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Dwelling and Drifting in Space

Landscape in the Poetry of Ted Hughes and Kenneth White

anglická literatura

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Prohlašuji, že jsem disertační práci vykonala samostatně, s využitím uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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INTRODUCTION

The contours of landscape in poetry perhaps cannot be satisfactorily mapped. The subject tends alarmingly to enormity and amorphousness, veering simultaneously towards trackless continents of cultural immensity and into the finest tissues of subjective inwardness. Poetic approaches to natural description indeed easily assume the aspect of an incommensurable difference.

Chris Fitter[1]

Landscape " as such" is never given,
only one or another of the ways to map it.

J. Hillis-Miller[2]

This study was originally motivated by a desire to bring together a personal predilection for both landscape(s) and the study of literature, to merge the affective and the cognitive with the more analytical. An attempt to write a critical study about landscape in poetry, however, is bound to encounter difficulties as it is bound to ask questions. As Chris Fitter suggests in his book *Poetry, space, landscape*, the subject offers multiple approaches and tends to spread innumerable strands linking often disparate areas. On the other hand, one may ask a subversive question, namely whether nature and landscape poetry is not somewhat anachronistic at the turn of the second millenium. It must have seemed so when Terry Gifford, in 1995, opened his book *Green Voices*[3] with a polemical statement: "Nature poetry is having a bad time". He was referring to the previous decade

during which allegedly the 'spirit of post-modernism' had changed the preoccupations of poetry and which was marked by such statements of reviewers and editors of poetry anthologies as: "We seem to have lost out nature poets", "We don't publish much landscape poetry" or "Ted Hughes is a remarkable writer but no longer the presiding spirit of British poetry".[4] The very title of Gifford's book, however, indicates a new impetus behind contemporary nature poetry which may be traced in poetry dealing more specifically with landscape as well. It is not the purpose of this study to advocate or stress some kind of 'green ideology' in poetry, but the element of growing environmental awareness in contemporary writing cannot be passed unnoticed. What seems to be an anachronism nowadays is not the theme of nature itself, but the notion which associates nature and landscape poetry with no more than sentimentality and escapism.

> Poets need no longer apologise for writing about Nature. The new Nature poetry is more than merely descriptive: it deals with the tensions between us and our environment, our intense and often destructive relationship with it, our struggle to come to terms with the fact that we're a part of the world out there and not simply observers and manipulators.[5]

Last but not least, it must be acknowledged that notions of nature are "socially constructed and determine our perception of our direct experiences, which, in turn, determine our communications about them".[6] In view of this, we may begin to ask about the place of landscape in contemporary poetry.

Are there, within this genre, any significant new features in the treatment of both nature as an empirical entity and spatiality as a more abstract concept? Encoding of landscape in verse nowadays is no longer strictly governed by the decorum of genre and aesthetic conventions while intellectual comprehension is gaining importance as a shaping factor of presenting landscape in verse. How is the present poet's account of direct personal encounter with the landscape phenomenon affected by familiarity with creative and theoretical work of other poets and scholars?

The landscape consciousness of every culture may seem historically distinct and subjective. Is it still possible to trace continuities, conscious or incidental, which indicate the persistence of forces other than personal, social or historical in contemporary landscape poetry?

The idea of 'landscape' both as a complex and mutable manifestation of nature and as a 'human construct' offers different readings. The present study attempts to trace the end-of-millennium space and landscape sensibility in the works of two poets writing in English, Ted Hughes and Kenneth White, in the context of relevant literary and philosophical studies. In the writings of both of these poets, landscape features as a major theme but their notion of it extends beyond the traditional concepts of English pastorals and Romantic 'lake' poetry as well as beyond the limits of straightforward ideological green writing.

The pastoral tradition itself is a complex issue which cannot be sufficiently covered in this introduction; a brief outline of it, however, seems necessary in order to mark one of the departure points of landscape poetry which took a different course. Simon Schama, in his *Landscape and Memory*, distinguishes between two types or stages of the Arcadian model.[7] Before Virgil,

imitating Thecritus, established the "enduring model for the traditional pastoral ... expressing the urban poet's nostalgic image of the peace and simplicity of the life of shepherds and other rural folk in an idealized natural setting",[8] before Classical poets identified the pastoral life with the mythical Golden Age and Christian pastoralists with the Biblical Garden of Eden, and before the Renaissance populated the pastoral landscapes with languid nymphs and shepherds, the 'original Arcadians' were marked by their bestiality and brutishness explained by their great antiquity. They were considered *autochthons,* original men sprung from the earth itself, "pre-selenic" or older than the moon.[9] As Schama points out, in the myths of Pan and Lykaon, the Greek notion of Arcadian origins anticipated, in an unexpected way, the theory of evolution in its assumption of continuities between animals and men.

> The Arcadians themselves, though, are never imagined by the Greeks as farmers. Hunters and gatherers, warriors and sensualists, they inhabit a landscape notorious for its brutal harshness, trapped between arid drought and merciless floods ... As for the common run of Arcadians, they sheltered from the elements in caves or the rudest huts, and subsisted on acorns and the meat and milk of their goats.[10]

As picked up by Theocritus and Virgil, the redesigned Arcadia appears to be at the opposite pole of the 'pre-selenic' one; a depiction of life which is antique but far from the brutally archaic, a product, as Schama puts it, of the "orderly mind" rather than the "playground of the unchained senses". Pan is still around

but "has already gone a long way to becoming the custodian of flocks and amiable prankster", his "indiscriminate insemination [transformed into] the spontaneous fecundity of nature itself".[11] Moreover, Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, while often contrasted as representing the leisured and the laborious countryside respectively, both "presuppose, not so very far away, the presence of state and city, the very world of human affairs, in fact, from which they are ostensibly in flight."[12] Instead of men who looked and behaved like beasts, "there are animals that, at their best, conduct themselves like citizens of a perfect political economy".

> And in the thinly disguised allegory (itself inherited from Athenian fables) we can already see the elements of the landscape of Renaissance humanism: diligent labour, placid, meaty livestock, and bounteous fields and orchards, all overseen, politically and visually, by hilltop fathers of the city-state.[13]

Ideal(istic) as it may seem at a glance, the pastoral in its various forms from Theocritus to Renaissance (and especially when traced further, e.g. to Wordsworth's "Michael, *A Pastoral Poem*") still has its dark sides. Primarily, it is not free of the impact of temporality; as expressed in the famous phrase, *Et in Arcadia Ego*, "even in Arcadia, I, Death, am present".

If there is a link between the landscape poetry discussed in this study and the pastoral tradition at all, it may be sought in the potential kinship with the former, archaic concept of Arcadia or explained through a recent, looser definition of the term 'pastoral' which applies to "any work which represents a

withdrawal from ordinary life to a place apart, close to the elemental rhythms of nature, where a person achieves a new perspective on life in the complex social world."[14] (Thus William Epsom e. g. in his *Some Versions of Pastoral*, extends the term to cover a genre as modern as the proletarian novel on the basis of contrasting "simple and complicated life, to the advantage of the former"[15] together with a sharpened awareness of social and class divisions.)

Landscape in the treatment of the 'lake' poets (which, again due to its complexity, can only be outlined here) cannot be read as a pure manifestation of nature either, since its depiction tends to be transformed by a moral or ethical symbolism. Thus, e. g. in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey", the poet hears in the sounds of nature "the still, sad music of humanity" but also feels

a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:

The omnipresent and all-penetrating energy of nature ("a motion and a spirit, that … rolls through all things") is therefore understood as the site of both imagination and human morality.[16]

well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the senses
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

In Wordsworth's *Prelude,* landscape features as "the speaking face of earth and heaven", a counterpart to the poet's 'mind' in extended colloquies.[17] However, "to conduct a conversation with the landscape is by no means a Romantic innovation" as M. H. Abrams points out in his discussion of Wordsworth's *Prelude* and Augustine's *Confessions,* where Wordsworth's concept of nature – landscape is seen as "a lineal descendant of the ancient Christian concept of the *liber naturae*, whose symbols bespeak the attributes and intentions of its author"[18].

With the Romantics, aesthetic evaluation of a natural scene, inherited from eighteenth-century theorists and manifest, for example, in the concepts of the *sublime* and the *beautiful*,[19] extends to finding moral and theological meanings in it and becomes the basis of a Romantic 'theodicy of the landscape'.

> By and large the beautiful is small in scale, orderly, and tranquil, effects pleasure in the observer, and is associated with love; while the sublime is vast (hence suggestive of infinity), wild, tumultuous, and awful, is associated with pain, and evokes ambivalent feelings of terror and admiration … the beautiful elements of nature are the enduring expression of God's loving benevolence, while the vast and disordered in nature express his infinity, power, and wrath…[20]

Beside the moral or ethical and the theological reading of landscape, there is also a Romantic concept in which the landscape becomes part of the poet's 'self' as, for example, in the third canto of Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: "Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part / Of me and of my soul, as I of them?"

While elements of Romantic attitudes may be traced in landscape poetry up to today, it is understandable that none of the above concepts is likely to be found in a pure form nowadays. What proved to be applicable to a considerable extent, however, is the Romantic treatment of the sea which will be discussed in chapter Five of this study.

My aim in this study has been to 'map' the terrain of landscape poetry of Kenneth White and Ted Hughes, since both of them, each in his own particular way, add a further dimension to this genre. Alongside traditional models of nature and landscape perception, their writing is marked by the influence of alternative sources of inspiration, namely those drawn from Eastern and indigenous cultures; their poetry thus indicates a broader *Weltanschauung,* more ecologically aware and acknowledging spiritual continuities as well as cultural diversity.

The approach to individual chapters in this study varies.

Chapter One is intended primarily to provide a theoretical background for my subsequent reading of Kenneth White but it is also relevant to my approach to Ted Hughes' treatment of landscape. The core of this chapter consists in the exposition of crucial concepts of Heidegger's late thought concerning space and the main principles of 'nomadology' of Deleuze an Guattari, since these two theories work as essential guidelines throughout this study.

The aspect of Martin Heidegger's thought discussed here is that which presents him also as one of the fathers of the vision of ecological awareness, an awareness perceptible throughout the whole sequence of White's writing and Hughes' late works as well. Certainly, there are areas where there is no consonance

between Heidegger and the works of either of the poets discussed, notably politics, but as for his emphasis of the role of the poet, the critique of science and technology or his attraction to the legacy of pre-Socratic philosophy there is a clear resonance of his views in the writings of both White and Hughes. While in the case of White, explicit references to Heidegger show his familiarity with this philosopher's views, the echoes of Heideggerian thought in Hughes are most likely coincidental albeit no less meaningful.

What makes Heidegger's late works especially relevant to the discussion of poetry is his sense of the importance of language and thought (in the order mentioned) and consequently a high valuation of the poet as a mediator of a 'primordial language'.

> Language for him as for Hughes [and White] is not the closed circuit of mutually interrelated arbitrary signs of the linguistician – it is an ever closing, but openable path to Being, the reality of what is. The closing is the fall from true and original (that is poetic) language into the cliché-ridden, merely representional language of ideas and the idle chatter ...[21]

Last but not least, what the two poets and the philosopher in question share is the notion of Nothingness and Emptiness as positive values which, in turn, is reminiscent of Eastern philosophical positions in general, positions to which all three of them inclined. While the treatment of these topoi and the Eastern connections in the works of White and Hughes will be discussed in subsequent chapters, Heidegger's affinity with the East seems worth a brief digression.

As Reinhard May showed in his pioneering study *Heidegger's Hidden Sources*[22], Heidegger drew upon German translations of Chinese Taoist and Zen Buddhist classics and kept conversations with Chinese and Japanese scholars over many years. May quotes Heinrich Wiegand Petzet reporting several instances of Heidegger's own statements acknowledging kinship between his philosophy and East Asian thought e. g. in a conversation with a Buddhist monk from Bangkok in 1964, on hearing the monk say that "nothingness is not 'nothing', but rather the completely other: fullness. No one can name it. But it – nothing and everything – is fulfilment", Heidegger responded with the words: "That is what I have been saying, my whole life long".[23] Heidegger himself distinguishes between an 'empty' or nugatory nothing and the 'true' Nothing which belongs to Being. Hence, his notion of the overcoming of nihilism is, seemingly paradoxically, characterized as follows: "To press the *inquiry* into Being expressly to the border of Nothing and to incorporate it [Nothing] into the question of Being."[24] Incidentally, Gilles Deleuze, one of the 'fathers' of nomadology, holds a similar notion of the nothingness or the non-being. "There is indeed, therefore, a *me on*, which must not be confused with the *ouk on,* and which means the being of the problematic and not the being of the negative: an expletive NE rather than a negative 'not'." In other words: "We must say both that being is full positivity and pure affirmation, and that there is (non)-being which is the being of the problematic, the being of problems and questions, not the being of the negative."[25] Heidegger's response to Buddhism seemed to be equally affirmative; while reading one of D. T. Suzuki's books on Zen, he reportedly remarked: "If I understand

this man correctly, this is what I have been trying to say in all my writings."[26]

What Heidegger, in his pursuit of thinking that overcomes metaphysics (which, as Jacques Derrida, for example, argues, was by no means complete), might have been attracted to in East Asian philosophical tradition is the lack of metaphysics in the Western sense in it. In the concept of Dao, as opposed to Western metaphysics, ontology and cosmology are linked. It - Dao "does not leave things behind and is not separated from things, but comprehends them all in their infinite versatility".[27]

In the light of the evidence given in May's study, it is hard to dismiss the similarities between certain Heidegger's and Eastern concepts as a case of merely fortuitous (even if meaningful) parallels. Certainly, he was no straightforward advocate of some kind of re-sourcing of Western culture from the East. In an interview for *Der Spiegel*, he actually claims the opposite:

> It is my conviction that a reversal can be prepared itself only from the same part of the world in which the modern technical world originated, and that it cannot come about through the adoption of Zen Buddhism or other Eastern experiences of the world.[28]

His reluctance to admit the possibility of some kind of common source and consequently a dialogue between Western and Eastern traditions of thinking may be at least partially explained on the grounds of his notion of language as a house of Being or, as he put it in *On the Way to Language:* "we Europeans presumably inhabit a quite different house from the East Asians".

> I do not yet see whether what I am trying to think as the essential nature [*Wesen*] of language is *also* adequate to the nature of East Asian language – whether in the end, which would at the same time be the beginning, thinking experience can be reached by an essence of language that would ensure that Western European and East Asian saying can enter into dialogue in such a way that there sings something that wells up from a single source [*Quelle*].[29]

According to H. G. Gadamer,[30] Heidegger's reticence about his potential Eastern sources might have been caused by the fact that a scholar of his generation and calibre would be reluctant to write anything about a philosophy if he were unable to read the relevant texts in the original language.

This is not the place to argue for or against the question of the influence of Eastern thought on Heidegger's philosophy. For the purpose of this study, however, it has proved stimulating to acknowledge the fact of Heidegger's familiarity with Taoist and Buddhist texts and the proved existence of affinities between concepts construed in these texts and some of his notions which, in turn, suggest an appropriation, however personal and clandestine, of non-Western sources into Heidegger's thought.

Despite the proclaimed 'Graeco-Teutonic' provenance of much of Heidegger's philosophy, there are hints in his writing, which indicate a 'broader' view. In discussing the 'great beginning' of Western thought, he makes a remarks which, due to the idiosyncrasies of his language, may sound equivocal, but nevertheless akin to the notions of either of the two poets discussed in the following chapters.

> There can of course be no going back to it. Present as something waiting over against us, the great beginning becomes something small. But nor can this small something remain any longer in its *Western isolation*. It is *opening* itself to the few other great beginnings that belong with their Own to the Same of the beginning of the *infinite relationship*, in which the *earth is included.*[31] (My emphasis)

What Hughes and White have in common, apart from the theme of landscape signifying their awareness of the Heideggerian 'infinite relationship with the earth', may be called a "struggle for liberation from the excesses of Enlightenment rationalism", which does not mean a straightforward rejection of reason but "an augmentation, harmonization and attunement of its faculties".[32] Both thus appear to develop the legacy of their major twentieth century predecessor, D. H. Lawrence.

A shared concern of both of them has been to augment ordinary modern Western consciousness in the pursuit of which they, at a certain phase of their creative careers, turned to non-European sources, be it Taoism, shamanism or an amalgam of Eastern and ancient Celtic traditions (in White).

Although landscape in the poetry of Ted Hughes always held a prominent place, the focus of this study is limited to a single, compact collection, *Remains of Elmet*, which appears to be crucial for the understanding of him as a poet of landscape rather than the 'animal poet' of his early period or the lyricist of his final phase represented by *Birthday Letters*.

Still, in the view of the theory of 'nomadology', developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the major reference theory of this study, Ted Hughes may be tentatively seen as a 'regional' writer associated with the category of a sedentary space, writing from and about a coded, inhabited, in Deleuze's terms, *striated* space. Kenneth White's domain, on the other hand is the *smooth* - *nomadic* space of the sea, the coast and air. According to this theory, the two poets could exemplify two different types of writing coexisting within a given cultural and historical milieu, not in a clearly cut 'binary opposition' but as complementary and mutually enriching forces.

Ted Hughes' characteristic movement was, as Craig Robinson put it, "from closure to openness, from rigid to the flexible, from the merely human to the fully human".[33] This movement culminates in the phase when the *Elmet* poems were written and resonates with White's recurrent emphasis of a similar, although more radical and complex, notion of openness and his pursuit of 'enlarged identity' of human beings.

The section devoted to Kenneth White is more extensive, comprising of chapters Three to Six, and is intended to provide a representative outline of the corpus of his writing which appears to be consistent in its treatment of recurrent central themes. Among them, the problematic notion of fusing nomadism and dwelling, ecologically informed awareness of the earth and physical as well as intellectual 'voyageuring' feature prominently. White is not the only author in recent British literature who took up the concept of nomadism; while Bruce Chatwin's treatment of it (e.g. in *Songlines*) may be called ethno-cultural, White approaches the concept of nomadism, as he puts it, 'poetico-intellectually'.

While the landscape poetry of Ted Hughes may still be referred to in terms of 'late modernist' notions of identity and representation, White's work has been described as "the first coherent expression of postmodernism" of which the emphasis on nomadism and drifting are sometimes seen as symptomatic (alongside "anarchy, play of energy, geography; refusal of Marxism, system and teleology"[34] – all traceable in White's writing as well). Aware of the ambiguities of the word 'postmodern' and scarcely using it himself, White takes it as a convenient concept with which to designate

> a general *turning* of intellectual and cultural forces since, say, Nietzsche. Olson's definition is still the one I like best: "the post-historic, the post-humanist, the going live present, the beautiful thing". Let's say that I'm trying, in my own way, to get at some sense of the *beautiful thing*.[35]

Contrary to the 'spirit of postmodernism' which in the view of some critics eclipsed the theme of nature in contemporary poetry, White's sustained preoccupation with the earth proves the opposite. His aim is to make the earth interesting again, in the etymological sense: *inter-esse*, being together (rather than the Romantic being One) – of human mind and the earth. "So that the earth, the earth itself, the beings-of-the-earth, away from any symbolic overcoding or functionalist reduction, become the interesting, passionate, marvellous thing."[36] Admittedly, White's concepts and definitions tend to be vague and flexible but it may itself be taken as part of his poetic method, since, as he put it in

Le Plateau de l'Albatros, "a global definition would be contrary to the current logic of openness."[37]

The present study, the core of which could be called 'Whitean', is itself marked in its method by a similar 'logic of openness'. It follows, to use a nomadic terminology, different trajectories, at different speeds; some of the chapters are expository, with a larger proportion of theoretical thought and citations (this concerns mainly the first, Heideggerian and Deleuzian chapter, since these philosophers are difficult to quote piecemeal), other (those which deal with the poets themselves) offer a 'mapping' of the poetic topographies of Hughes and White in the light of these theories. As a whole, this study may resemble "a fabric … in which any number of connecting routes could exist"[38] rather than a finished, systematic 'structure'; a fabric, however, in which, hopefully, the main threads are still 'mappable'.

I. Space, Landscape and Existence

Man's interest in space has existential roots. It stems from a need to grasp vital relations in his environment, to bring meaning and order into a world of events and actions.

Ch. Norberg-Schulz

Natural and Existential Space: Preliminary Reflections

Landscape is a basic term used for designation of 'natural places'. It is a manifestation of nature, or "the shape and form of nature"[39] and as such it retains most of the original meanings of the Greek word *fysis,* which originally refers to procreation, fertility and growth.

Landscape, containing the polarity between heaven and earth, also refers to teachings, which explain nature in all its aspects as a dynamism within opposites, as a continuous flow of changes and transformations. Chinese Taoists, the same as Heraclitus, were aware of the fact that decay and rest, plenitude and emptiness traverse an eternal cycle enunciating a direction which gives meaning to all being, an order to which all beings are subjugated (Zhuangzi).[40]

With Lovelocke's theory of *Gaia* in mind, it should not be difficult to imagine also landscape as a sentient 'being' (one of the meanings of *fysis*), something that should be approached as 'Thou' rather than 'it'. Its place in the hierarchy of living structures is unique. It is a borderline case in the sense that it is the highest plane of life still accessible to human perception. Landscape is to be perceived not as a mixture of interactive albeit

independent organic and inorganic structures, but as a living system with its own complex structure of links and laws. The expression 'memory of landscape' then is not a mere metaphor; each of its constituents simultaneously composes, perceives and changes the landscape.[41] Understanding landscape as a 'natural space' means to be able to 'experience' it not as a *res extensa* but as a *multiplicity* of living forces in which we ourselves participate.

Landscape, however, as its etymology suggests, is as much a 'human construct' as it is a 'living body'[42]. The word itself entered the English language as a Dutch import at the end of the 16th century as *landschap* which, like its Germanic root, *Landschaft,* signified "a unit of human occupation, indeed a jurisdiction, as much as anything that might be a pleasing object of depiction."[43]

Human participation in its design and use concerns both, active physical presence as well as mental concepts related to it. "Before it can ever be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock."[44]

Landscape as such, as a space of interaction of nature and culture, is the primary space of our *being in the world*, it is an 'existential space'. The term was coined by Christian Norberg-Schulz, who - in his phenomenology of architecture - assigns landscape a crucial importance. When he says that social and economic conditions define the space of our everyday life, but that its existential dimension stems from a deeper level, he is talking about landscape and recalls Willy Hellpach's *Geopsyche*

which claims that the 'existential contents' of our being are 'brought forth' by the landscape.[45]

According to Norberg-Schulz, to be able to live (or *dwell*) between heaven and earth, one has to 'understand' the two elements and their mutual interaction. This does not imply a scientific examination but rather an existential 'experience' of the 'meanings' mediated by them. Since landscape, perceived from the point of view of human existence, is not a neutral continuum of Euclidean space but always a space qualitatively differentiated and 'coloured' or loaded with (often symbolic) meanings (Aristotelian *topos*).

Approaching Landscape: The Chinese Inspiration

Nature, and consequently also landscape, assumes in Chinese thinking and poetry a deeper significance, quite different from that commonly perceived e. g. by English Romantic poets. James J. Y. Liu, in his *Art of Chinese Poetry* comments:

> In the first place, Nature … is not a physical manifestation of its Creator … but something that is what it is by virtue of itself. The Chinese term for 'Nature' is tzu-jan, [zi-ran] or 'Self-thus', and the Chinese mind seems content to accept Nature as a fact, without searching for a *primum mobile.* This concept of Nature somewhat resembles Thomas Hardy's 'Immanent Will', but without its rather sombre and gloomy associations.[46]

Another expression for 'nature' in Chinese may be translated as “arising and changing (or passing)”[47], which suggests a process rather than an object or thing. Similarly, the Chinese concept of heaven lacks the divine or religious aspects in the traditional Western terms. Thus nature is seen as neither benign nor hostile to human beings and the relationship between the two is not characterised in terms of an ongoing struggle. Nor is nature humanized, depicted as acting in a humane, sympathetic way. The fifth chapter of Laozi’s *Dao de jing* reads: “Heaven-and-Earth is not sentimental; / It treats all things as straw-dogs”.[48]

While Heaven-and-Earth may be interpreted as nature in the given context, “straw dogs” were used as an offering in rituals and as such had been treated with care beforehand; the above lines therefore should not be read as a straightforward metaphor of the worthlessness of “all things”, human beings included. They are rather a metaphor of an eternal cycle of ‘arising and passing’ which, at the same time, reflects the temporality of human existence. Humanity is simply seen as a part of nature and this nature is impartial, does not know favour or disfavour, love or hate and treats all creation with equal detachment.

> There are no Icaruses and Fausts in Chinese poetry; instead, Man is advised to submerge his being in the infinite flux of things and to allow his own life and death to become part of the eternal cycle of birth, growth, decline, death, and re-birth that goes on in Nature... The presence of the poet is withdrawn or unobtrusively submerged in the total picture.[49]

The Chinese view thus mediates a different, and perhaps more immediate bond between nature and humankind. The essence of this bond is Taoist in principle and may be illustrated by one of Zhuangzi's texts paraphrased below:

> Every thing is an object and every thing is a subject. Seen as an object, a thing cannot be apprehended; every thing can only be recognized from within … Object is a product of subject and subject is necessitated by the object. It means that subject and object are being born simultaneously.[50]

A treatise on landscape painting by the 17th century Chinese painter Shi Tao is instrumental in its discerning between two modes of relating to landscape: *vedana* and *vijnana*. While the former term indicates a receptive attitude, an immediate sensation or 'feeling' of things, the latter is an equivalent of rational understanding and discriminating consciousness. Using the traditional Buddhist classification of five *skandhas,* or elements and processes which make up the self or person, he contrasts its two extreme possibilities of psychic functions[51] and uses them to demonstrate a privileged way - a painter's way of looking at landscape. In saying that a perception (*vedana*) which would only follow after knowledge (*vijnana*) is not the right perception,[52] Shi Tao promotes a certain hierarchy of our relating to the natural surroundings. It does not necessarily amount to an elimination of conceptual and rational comprehension of the world, but indicates a typically Eastern attitude which is much less likely to give rise to the Western idea of man as a "master of nature".

In Taoism, such an attitude is echoed in the term *wu-wei*, a crucial concept within the Chinese tradition, usually ascribed to Laozi and understood as an expression of absolute receptivity, roughly translated as non-striving, non-action or non-interference with the flow of events.

Landscape cannot be fully comprehended in the act of 'representation'. A commonplace intentionality of our relation to the surroundings does not seem to be adequate when applied to landscape. A cognition based on "reason - designed relations between individual components of a given phenomenon"[53] falls short of comprehending the holistic nature of landscape. It can rather be experienced in a state of restrained receptivity, for which Heidegger revived the old term *Gelassenheit* (and used it to describe an attitude to works of art) - a state characterised by dwelling in openness, exposure and ability to 'step out of oneself', a state which seems to be the nearest equivalent to the Taoist concept of *wu-wei*.

Although Chinese poetry is mentioned in this study as one of the sources of Kenneth White's poetics, one striking thematic non-correspondence between the two should be explained. The fact that in Chinese nature poetry, shan - shui, mountain and river poems, images of seas and oceans (White's stock material) do not habitually appear is explained by the Chinese concept of the world which consists of three vertically oriented spheres of earth, man and sky. The sea is not, in Chinese thinking, a part of 'this' world. Although China is not a land-locked country, it has been subjectively perceived as such, as a self-contained area, with a tendency to turn away from the ocean as something foreign and 'other'. (Confucius for instance referred to sea voyages in terms

of leaving 'this world'.) While the 'core' of China is to be looked for in the Northwest of the country, the same self-centred concept is also reflected in China's later adopted attribute - the empire of the middle. Hence the conspicuous absence of sea poems in traditional Chinese nature poetry. (Western poets inspired by this poetry, such as Kenneth White discussed in this study, while adopting some of its themes and formal aspects, no longer strictly adhere to the original vernacular usage.)

Space, Place and *Dwelling* in Heidegger's Topography*

In his understanding of the meanings mediated by landscape as an 'existential space' which is actually delimited as a 'space between heaven and earth', Norberg-Schulz frequently employs Heideggerian references. Talking about the earth which is the basis of landscape, its horizontal dimension, he quotes: "earth is the serving bearer, blossoming and fruiting, spreading out in rock and water, rising up into plant and animal."[54] Reflecting on the sky which adds a vertical dimension to it, he turns to Heidegger again:

> the vaulting path of the sun, the course of the changing moon, the wandering glitter of the stars, the year's seasons and their changes, the light and dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of the weather, the drifting clouds and blue depth of the ether.[55]

Seemingly trivial, the basic opposition of heaven and earth already defines landscape as a *world*, since being on the earth and under the sky at the same time, refers, according to Heidegger, to *dwelling* in the sense of human existence. "The way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans

* The word 'topography' used here refers to its original meaning (which seems an appropriately Heideggerian attitude), i.e. "the creation of a metaphorical equivalent in words of a landscape". The triple meaning of this word is discussed in J. Hillis Miller's *Topographies*. The following discussion of space in Heidegger is derived mainly from his essay "Building Dwelling Thinking" and my reading of this essay for the purpose of this study may be called 'straight', taking its author as an 'authority' on human topography (although, admittedly, a highly problematic one). Therefore, I shall not examine here the political implications of his ideas about topography as e.g. Hillis Miller did in "Slipping Vaulting Crossing: Heidegger" in *Topographies*.

are on the earth, is *Buan*, dwelling … But 'on the earth' already means 'under the sky'", which for Heidegger, however, still leaves the question of the nature of dwelling open. "But in what does the nature of dwelling consist?", he keeps asking. Tracing its etymological origin in the Old Saxon *wuon*, the Gothic *wunian* and the old word *bauen*, he arrives at the meaning "**to remain, to stay in a place**" (my emphasis). A closer examination of *wunian* specifies how this remaining is experienced: "to be at peace, to be brought to peace, to remain in peace". Through the association of peace with *Friede*, the free, i.e. "preserved from harm and danger, safeguarded", he makes another step in saying that "to free really means to spare."

> Real sparing … takes place when we leave something beforehand in its own nature, when we return it specifically to its being, when we 'free' it in the real sense of the word into a preserve of peace. To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature. *The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving.*[56]

A significant ecological tinge seems to resonate through this section, which may well complement our characterisation of landscape as a natural place. Heidegger develops this idea more specifically:

> Mortals dwell in that they save the earth … To save really means to set something free into its own presencing. To save the earth is more than to exploit it

> or even wear it out ... Mortals dwell in that they receive the sky as sky. They leave to the sun and the moon their journey, to the stars their courses, to the seasons their blessing and their inclemency; they do not turn night into day nor day into a harassed unrest...[57]

Heidegger's definition of *dwelling*, however, is "fourfold". Its former two characteristics -'on the earth' and 'under the sky' are complemented by other two aspects:

> Both of these *also* mean 'remaining before the divinities' and include a 'belonging to men's being with one another.' By a *primal* oneness the four – earth and sky, divinities and mortals – belong together in one.[58]

While the former reference to being 'on earth' and 'under the sky' seems crucial for our understanding of landscape as a natural space, the complete concept of the "*the fourfold* – a *primal* oneness of the four – earth and sky, divinities and mortals", as developed in "Building Dwelling Thinking", leads to a more complex perception of landscape, landscape as an 'existential space'. It enables us to experience our environment as meaningful, to *dwell*. "But the basic character of dwelling is to spare, to preserve. Mortals dwell in the way they preserve the fourfold in its essential being, its presencing ."[59] The notion of preserving in this essay is directly linked to another crucial Heideggerian topos, 'the thing', which then helps to define his concept of space (which – in turn – is crucial for our exposition).

> How do mortals make their dwelling such a preserving? Mortals would never be capable of it if dwelling were merely a staying on earth under the sky, before the divinities, among mortals. Rather, dwelling itself is always a staying with things. Dwelling as preserving, keeps the fourfold in that with which mortals stay: in things.[60]

In the second part of "Building Dwelling Thinking", the image-concept of a bridge illustrates the nature of such a'thing':

> The bridge ... does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. ...The bridge *gathers* the **earth** as landscape around the stream. ...the bridge is ready for the **sky**'s weather and its fickle nature. ...Always and ever differently the bridge escorts the lingering and hastening ways of **men** to and fro, so that they may get to other banks and in the end, **as mortals**, to the other side. ....The bridge *gathers*, as a passage that crosses, before the **divinities** – whether we explicitly think of, and visibly give thanks for, their presence, as in the figure of the saint of the bridge, or whether that divine presence is obstructed or even pushed wholly aside.[61] (my emphasis)

A bridge thus *gathers* the 'fourfold' and exactly because of that may be understood as a 'thing', which, as Heidegger

explains, is an ancient word "of our language" for gathering or assembly.

A common assumption would be, that such gathering can only **take place in a space** (which is already there). But Heidegger seems to argue something different. "The bridge is a thing; it gathers the fourfold, but in such a way that it allows a site for the fourfold. By this site are determined the localities and ways by which a space is provided for." Thus things – locations allow for spaces, rather that the other way round. In pursuit of his argument, Heidegger, as usual, turns to etymology.

> *Raum* means a place cleared or freed for settlement and lodging. A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary, Greek *peras*. A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something *begins its presencing*. ... Space is in essence that for which room has been made, that which is let into its bounds. ...*Accordingly, spaces receive their being form locations and not from 'space'.*[62]

From the above paragraphs it follows that Heidegger's concept of space is defined by his notion of a thing as a location, i.e. as something which gathers and thus allows a site for the fourfold, a site, which in turn provides for a space. It might be said that space originates in or unfolds from things – locations, such as the bridge, that 'things' are somehow primordial or superior in his hierarchy of spatial concepts.

> The space allowed by the bridge contains many places variously near or far from the bridge. These places, however, may be treated as mere positions between which there lies a **measurable distance** … a *spatium*, an intervening space or interval [in which] the bridge now appears as a mere something at some position, which can be occupied at any time by something else … What's more, the mere dimensions of height, breadth, and depth can be abstracted from space as intervals. [63] (my emphasis)

A further abstraction suggested by Heidegger leads towards pure manifolds with which, however, we no longer speak about a *spatium*, but about *extensio*. Finally we may arrive at a space of purely analytic-algebraic relations. "The space provided for in this mathematical manner may be called 'space,' the 'one' space as such … We never find in it any locations, that is, things of the kind the bridge is."[64]

Hillis Miller, in his comment on this section of "Building Dwelling Thinking", introduces a term which seems crucial for understanding Heidegger's concept of space in the context of this study. He talks about it as "an organized field" which is opened by locations created by man's building activities.

> Euclidean space is not original, already there. It is the reductive derivation from a space that has its ultimate origin not so much in the bridge as in man the builder and dweller who lets space be by building, who clears a place for space by making sites and locations that surround themselves with a landscape.[65]

The implicit hierarchy of spatial concepts which we find in the thought of the later Heidegger, where things-locations take precedence over space, is paralleled in his treatment of the relation between spatiality and temporality in *Sein und Zeit*. There, space is also explained as 'secondary', said to be generated by time. In paragraph seventy of *Sein und Zeit*, Dasein's specific spatiality is said to be grounded in temporality. Literally,

> Dasein takes space in. Space is by no means just present-at-hand in a bit of volume which its [Dasein's] body fills up. In existing it has already made room for its own leeway. Dasein determines its own location in such a manner that it comes back from the space it has made room for to the 'place' which it has reserved.

Hillis Miller identifies this movement of going out and coming back with the basic movement of temporality. Dasein moves forward into the future in order to come back to the past. In Heidegger's formulation: "Because Dasein as temporality is ecstatico-horizontal in its Being it can take along with it a space for which it has made room, and it can do so factically and constantly."

The notion of a temporality of landscape in his "Building Dwelling Thinking" is implied in the very choice of bridge as an example of a built thing. A bridge may be understood as something which mediates a way from here to there through time. As Hillis Miller points out, the examples of the uses of bridges in the essay are temporal. "They implicitly contain a historical narrative tracing out the course of human life."[66] (As

quoted above: ...Always and ever differently the bridge escorts the lingering and hastening ways of **men** to and fro, so that they may get to other banks and in the end, **as mortals**, to the other side.)

And so, the temporality of landscape as we find it in this essay is also linked to human presence in it. It is a humanized landscape, constructed around his imaginary bridge as a central location, surrounded by other things and places within a given horizon. "Building of all sorts, for Heidegger, makes earth and sky a domicile within which man can dwell, think, and ultimately, die in proximity to the gods, as he makes his way through a space that is a dimension of time."[67]

The *Smooth* and the *Striated*: Space in Deleuze and Guattari

Heidegger's model of space, as introduced above, may be understood as 'striated', in the terminology of Deleuze and Guattari, since "in striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one point to another."[68] There is, however, a different type of space in the theory of the above authors, a 'smooth' space, in which the logic of subordination is reversed.

In defining the smooth space, they draw on epistemology as well as on anthropological studies into nomadism, which is used in support of their arguments in different ways. Perhaps the most 'extensive' treatise of the subject (though one may hesitate to use that expression, bearing in mind the emphasis they put on 'intensities') appears in chapter 12 of their book *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* entitled '1227: Treatise on Nomadology – The War Machine'. In the first place, it involves direct references to empirical research of nomadism as a particular way of life. Secondly, nomadism actually becomes 'nomadology', as it is not used only as an anthropological term expressing the opposite of 'sedentary' but as a theory applicable to any aspect of human activity, whether physical or mental.

Nomadology is defined in opposition to history, because "history is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus".[69] Deleuze and Guattari indicate a qualitative difference between the 'State space' (collusion between philosophy and the State) and the 'space of nomad thought'. The former is characterised by such terms as "hierarchical ranking, identity, resemblance, truth, justice, and negation; the rational foundation for [established] order; the

power of *logos*, entrenched in a closed space, power which builds walls". The latter, in turn is associated with **force**, which "arrives from outside to break constraints and open new vistas". Nomad thought, in their rendition,

> rather than analyzing the world into discrete components, reducing their manyness to the One of identity, and ordering them by rank, sums up a set of disparate circumstances in a shattering blow ... [it] does not immure itself in the edifice of an ordered interiority; it moves freely in an element of exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference.[70]

Smooth space is primarily a nomadic space, where the points – stops are determined by the trajectory, where "the dwelling is subordinated to the journey; inside space conforms to outside space: tent, igloo, boat."[71] The principle of a nomadic journey is the trajectory, not the points, which arise only as a consequence of the journey. "The water point is reached only in order to be left behind; every point is a relay and exists only as a relay."[72] Nomadism thus represents a different approach to space than sedentary life. "Refusing to take possession of the land they cross, the nomads construct an environment out of wool and goat hair, one that leaves no mark at the temporary site it occupies ...They leave space to space."[73] Deleuze and Guattari develop the above account of an anthropologist in contrasting the functions of a sedentary road and a nomadic trail. While the former is used "to *parcel out a closed space to people*", the latter does the opposite "it *distributes people (or animals) in an open space*" (italics in the original)[74]. A sedentary space is 'striated'

by walls, enclosures and roads while nomad space, marked only by temporary 'traits' which are "effaced and displaced with the trajectory" remains 'smooth'. (This comparison is not meant to be directly linked to Heidegger's concept of 'bridge' which, as a structure linking earth, sky, divinities and mortals, past and present, time and space, takes a special place among the 'sedentary structures' mentioned above.) A nomadic journey is variable, it involves changes of direction, since not only the fixed points of oases, but also temporary vegetation, which shifts location according to local rains, determines the routes.

Heidegger's space, organized by the "gathering" capacity of such "things" as the bridge, things arising as a result of and dependent on human building – dwelling, may thus be seen as a certain form of the *striated* space as discussed by Deleuze and Guattari. A possible link between these, otherwise seemingly disparate, concepts of spatiality may be traced in Heidegger's reference to the various practical functions of bridges on the one hand and in Deleuze's and Guattari's association of the striated space with the functioning of the State apparatus on the other. "The bridge *gathers* the earth as landscape around the stream," asserts Heidegger and gives the following examples:

> The city bridge leads from the precincts of the castle to the cathedral square; the river bridge near the country town brings wagons and horse teams to the surrounding villages. The old stone bridge's humble brook crossing gives to the harvest wagon its passage from the fields into the village and carries the lumber cart from the field path to the road. The highway

> bridge is tied into the network of long-distance traffic, paced as calculated for maximum yield.[75]

Alongside its symbolic function, the bridge is mentioned in Heidegger's essay also as a practical means of communication; i.e. not the communication with the 'other' in this case, but a communication between different locations, hence also between different strata of society as a result of which the bridge actually participates in the functioning of the State.

Deleuze and Guattari, in turn, see the act of assigning "a communicational role" to the smooth space, as crucial in the process of 'converting' and controlling it. Among the components implied by the existence of the State-form is "commerce based on a constellation of town-country (*polis-nomos*) communications", commerce which obviously relies on the existence of traffic, part of which is very likely to be those highway bridges mentioned by Heidegger. "One of the fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns, or to utilize smooth spaces as a means of communication in the service of striated space."[76] The bridge, then, may be seen not only as something which "grants their way to mortals so that they may come and go from shore to shore", as Heidegger puts it in his essay, but alternatively also as a construction which fits well what Deleuze and Guattari call the State's "need for fixed paths in well-defined directions". Allowing for the - not uncommon - function of bridges as strategic points facilitating the control of certain areas, or - historically - as points equally connected with the collection of levies and duties as the gates of the city or border crossings, they seem to be most eligible to be complementary components of the State's political power

understood as "*polis*, police, that is, management of the public ways". Bridges too, in the above understanding, may function as "barriers, filters against the fluidity of the masses, against the penetration power of migratory packs, people, animals, and goods."[77]

One more reason for classifying the phenomenon of the bridge as a symptom of the striated rather than the smooth space is its to be found in its potentially religious aspect visibly present in "the figure of the saint". Here, the saint represents the authority of an official religion (rather than being a manifestation of the sacred in the mythical sense) and religion, by making the absolute appear at a particular place in this way, is also a part of the State apparatus, participating in its effort directed towards the 'striation' of a smooth space and establishing solid and stable centre.

The nomad is not only opposed to the sedentary but should not be confused with the migrant either. Both move from point to point, and for the migrant too, the next point may be uncertain, but migration means principally leaving behind "a milieu that has become amorphous or hostile". The nomad, on the other hand, as presented by Deleuze and Guattari, "does not depart, does not want to depart." "The nomad distributes himself in a smooth space; he occupies, inhabits, holds that space"[78] That, however does not mean taking possession of the space, of the land he crosses. The term 'territory' is introduced together with the notion of nomadism and the nomad is called, in terms of that, "the Deterritorialized par excellence". The earth provides the nomad with a territory, but his relation to the earth is different from that of the migrant or the sedentary, for both of whom there

is a possibility of "reterritorialization"; "*afterward*" for the migrant or "upon *something else*" for the sedentary. For the nomad,

> the land ceases to be land, tending to become simply ground *(sol)* or support ... The nomads are there, on the land, wherever there forms a smooth space that gnaws and tends to grow, for it has been established that the nomads make the desert no less than they are made by it[79]

In contrast to the striated space, which is claimed to be both limited and limiting, divisible by boundaries into parts which are assigned constant directions and oriented in relation to one another, the smooth – nomad space may only be "localized and not delimited". This is because the smooth space of desert, steppe or ice is associated with "intensities" (wind and noise, forces and sonorous and tactile qualities), with "events and haecceities" rather than with "formed and perceived things".

The concept of *haecceity* is a crucial one in the context of the "nomadic theories" of Deleuze and Guattari. The term, originally coined by Duns Scotus[80], was revived in their book *A Thousand Plateaus* as "a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance". Thus

> a season, a winter a summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. They are haecceities in the sense that they consist entirely of relations of movement and rest

> between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected.[81]

Haecceities help to define smooth space as "an intensive rather than extensive space, one of distances, not of measures and properties. Intense *Spatium* instead of *Extensio*"... Striated space, on the contrary, is "canopied by the sky as measure and by the measurable visual qualities deriving from it."[82] The notion of sky as measure appears in Heidegger's essay "...Poetically Man Dwells...", in which he analyses a poem by Hölderlin, where the essay's title originates.* In his explication of this part of the poem, Heidegger says the following:

> The measure consists in the way in which the god who remains unknown, is revealed *as* such by the sky...the unknown god appears as the unknown by way of the sky's manifestness. This appearance is the measure against which man measures himself.

While for Heidegger *Spatium* is already considered to be an abstraction derived from space opened by a thing – location, the theories of Deleuze and Guattari 'operate' primarily within the 'intense *Spatium*' of a smooth nomadic space itself, with little or no dependence on such fixed things as e.g. Heidegger's bridge is.

It must be said, however, that even for Deleuze and Guattari, there is no clear-cut opposition between the two models of space.

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*...Is God unknown?
Is he manifest like the sky? I'd sooner
Believe the latter. It's the measure of man.
Full of merit, yet poetically, man
Dwells on this earth ...

(It seems, nevertheless, that the formulation below still presupposes the smooth space to be somehow more 'original' than the striated.)

> Smooth space and striated space – nomad space and sedentary space … the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space.[83]

The bridge belongs to, or indeed 'opens', a space which may be called striated. It is a 'thing' which gathers the fourfold, i.e. not only earth, sky and the mortals, but also the divinities and thus is implicitly connected with a religion, in which the absolute is essentially "a horizon that encompasses, and if the absolute itself appears at a particular place, it does so in order to establish a solid and stable center for the global."[84] If the smooth space is not delimited, then the absolute does not appear at a particular place but becomes a "nonlimited locality; the coupling of the place and the absolute is achieved not in a centered, oriented globalization or universalization but in an infinite succession of local operations"[85] – such as those epitomized in the variable directions of nomadic routes.

The role of smooth spaces in gradual "striation of the earth" is double. On the one hand, they actually give rise to the striated in becoming the encompassing element – a horizon, which "grounds" the earth and "makes Form possible". On the other, the smooth is repelled and excluded from the encompassed element. "Thus the great imperial religions need a smooth space

like the desert but only in order to give it a law that is opposed to the *nomos* in every way, and converts the absolute."[86] Among such smooth spaces are named, apart from the desert, "sky, or sea, the Ocean, the Unlimited".

The sea, actually, is considered to be "a smooth space par excellence", especially the sea before the invention of scientific or astronomical navigation, when "a complex and empirical nomadic system of navigation based on the wind and noise, the colours and sounds of the seas" was in use.

The above-mentioned difference between the smooth and the striated is not, however, limited purely to their geographical or anthropological aspects. It may be applied to a particular way of travelling, thinking, writing or living in general, in short, it is a matter of "the mode of spatialization, of the manner of being in space, of being for space".

"To think is to voyage"[87], claim Deleuze and Guattari and this attitude to the understanding of space and spatiality seems to be particularly relevant to the work of Kenneth White as the present study attempts to show. "It is not a question of returning to preastronomical navigation, nor to the ancient nomads. The confrontation between the smooth and the striated…[is] under way today, running in the most varied directions."[88]

A Thousand Plateaus has been characterized by its English translator as "an effort to construct a smooth space of thought" - a "nomad thought" – which is no longer merely a matter of anthropology, nor even traditional philosophy. "The classical image of thought, and the striating of mental space it effects, aspires to universality … the nomad thought…does not ground itself in an all-encompassing totality but is on the contrary

deployed in a horizonless milieu that is a smooth space, steppe, desert, or sea."[89]

As to the notion of 'dwelling' in nomad thought, we might say that, "is tied not to a territory but rather to an itinerary."[90] Such a statement (which happens to be conformable with one of W. H. Auden's characteristics of a Romantic attitude to the sea, discussed in chapter five) however, seems to challenge crucial Heideggerian premises concerning dwelling.

In the writings of Kenneth White, the above two disparate notions of 'dwelling' converge. Identically with Heidegger, this 'term' features prominently in White's writing, but the context in which it appears is worth further examination. It should be mentioned at this point that White's use of the term 'dwelling' is rather loose and appears to be interchangeable with such expressions as 'presence / residence in the world / earth'.

While Heidegger's initial etymological interpretation of dwelling as 'remaining, staying in a place' (see p. 25) puts emphasis on the moment of rest, White's notion expands on the implicit aspect of movement in it – "as the idea of 'dwelling for a moment' conveys; a repose, perhaps a concentration of energies, breaking an ongoing journey." Thus the word 'dwelling' combines in his understanding the counterpoint of 'moving' and 'staying', of *errance and residence*. His concept of poetic dwelling, a governing principle of the idea of *geopoetics*, borrows eclectically from different philosophical traditions of East and West, but principally attempts to reconcile the two approaches represented by later Heidegger on the one hand and by the nomadology of Deleuze and Guattari on the other.

> For Deleuze and Guattari ... this [residence] is not a question: concerned with flight from constrictions, stifling enclosures, and with a line of flight anxious only to flee farther and farther, beyond all emplacement, into a dimensionless abstract, they are like men who leave a hotel to hop into a jet. Heidegger is the opposite. He is much concerned with residence, dwelling, with quiet paths of thought around a well-felt place. Think of that house of his in the Black Forest. [91]

Trying to combine the disparate notions of nomadic existence and residence he suggests: "Might it be possible to conceive of a 'great residence' that would reconcile movements and things, removing and remaining, stravaiging (Scots word for 'roaming', 'wandering aimlessly') and staying?"[92]

TED HUGHES

II. The Order of Heaven and Earth in *The Remains of Elmet*

Landscape it was, what entrusted me to speak for it,
and landscape it is, what now rises from me,
the same landscape from which I have arisen
Shi Tao[93]

Smooth space and striated space – nomad space and sedentary space... the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space
Gilles Delleuze, Felix Guattari [94]

Labelled as a "laureate of nature", as an "anti-pastoralist" or as a "shepherd of being", Ted Hughes was one of the foremost poets of landscape in all its complexity, both as a natural space and as an existential space. Landscape as a space between heaven and earth features in the poems of his collection *The Remains of Elmet* as a field of mythical encounter of the sacred and the profane, as well as an area of perpetual 'combat' between elementary forces of nature and human 'civilizing' efforts, while his treatment of the landscape theme is grounded in recognition and respect for the forces and energies inherently present in it. His landscape is a living and active force, a basis which bears as

well as counteracts humans. In a process of mutual concurrence it is being transformed by people and at the same time permeates their everyday life and thus becomes a dimension of human existence as well as a measure of appurtenance and alienation of man and nature. While it represents a specific region with its own history, it can also be read as a metaphor of a mythical universe. Hughes unfolds the multiple network of relations among individual components of his landscape and reunites them again in a complex and versatile whole subordinated to the "order of heaven and earth" as we find it in Taoist scriptures; the spirit of Taoism permeates the whole collection and its trace will be followed throughout this chapter.

Among the body of his work, the *Elmet* poems (and *River*) are perhaps most influenced by Hughes's extensive readings in Oriental writings. Taoism in particular (in comparison with other, more fastidious or aloof Eastern creeds) offers a 'down to earth' approach, which complements well the immediacy of his treatment of an intimately known region and his awareness of nature as, in Leonard Scigaj's words, our "ecological second skin".[95] The order of Dao represents a natural order as opposed to an imposed, man-made order. Its workings are manifest and can be apprehended but its origin remains elusive. As phrased in the first chapter of Laozi's *Dao de jing*:

> Tao can be talked about, but not the Eternal Tao.
> Names can be named, but not the Eternal Name.
> As the origin of heaven-and-earth, it is nameless:
> As "the Mother" of all things, it is nameable.[96]

The Chinese character for *dao* means primarily a "way", figuratively also a "method, meaning or principle", its other meaning may be translated into English as "to say, to speak or to name". In the first line above, the word is used in both senses.[97] It echoes the notion that Dao – order of the Universe, i.e. something which is itself "unknowable, unclassifiable and not transferable to a simple code or formula, cannot be 'expressed' as something unambiguous, easy to classify and understand"[98]. As a result, the 'order' of Dao may be understood as "a movement on numberless ways, back and forth, incessantly."[99] As such, as an everlasting dynamic principle, it can be traced behind the imagery of Hughes's *Elmet.*

The West Yorkshire moors in *The Remains of Elmet* are portrayed as a site, where one can listen to "dark voices of the earth", where the dialogue of elementary natural forces and formations takes place. Stone and water, wind and clouds, solitary trees and dilapidated chimneys of abandoned mills feature among the actors of Hughes's minimalist dramas, the same as people, who "are not detached enough from the stone, as if they were only half-born from the earth, and the graves are too near the surface". ("The rock")

Continuous oscillation between heaven and earth, which can be traced in most of the poems, recalls the mythical attributes ascribed to these two basic elements of landscape configuration. The myth of the Earth as a Mother, a living and life-giving force is complemented with the *cosmic* and transcendental dimension of heaven. These archetypal principles are confronted within a particular, directly experienced locality of the West Yorkshire

moors, which retains the ambiguity of a mixed, heterogeneous space of shifting borders between civilization and wilderness.

The language of this collection, which originated as poetic commentaries to a series of black and white photographs of Fay Godwin, often retains the immediacy and focus of the visual record. In "Stanbury Moor" ("These grasses of light"), fragmentary statements depicting individual elements of the scene – "these grasses of light"..."these stones of darkness"..."this water of light and darkness"..."and this wind" – acknowledge the self-sufficiency and detachment of nature towards human affairs – they "think they are alone in the world"..."have a world to themselves"... it "hardly savours creation"..."has enough just to exist". And yet, they represent what is indispensable for us, and not only for our physical survival.

The 'things' named constitute an elementary moor scenery. (And they may also be understood as representing literally the four natural and/or alchemical elements: fire / sun – its energy transformed in the cycle of photosynthesis into grass, water, earth and air.) In a minimalist sketch, Hughes grasps the essence of the complex phenomenon of landscape, showing in the play of darkness and light its materiality and spatiality, temporality and dynamism. Grass growing and fading in the cycle of seasons, stone with its hardness and duration verging of eternity and water, the ur-element, are complemented by wind freely flowing in the space between heaven and earth. The landscape of "Stanbury Moor", while seemingly composed of individual limited objects, implies a diversity of configurations and sets of relations.

Aesthetically, the scene he sketches well accommodates the principles of dynamism stated in an apposite description of landscape by the 17th Century Zen Buddhist monk and painter, Shi Tao:

> Heaven is measured by height and light, earth is measured by quantity and depth. Heaven unites landscape by wind and clouds, earth spirits landscape by water and rock. Without all that, what creates the measure of heaven and earth, the infinite versatility of landscape would not exist...
>
> ...And all that is subject to the measure of heaven and earth, since heaven has its measure which changes the spirit of landscape, and earth has its measure which spirits the breath and pulse of landscape. [100]

But Hughes's insight goes deeper than to the level of aesthetic appreciation, "landscape has always been the material reality in which he has rooted his metaphysical adventure"[101]. Isolated as they may seem, his elements

> Are not
> A poor family huddled at a poor gleam
> Or words in any phrase
> Or wolf-beings in a hungry waiting
> Or neighbours in a constellation".
> They are
> The armour of bric-à-brac
> To which your soul's caddis
> Clings with all its courage.

While the simplicity of language, stripped of all embellishment – 'to the shamanic bone' – corresponds to the roughness of the scene depicted, a lack of punctuation suggests infinity and continuation of an empty space, in which all "things" find their origin. A Taoist view 'locates' such an origin in the space between heaven and earth:

> Between Heaven and Earth
> There seems to be a Bellows:
> It is empty, and yet it is inexhaustible;
> The more it works, the more comes out of it
> No amount of word can fathom it
> Better look for it within you.[102]

From a Western viewpoint, the poem's conclusion echoes Willy Helpach's thesis, which considers landscape to be an 'origin' from which the 'existential contents' of our being stem.[103] The "soul's caddis" also perhaps clings to the wild and uncultivated because

> the charm of movement in an uncultivated landscape may inhere in the fact that it resembles the structure of lower layers of our own nature; that it is an external analogy of something basic, but hard to control within ourselves.[104]

In terms of the *sacred,* rock, vegetation and water are, according to Eliade, primordial natural 'things', which fill places with meaning and make them sacred. Even the most primitive of 'sacred places', that we know, form a microcosm, a landscape made of stone, water and plants. Such places, however, are not

chosen by man, they are only discovered in a sort of an epiphany.[105] Hughes apparently finds a sacred dimension in the moor landscape; while his view retains the freshness of first realizations of the religious significance of the earth in being 'indistinct', it does not "localize sacredness in the earth as such, but jumbles together as a whole all the hierophanies in nature – earth, stones, trees, water, shadows, everything."[106] Moreover, given the universality and anonymity of the elements listed, it seems to apply to the whole territory rather than any individual *locus.* The space of the moors resembles in this way a smooth, nomadic space, where, as Deleuze puts it, "the absolute does not appear at a particular place but becomes a non-limited locality".[107]

With respect to Hughes's profound interest in shamanism, the whole *Elmet* sequence then appears as a specific religious or spiritual tribute to the region of his childhood. Like the tribal shaman, the poet journeys among the elements of nature and sings for the sake of healing the wounds inflicted on the 'body and soul' of the region by the society and history, be it war, industry or religion.

Emptiness or nothingness is a recurrent image in *Elmet* poems and "Widdop" is perhaps the most disturbing among them. Ambiguous and seemingly nihilist, the poem appears in a different light when linked to the Eastern concept of nothingness as a non-differentiated allness of being. Paradoxically, the spirit of negativity, which is undoubtedly present in its imagery, is associated with 'something' being added. This may partly be explained if we realize that the "frightened lake" is a man-made hydraulic structure, the Widdop Reservoir and thus something

which disrupts the original 'harmony' of the place, of the 'emptiness' of moor landscape.

Where there was nothing
Somebody put a frightened lake

Where there was nothing
Stony shoulders
Broadened to support it.

A wind from between the stars
Swam down to sniff at the trembling.
Trees, holding hands, eyes closed,
Acted at world.

Some heath-grass crept close, in fear.

Hesitant acceptance of 'the intruder', however, is hinted as the earth supports the lake, vegetation surrounds it and wind moves the watery sheet. What restores unity is nothingness itself again. The agitated tone of the initial end-stopped stanzas gives way to an unpunctuated flow of the conclusion.

Nothing else
Except when a gull blows through

A rip in the fabric

Out of nothingness into nothingness

In a fleeting moment, a gull appears – a parable which suggests the passing of all created being from nothing back into nothing.

With a shift of perspective to a different time-scale, the presence of the lake may be as ephemeral as the appearance of the gull in the sky.

The landscape of Ted Hughes, a landscape of heaths and moors is largely formed by *smooth* space similar to Kenneth White's coastal territory, but interspersed and thus limited by the *striated* space of hamlets and mills. What we encounter in his poetry is thus a kind of a mixed space in which the latter is constantly being attacked and invaded by the former. It is a borderline territory again where the realm of human activities, coded space of civilization, charged with the *logos* of history encounters the exteriority of elements and other natural phenomena, but without the possibility of communication between the two. The moors are a place of contest, a place where constant deterritorialization and reterritorialization takes place.

Human imprints in the landscape are generally perceived as somewhat inappropriate. Confronted with the elements, their inherently impermanent nature stands out.

The romantic *topos* of ruins present in Hughes's *Elmet* poems is bereft of the pathos and nostalgia for the past and amounts to an unsentimental acknowledgement of the transient nature of human activities face to face with the elemental energies of nature.

Industry as well as institutionalized religion participated in turning the chaotic wilderness of Calder Valley into a place of temporary order, disassociating the former bonds and almost organic symbiosis of human and natural elements of the place.

The dark "earth dimension" of this collection is confronted not only with the Hermetic symbolism of light[108], but also finds a

counterpart in the sound imagery which permeates the *Elmet* poems.

The 'story' of "Heptonstall Old Church" features one kind of sonority. A specific version – metaphor of the deterritorialization – reterritorialization process can be recognized in it. It works with the symbolism of a bird as a divine messenger which is embedded both in the Celtic and Biblical traditions. The sound imagery is used symbolically here, but with a similar, territorial effect.

As "a great bird landed", the centre of an organized space was marked. It is symptomatic that the birth of order out of chaotic wilderness is accompanied by a song. Deleuze, referring to a frightened child singing in the dark, asserts in "1837: Of the Refrain" chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus*:

> The song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable, centre in the heart of chaos…it jumps from chaos to the beginnings of order in chaos and is in danger of breaking apart at any moment. There is always sonority in Adriane's thread. Or the song of Orpheus.[109]

Thus:

> Its song drew men out of rock,
> Living men out of bog and heather.
>
> Its song put a light in the valleys
> And harness on the long moors.

The above lines suggest a kind of a sonorous "wall", emerging through the bird song, and forming thus "a circle around that uncertain and fragile center." "The forces of chaos are kept outside as much as possible, and the interior space protects the germinal forces of a task to fulfill or a deed to do."[110]

"The bird sings to mark its territory".[111] The bird of Hughes' poem and the light spread by its singing can be understood as a messenger and a message of Divine Light – Order respectively. The territory marked by its song delimits the ordered space of human community.

The connection between the bird song, a melodious code of order and light (Divine Light as an embodiment of order – logos) is further emphasized in the next stanza.

> Its song brought a crystal from space
> And set it in men's heads.

The pattern of repetition employed in the above three stanzas forms itself a kind of a refrain, which seems to serve the same purpose – "a delimitation of a structured space".

The image of order, however, is only temporal. The regularity of the verse is broken with a single line:

> Then the bird died.

The magic-divine spell of the illuminating song disappears and the protective walls of sound are gone with it. The bare structure (skeleton of the bird – ruins of the church), bereft of the melodious refrain, is no longer comprehensible.

Its giant bones
Blackened and became a mystery.

The crystal in men's heads
Blackened and fell to pieces

The "uncertain and fragile center", losing the source of light and order can no longer hold and yields to the forces of a returning chaos.

The valleys went out.
The moorland broke loose.

A cycle of eternal returns "out of nothingness into nothingness" – a closing line of another *Elmet* sequence poem "Widdop" - has come round. The "musical formula" of a particular social structure (based on religion) merged back into the territorial refrain of the land.

"Forces of chaos, terrestrial forces, cosmic forces: all of these confront each other and converge in the territorial refrain."[112] The bleak landscape of the West Yorkshire moors in the sequence of *Elmet* poems is pervaded with polyphony of sonorous refrains of different kinds. The essential one is symptomatically introduced in the opening poem of the sequence, "AbelCross, Crimsworth Dene" ("Where the Mothers"), which opens with a scene, one of many in the sequence, reminding of the lines from Laozi: "Heaven-and-Earth is not sentimental; / It treats all things as straw-dogs".[113] Hughes's moor landscape – a space between heaven and earth *par excellence* - stands out in a similar, unsentimental way:

Where the Mothers
Gallop their souls
Where the *howlings of heaven*
Pour down on to earth...
Looking for bodies
Of birds, animals, people
(my italics)

In the midst of the forces of chaos, however, "A happiness starts up, secret and wild", for which Hughes uses another sonorous, albeit seemingly paradoxical, simile, "Like a lark-song just out of hearing / Hidden in the wind". Once again, the image of song, expressing happiness, creates that Deleuzian "calming and stabilizing center in the heart of chaos", leading towards the conciliatory final lines of the poem, where the constant interplay of cosmic and terrestrial forces is re-enacted:

A silent evil joy
Like a star-broken stone
Who knows nothing more can happen to it
In its cradle-grave

In "Hill-Stone was Content" the dichotomy of sonorous "refrains" is epitomized in the contrast of the forgotten "earth-song" of a stone, content "to be cut, to be carted ..... conscripted / Into mills" and the "drum-song of the looms", a monotonous, mechanical manifestation in sound of the local textile industry, which "conscripts" both, stone and "mankind" to its realm. And yet, the final 'say' in the poem belongs to an element again, to "the guerrilla patience / Of the soft hill-water", which outlasts the "long, darkening, dwindling stand" of "four-cornered, stony"

people working in the mills and the mills themselves. Hughes endows the soft - yin, feminine and receptive (although enduring) Taoist element of water with an unusual attribute of "guerilla patience" which suggests an activation of its latent strength referred to in Laozi:

> Nothing in the world is softer and
> weaker than water;
> But, for attacking the hard and strong,
> there is nothing like it!
> That the weak overcomes the strong,
> and the soft overcomes the hard,
> This is something known by all,
> but practised by none.[114]

The element of water, embodied in the Calder river as a geographical as well as a symbolic backbone of Elmet landscape resonates well with Taoist principles. With all its passivity and submissiveness, it mediates reconciliation and comes perhaps closest to the mystery of existence, since:

> The highest form of goodness is like water.
> Water knows how to benefit all things
> without striving with them.
> It stays in places loathed by all men.
> Therefore, it comes near the Tao.[115]

The same Taoist spirit of acceptance characterizes Hughes' poem "Tree", personifying "a priest from a different land", not dissimilar to Wesley's Methodist preachers with his rhetoric of denouncement, in which he

> fulminated / Against heather, black stones, blown water. / Excommunicated the clouds / Damned the wind / Cast the bog pools into outer darkness / Smote the horizons / With the jawbone of emptiness / Till he ran out of breath -

The above lines may be also interpreted in terms of Deleuze's encounter between the smooth and the striated spaces, as an effort aimed at the striation of the smooth, elemental space of the moors. The poem's conclusion, however, is again symptomatically Taoist. Only after abandoning his verbal battle, "when only his eye-water protected him / He saw / Heaven and Earth Moving" and in resigning to be dumb "Lets what happens to him simply happen." It is the supreme wisdom of a Taoist sage, who "manages his affairs without ado, / And spreads his teachings without talking. / He denies nothing to the teeming things."[116] Another section of *Dao de jing* comments on the same as follows:

> Only simple and quiet word will ripen of themselves,
> For a whirlwind does not last a whole morning,
> Nor does a sudden shower last a whole day.
> Who is their author? Heaven-and-Earth!
> Even Heaven-and-Earth cannot make
> such violent things last long;
> How much truer is it of the rash endeavours of man?[117]

It is not in the nature of Taoism trying to form or reform, to inflict one's notion of truth or goodness on anybody. The principle of *wu-wei*, roughly translated as non-action, non-

striving, non-interference with the flow of events, suggests openness and receptivity, rather than just passivity and inertia. The well known "go with the flow" maxim, often misinterpreted in sociological contexts as "follow the crowd" conformity principle, is found here in its proper, nature-related, or what we would nowadays call ecological, context.

The spirit of acceptance also stems partly from an adoption of perspective to a time-scale different from that of a man or society.

> It is not the short scale of a lifetime where the deaths of the chapels and mills and of individuals might create resentment and pessimism; nor the rather longer scale on which the many decades of dehumanisation and sacrifice of the working people would suggest an equally black view; nor, at the farthest extreme, is it the geological scale of millions of years on which seas swell and shrink and mountains rise and fall. Hughes's scale lies between the social historian's and the geologist's, so that man's tiny but real efforts come and go as interludes in the dominance of a stable nature...an original unity of man and nature is followed by a separation and fall into the phase of the Industrial Revolution; the Heideggerian Turn, back towards nature, is now beginning.[118]

The very choice of title, referring to "the last independent Celtic kingdom in England"[119], an ancient name of Hughes' native region, suggests this awareness of a longer and relatively more stable time-scale. Fernand Braudel's concept of three temporal

layers, unfolding simultaneously but at a different pace, seems to offer a convenient approach to the *chronotope* of Elmet.

The shortest and fastest within the triad, 'individual time', dealing with *events* within the horizon of years, is projected mainly to the level of personal history of Hughes' family recorded in the poems. The focus of the school of *Annales* on the 'small histories' of the *quotidien* then, finds a natural counterpart in the poet's 'verbal archeology' as we find it e.g. in "Familiar", dedicated to his deceased grandfather, who was "a seed / Of the Great Hunger, fallen among stones. / Embryo, reabsorbed in the acid-sodden / Grit of the Calder crevasse."

> Eighty-four years dead, younger than I am,
> Your hair still full red, you sip your medicine.
> Your friends are the Wesleyan vicar and the Catholic priest,
> One brings you flowers, one whisky. A lifted glass –

In a prefatory poem to *The Remains of Elmet* in a Faber and Faber joint edition of *Three Books (Remains of Elmet, Cave Birds, River)* such an "archeology of the mouth" introduces the recurrent theme of Mother(s). Intensely personal in theme, the poem bears the title "The Dark River" and opens with the lines:

> Six years into her posthumous life
> My uncle raises my mother's' face. He says
> Yes, he would love a cup of tea.
> Her memory still intact, still good
> Under his baldness.
> Her hands a little plumper, trembling more
> Chatter his cup in its saucer.

Three stanzas on, however, the perspective broadens to encompass another manifestation of the feminine, the earth itself, or rather more specifically, the womb-like valley of Calder and a longer time-span.

> And the smoky valley never closes,
> The womb that bore him, chimney behind chimney,
> Horizons herded – behind encircling horizons,
> The happy hell, the arguing, immortal dead,
> The hymns rising past farms.

A personal theme thus joins that of appurtenance to the region, suggesting the permeability of landscape and individual lives, faces seen through the prism of landscape and vice versa. Anthropomorphisation and theriomorphisation of the landscape is a common device of Hughes throughout the *Remains of Elmet* and people and human settlements in it are in return often endowed with landscape features.

In "Heptonstall Cemetery", one of the concluding poems (and in the *Three Books* edition the concluding poem) of the collection, the spiritual significance of West Yorkshire *genius loci* surfaces again in connection with a deeply personal theme. The place is the burial ground of the Hughes family, but the wind, experienced as a "giant beating wing" of the hill-top, initiates the image of those buried there, Hughes's mother Edith, uncles Thomas and Walter, and first wife, Silvia Plath, as "living feathers". "These feathers are dead but part of a living organism as are real feathers".[120] Life and death are symbolically united in the landscape. Personal history, as local and social histories in

other poems, is confronted here with the elemental and eventually merges and dissolves in it. The resistance and struggle of the living yield to the liberating flow of the departed souls in the wind, which is so much part of the moor landscape.

> You claw your way
> Over a giant beating wing.
> And Thomas and Walter and Edith
> Are living feathers
> Esther and Sylvia
> Are living feathers
> Where all the horizons lift wings
> A family of dark swans
> And go beating low through storm-silver
> Toward the Atlantic.

Similarly, the themes of growth, ageing, withering, and possible regeneration, enacted in individual lives, are paralleled in the histories of human settlements and other "constructs", which recalls Braudel's middle layer, the 'social time'. It spans decades and can be applied to the period of building mills and chapels, Calder valley industrial growth and decline, or the rise and fall of Wesley's Methodism. Hughes comments on this layer of Elmet history in his notes to *ROE* (in Faber and Faber edition from 1994):

> The men who built the chapels were the same who were building the mills. They perfected the art of perching their towering, massive stone, prison-like structures on drop-offs where now you would only just

> graze sheep. When the local regimes (and combined operation) of Industry and Religion started to collapse in the 1930s, this architecture emerged into spectacular desolation – a grim sort of beauty. Ruin followed swiftly, as the mills began to close, the chapels to empty, and the high farms under the moor-edge, along the spring line, were one by one abandoned.

The most distinctly featured in the collection, however, is Braudel's 'geographical time', his *longue durée,* the longest and slowest of the three. It is

> a history of man in his intimate relationship to the earth which bears and feeds him; it is a dialogue which never stops repeating itself, which repeats itself in order to persist, which may and does change superficially, but which goes on, tenaciously, as though it were somehow beyond time's reach and ravages.[121]

In "First Mills", a bleak vision of the 20th century fate of the Calder valley, "Cradle of the Industrial Revolution", images of a declined industry are mixed with those of World War I. A further shift of time perspective, however, mediates a final reconciliation in accordance with the spirit of the collection. After "the bottomless wound of the railway station /… bled this valley to death" and "… the hills were requisitioned / for gravemounds", after "the towns and the villages were sacked" and "everything fell wetly to bits / In the memory" under "a sky like an empty helmet / with a hole in it" there is still a seed of hope in the final two lines:

And now – two minutes silence
In the childhood of earth.

After a period of mourning, life will continue. There is still the earth and the sky, who will witness new ephemeral dramas acted by the individuals and society of the region. Norberg-Schulz likens social and economic conditions to a frame of a picture. They provide or delimit a certain 'space' in which life may take place, but they do not determine its existential meanings. Existential dimension or 'truth' is revealed in history, but its meanings transcend any given historical situation. On the other hand, history only becomes meaningful as an instantiation of existential dimension. This instantiation is related to 'how things are', which concerns also environment.[122] Hughes's *Elmet* may be read as 'a presencing' of this deeper, existential dimension and a testimony of an appurtenance to place, a bond which defines one's identity.

The landscape of *Elmet* poems is a manifold palimpsest endowed with plurality of meanings and relations. It spans individual human life, bird and animal life, atmospheric changes, industrial and social development. All of them, however, eventually converge in the elemental; "the dominant force of the collection is of failed attempts to control nature".[123]

KENNETH WHITE

III. Landscape and Identity 1 : On Scottish Ground

Landscape and I get on together well
Though I am the talkative one, still he can tell
His symptoms of being to me, the way a shell
Murmurs of oceans
Norman MacCaig[124]

The verse of our time is Ithacan in its orientation
Robert Crawford[125]

I'm what you might call a transcendental Scot
K. W.[126]

In 1989, in an interview with David Kinloch for the *Verse* magazine, Kenneth White, a poet who was born and brought up on the west coast of Scotland, travelled all over the world and finally settled on the coast of Brittany, was asked a tricky question: "Did you really have to leave Scotland after all?" It was the year of Kenneth White's come-back to the British – Scottish literary scene after two decades of – to use the words of James Joyce's famous statement from *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* – 'silence, exile and cunning', the year when a book of his collected longer poems *The Bird Path* was published by the Edinburgh based Mainstream Publishing Company. The question was getting at the persistence of certain themes and images in his writing, namely those of the sea and

the coast; White, however, sensed the moral-political connotation implicit in it, the parochial idea that a Scottish writer who leaves Scotland is some kind of renegade – a slightly reproachful allusion to the brain drain South, to that notorious remark of Samuel Johnson that "the noblest prospect that a Scotsman ever sees is the high road that leads him to London". In response, he offered the following explanation:

> It was to get away from constricting ideology and very curtailed outlook of this type, away from such historically dictated, historically dated situations that I felt the need to leave the Scottish context at one point. Not for England – that never occurred to me. But for France ... and moving out from there. A question of scope and breathing space.[127]

According to Chris Harvie, a Scottish historian, there are two types of Scots, representing a social form of the notoriously discussed Scotland's 'split personality'. The 'red' Scots (no political orientation implied here) are those who leave the country in search of new opportunities, the 'black' Scots are those who stay to nourish the home culture.[128]

Kenneth White would appear to fit well among many of the 20th century examples of the former variety. Even his reasons for leaving the country about forty years ago seem to fit the 'red' Scots pattern summed up by David McCrone as "only if you have lived in the 'wider' culture – the 'mature, all-round thought-world'...are you immune for the insidious psychological effects of Scottish culture."[129]

Rather like Joyce, however, who kept recalling and rewriting successive versions of Dublin during his self-exile, White in his writing never quite left Scotland. His poetry abounds in images of the Scottish landscape and its Atlantic coast, a geographical territory which, as I will try to show, became a perfect epitome of his concept of the 'white world'.

Scotland's ancient name Alba, which he revived for this poetic territory, seems to offer him both limitation and liberation. On the one hand, linked etymologically to the perception of whiteness (lat. *albus*) and perhaps also 'heights' (considering a possible non-Indo-European root of the word)[130] in the landscape it immediately implies a geographical focus of his poetry. On the other hand, though linked to Scottish history, it is, in his understanding, "an arch-word, an arch-name", and thus it transcends the much disputed nation-based notion of Scotland. As such, it offered White 'a way out of so much fankled nationalism'. "I began to think in terms of Alban reconnaissance rather than 'Scottish renaissance'."[131] His concept of Alba, the "white land" is thus 'less' than the common notion of Scotland, a notion which involves social, political and historical dimensions, and at the same time 'more' than Scotland, exactly because these social, political and historical boundaries are transcended.

White's ever proclaimed intention of "getting out of history and into geography" is not unique in the context of Scottish literature and seems to be a re-formulation of ideas already present in the writings of many of his older compatriots . In his treatment of landscape he consciously draws on the tradition running through the novels of Neil Gunn and Lewis Grassic

Gibbon or the later poetry of Hugh MacDiarmid. For all of them, landscape (or geography) was the superior counterpart to the often unsatisfactory course of history or even a substitute for an apparent lack of history in the Scottish environment. This orientation, however, should not be seen as a mere escapism but rather as an indication of the less anthropocentric and more ecologically aware ways of thinking which were to come.

If we look at MacDiarmid's "On a Raised Beach", there is a sense of recognition that "the error in occidental culture lies in its loss of a 'sense of the world'" alongside the feeling of a desire for "a reconciliation with the elemental matter of the universe".[132] The idea as well as the vocabulary of its section quoted below may be taken as a starting point of White's development of these issues.

> What happens to us
> Is irrelevant to the world's geology
> But what happens to the world's geology
> Is not irrelevant to us
> We must reconcile ourselves to the stones,
> Not the stones to us
> Here a man must shed the encumbrances that muffle
> Contact with elemental things

The MacDiarmid to whom White pays homage in his writing is not the nationalist reviving Lallans as a cultural weapon against the English domination of Scotland, but the poet of rock, stone and sea who also valued the far-Eastern traditions as a resource of Western culture and sensed the

affinity between Celtic art and the East which White himself elaborates on. The MacDiarmid who in his *In Memoriam James Joyce* wrote:

> For unlike you, Joyce, I am more concerned
> With the East than the West and the poetry I seek
> Must be the work of one who has always known
> That the Tarim Valley is of more importance
> Than Jordan or the Rhine in world history

The above passage is one indicator of the values and tendencies the two poets share. In the late seventies, quoting this passage of *In Memoriam*, White concluded: "he is talking about the work that has absorbed me for the last twenty years."[133] The significance of the Tarim valley for both poets is obvious – it was the site of some of the earliest human habitations in China (hence its claim to be called one of the cradles of civilization) and it is a territory once crossed by the ancient Silk Road (hence - literally the space of the "meeting of the East and the West"). Incidentally, White's acknowledgement of the significance of this passage in the context of his work is a potent argument against the ranking of his writing as a-historical, ascribing him "a facile distinction between geography and history".[134]

A different link between White and MacDiarmid concerns the nature and style of their poetry, the 'connective logic' and dynamics of their writing. The 'common procedure' which Alan Riach ascribes to all MacDiarmid's later work may equally well

apply to the corpus of Kenneth White's writing. It is the way in which

> analogies and metaphors are multiplied, not to make hierarchical comparisons nor to diminish the particularity of any single thing or event, but to assert or announce correspondences and relations which, taken altogether, affirm the indivisible totality of existence, and provide a dynamic *Weltanschauung.*[135]

While the validity of the notion of 'indivisible totality' in the context of contemporary theory (which White's writing cannot and does not ignore) might be successfully disputed, the multiplicity of cross-references, the deliberate denial of hierarchical ranking, the world perceived as innumerable relations and minute attention paid to tiny particulars, all this is symptomatic for the 'dynamics' in White's views and poetry.

It is interesting to observe that the absence of hierarchical relations which Riach finds in MacDiarmid's later poetry (and which is as evident in most of White's verse) is one of the symptoms of the 'nomad thought' as opposed by the 'State philosophy' or representational thinking. The latter, as described by Deleuze, "reposes on a double identity: of the thinking subject, and of the concepts it creates and to which it lends its own presumed attributes of sameness and constancy".[136] The non-hierarchical connection between individual images and metaphors which MacDiarmid and White tend to use could be called 'rhizomatic'. "In contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of

communication and preestablished paths, the rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical ... system."[137] The result of such a 'rhizomatic' logic – traceable in the writings of both poets – is, that

> themes, ideas, facts, names, languages, cultures, sources and quotations are let loose from any imperial centrality and occur in a free, but not directionless movement.[138]

Thus it is perfectly in accordance with this kind of 'connective logic' that White writes in "Crossing Lochaber":

> The white hills
> have perfect reflection
>
> I came through Lochaber
> in the dead of winter
>
> to meet Matsuo Basho
> on the Isle of Dogs

His poetry is allusive which, admittedly, may cause difficulties to an 'uninitiated' reader. It takes, however, just a bit of 'practice' to recognize the recurrent images in White's writing which stem from his perception of landscape and which are employed as a means of the 'rhizomatic' connections. Moreover, selected White's poems are provided with footnotes, at times just adding further context concerning the origin of the poems, at times explanatory, reminiscent of Eliot's *Waste Land.*

Such allusive writing is, indeed, reminiscent of Surrealism with its rejection of logical reason, violated syntax and automatism of associations. However, the privileged place of 'inner worlds' in surrealist poetry is contrasted by the 'outdoor' orientation of White's. In place of the emphasis on the "unhampered operation of the 'deep mind', [regarded] as the only source of valid knowledge and art"[139] by the surrealists, White stresses poetry as "the authentic communication between man and earth". It might be said that "travel is to [White's] geopoetics what the dream was to Surrealism."[140]

It is worth noting that the above lines appear simultaneously as a self-contained poem under the mentioned title (in *Handbook for the Diamond Country*) and as a component part of a longer poem "The Gannet Philosophy" (in *The Bird Path*)[141]. The fact that such a practice is not at all sporadic in the corpus of White's writing may serve as yet another symptom of its 'rhizomatic' character. The corpus of White's writing may be read as a 'map' (topographical metaphors are a commonplace in his texts) which in the understanding of Deleuze and Guattari is different from tracing. A map which connects any point to any other point, rendering all potential boundaries fluid and pervious.

> The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable and reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked ... It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as meditation.

> Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entry ways ... A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back 'to the same'.[142]

This feature also contributes to the 'continuous work in progress' character of his writing reminiscent e.g. of Pound's *Cantos* or Gary Snyder's *Mountains and Rivers Without End.*

His verse, same as MacDiarmid's, "becomes the movement through a kaleidoscope of lists, examples and instances", an extended 'metaphor' in its original etymological meaning of a 'transport of language'.[143] The passage Riach quotes as an illustration of such qualities in MacDiarmid invites multiple Whitean resonance.

As subtle and complete and tight
As the integration of the thousands of brush strokes
In a Cézane canvas ...
Alive as a bout of all-in-wrestling,
With countless illustrations like my photograph of
Morning Dove
Taken at a speed of 1/75,000 of a second
A poetry that speaks of 'trees
From the cedar tree that is in Lebanon
Even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall,'
And speaks also 'of beasts, and of fowl,
And of creeping things, and of fishes' ...

The Kind of Poetry I Want

First of all, what the two poets share is a persistent preoccupation with the question of poetry; the kind of poetry that MacDiarmid wants is not at all dissimilar from the kind of poetry White advocates and examples of which are scattered throughout this study. Among them, his long poem "Walking the Coast" deserves a special place. White (always relishing in puns, neologisms and portmaneau words) might himself call it 'a chaotico-poetic manifesto', while others have described it as a poem which deals with "the conception, birth and identity of poetry".[144]

Allusions to artists and eccentrics, creative feats and failures, maxims and metaphors of art abound in the poem, interspaced with images spanning the geological and biological with the mythological via accidental autobiographical accounts, but always getting back to 'the kind of poetry he wants' phrased e.g. in section 31 as follows:

and when the Japanese literatus
speaks of the series of *waka* poems
(sometimes as many as 100 in a sequence)
written in the Kamakura period
(13th and 14th centuries)
saying 'the result
was often a kind of kaleidoscopic beauty
with infinite variety
revealed to the reader
in a slowly evolving movement'
I recognize my aim

MacDiarmid himself appears in the poem as an erratic figure "composing the caledonian wake / circumveiloped in obscuritads / and / ortan like an ox in an ootdyke" – for White is not unaware of the ambiguities and idiosyncrasies of the personality and work of this "spiritual materialist" and "transcendental Marxist" (as MacDiarmid called himself in a pamphlet *Metaphysics and Poetry*)[145].

> I tend to see MacDiarmid the way Nietzsche saw Carlyle: desperately trying ... to introduce some scope and height of thought into the all-pervading *'echt-britische Beschränkheit'* (D. H. Lawrence called it 'pettyfogging narrowness'). The poetic future may not be the multifarious gigantism that MacDiarmid ... poet *at large*, throwing up all his work-notes on the page, represents ... But that gigantism, that whole craggy, contradictory, volcanic landscape must be seen as a necessary stage in the process ...[146]

White's use of the landscape metaphor in the above description of MacDiarmid's work is not incidental. If there is some kind of 'spiritual' kinship between the two, then there is certainly also a 'territorial' one. The suggested affinity between MacDiarmid and White may as well be located 'on Scottish ground', in the very landscape, which brings forth their onto-cosmological meditations. There is another, shorter poem, where both, the spiritual as well as the territorial kinship between White and the poet who wanted 'a poetry that speaks of trees', are explicitly acknowledged.

Scotland in Winter
wind whooming round the white peaks

I have been walking along the river Druie
by the golden pine and the silver birch
thinking of your poetry

now in the Lairig Ghru
at the heart of the ontological landscape
alone with the diamond body
"For Mac Diarmid"

The notion of a shared 'territorial' origin of the two poets implies potential similarities in their use of language – understood as primarily being shaped by the landscape rather than deliberately adjusted for the sake of a national community. The post-Lallans MacDiarmid, indeed, in *In Memoriam James Joyce* associates "a language that can serve our purposes" with

A marvellous lucidity
Flowing like clear water, flying like a bird
Burning like a sunlit landscape

One of White's adopted poetic alter-egos, the exiled Ovid on the coast of the Black Sea, reflecting on his own sensibility transformed by a landscape perceived as radically different than his former Mediterranean milieu, 'reports' as if in response to the above claim:

I take quick notes
like this:
winter morning light
and a black-winged gull
keening over the hut
no more than that
no metaphor-mongering
no myth-malarkey

I think of lines
like lightning flashes
lines that in their flying energy
would make things
touch and radiate in the mind

The above concluding lines of White's "Ovid's Report" match notably MacDiarmid's, both describing their authors' ideals of a poetic language, both drawing on the visual perceptions of landscape phenomena, more precisely on transient or mobile natural phenomena in landscape. While MacDiarmid's metaphors employ the images of gleam and luminance, White's are more dynamic, stressing the energy of language. (Admittedly, neither of them found / finds the process of shaping such a language to be an easy one.)

White's motives for choosing the landscape alternative have been shaped by different and yet related conditions. First, there can clearly be traced the influence of enhanced environmental consciousness – a phenomenon quickly spreading throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

White mentioned this concern at the opening of the International Institute of Geopoetics:

> If, around 1978, I began to talk of 'geopoetics', it was for two reasons. On the one hand, it was becoming more and more obvious that the earth (the biosphere) was in danger and that ways, both deep and efficient, would have to be worked out in order to protect it. On the other hand, I had always been of the persuasion, that the richest poetics came from the contact with the earth, from a plunge into biospheric space, from an attempt to read the lines of the world.

Secondly, his sustained preoccupation with what he calls "global (cosmological, cosmopoetic) space" can be attributed to his renouncement of both the tiresome disputes over Scottish - English relations and the timeless worldwide struggle for power as meaningless in the 'wider – cosmic scope'.

For White, a political solution of the *malaise* of history is no longer acceptable. Unlike Grassic Gibbon's young Ewan in *A Scots Quair*, who tries to find a solution for his desire to control the "hell of history" in a commitment to communism, by "living history oneself, being it, making it", White consciously turns away from the direct political road. "History and politics, as commonly understood...were part of the problem, not the solution..." and thus the 'cultural revolution' he proposed in 1968 Paris was "Taoist, not Maoist!", indicating his lifelong interest in and a chosen source of inspiration in the Eastern culture, philosophy and spirituality.

White thus chooses a paradigm which Cairns Craig calls "a particular escape route for the Scottish imagination, an escape which involves acceptance of the historyless by its transformation into a higher, transcendental form".[147] As Craig further explains,

> the historyless in this context is no longer the primitive [although 'primitive' in Whitean context would be rather positive than derogatory] ... it is a condition in which the historical, with its determined trajectory towards the future, is seen as a deformation; it is a consciousness in which the cyclic is no longer an oppressive repetition but a revelation of a fundamental pattern that releases the individual from the constraints of temporality.[148]

Although the above characteristic appears in the context of *narrative* paradigms in Scottish and British culture, White's poetic vision of a 'nomad' is comparable with it. "The nomad is also the one who leaves the motorway of history ... and who plunges into a landscape where there are occasionally no more paths, tracks, even traces."[149] However, rather than Craig's "revelation of a fundamental pattern", White's nomadism is a discovery of "a play of energies", it means leaving behind "fixed identities and established frames of reference", becoming something "other in a multidimensional polytopian space".[150]

Cairns Craig finds an example of the acceptance and transformation of 'the historyless' in the 'mountain-top' perspective as it appears in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*. "The

mountain-top perspective negates time's insistent directionality, and allows past and present, the actual and the possible, to be seen simultaneously". In Neil Gunn's *Highland River* a similar experience is expressed through Kenn's 'cliff-top knowledge' described as "a rhythm that underlay or interpenetrated all other rhythms , and bore upon it – or was itself – ultimate reality".[151]

Kenneth White adds another crucial milieu, where such an experience of transcended temporality or timelessness can be encountered – is one which could be called "the coastal perspective", the one employed throughout his writing and explicitly present in many of his poems' titles, the one which he values in MacDiarmid's "On a Raised Beach".

> I take 'seaboard' to be particularly significant space. We are close there to the beginnings of life, we cannot but be aware there of primordial rhythms (tidal, meteorological). In that space, too, we have one foot, as it were, in humanity (inhabited, inscribed, coded space), the other, in the non-human cosmos (chaos-cosmos, chaosmos) – and I think it is vitally important to keep that dialogue alive.[152]

White's frequent images of stones, rocks and geological formations seem to be inherited from a long existing tradition picked up by the writers of the Scottish Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s. Language, according to White "is not primarily communication, it says the relationship of the human being to the universe, it expresses *original* experience, it is the *evidence* of original experience".[153] The apparent lack of

historical correlativity found in his poetry can be explained by the perspective adopted throughout his writing. It seems to be determined by the Scottish mountainous landscape, "a landscape which refuses to compromise with human needs or human meanings".

> The particularity of events does not find its universal meaning through discovering its parallelism with or its place within an overarching historical trajectory, but finds it in the context of legend and myth that dissolve the present back into a timescale to which historical time is irrelevant, and of which geological time and geological formations are the only relevant boundaries.[154]

Thus, in his effort to get out of history and with his preference for geography, although sufficiently justified with respect to contemporary critical thinking, White seems to be himself a part of a certain kind of history, a certain tradition of writing.

The home-brewed tradition, however, is in White's rendition further enriched with a variety of influences (oriental and other) easily compatible with the transcendental quality of his native mountainous landscape.

While his disregard of social and political levels of history associated with 'grand narratives' coincides with the changing views of history in modern theory, his eclectic borrowings from other cultures seem to be well conditioned by the current globalization of culture.

Poetry obviously follows different paradigms than traditional prose narrative genres and the importance of space (usually in the form of a particular *loci*) for a poet has been a commonplace. The poet who constructs an identity which allows that poet to identify with a particular territory may be the paradigmatic modern poet in the Anglophone world, as Robert Crawford suggests, but the nature of a poet's identification with a particular territory may take different forms. The phrase he coined in the title of his book *Identifying Poets* seems to capture the changing nature of such identification.

> Not least it allows us to see ways in which poets from cultures too easily regarded as marginal …may be re-viewed as crucial to modern traditions. The phrase 'identifying poet' has about it none of the covert cultural imperialism that too easily attends words like 'regional', 'provincial', or even 'national', all of which can be used in implicit marginalization or relegation, when defined against assumed metropolitan norms.[155]

Kenneth White's way of identification with mountainous and coastal landscapes (Scottish and worldwide) can be much better understood in terms of Crawford's phrase than in terms of its more traditional alternatives. If "celebration of home ground has made itself a, perhaps even the, crucial topic of late twentieth-century verse" (ibid.), then White's poetry can be regarded a specific contribution merging the domestic with the universal and thus escaping associations with the curse word of Scottish literature – parochial.

Two disparate tendencies or strategies may be traced in White's poems, both of which are relevant to the notion of an 'identifying poet'. First, random 'quotations' from different cultures on the backdrop of natural scenery as we find it in his verse suggest a concept of cultural boundaries dynamic, fluid and shifting. Second, the frequent use of local place names on the other hand functions in his poems, as Crawford puts it, as a sort of 'silent dialect', reminding us of the importance of the text's origins and that they are part of what the poem is about. Yet another identification with the 'home territory' then comes with the names of people scattered throughout his verse.

Crawford's book deals with "the way twentieth century poets construct for themselves an identity which allows them to identify with or to be identified with a particular territory". Kenneth White's poetry (and prose) seems perfectly suited for such a perspective, offering a complex notion of poetic identity, which attempts to reconcile nature and culture(s) in a dynamic 'open field' territory. "For identity is dynamic, it alters..."[156] and the alternation is, in White's case, brought about by 'looking in' (which, however, means a meditative insight rather than preoccupation with internal social and political issues) as well as 'looking out' to other cultures and traditions.

> It is the outward-looking, expansive gaze which makes possible the interaction with a 'significant other', a foreign culture in which gifts for the future of one's own culture may be located, and in which an illuminating reflection of one's own identity (or desired identity) may be glimpsed. That foreign culture

> may be geographically or linguistically or temporally 'other', or a combination of these.[157]

It may seem that the above reference to identity has actually more to do with difference or an assimilation of the other. While these elements may part of it, it still does not does not entail a renunciation of one's own culture. Crawford's concept of identity has been inspired by Bachtin's notion of *creative understanding*.

> In order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understands to be *located outside* the object of his or her creative understanding – in time, in space, in culture ...In the realm of culture, outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding ... A meaning only reveals its depths since it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue, which surmounts the closedness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. ... Such a dialogic encounter of two cultures does not result in merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and *open* totality, but they are mutually enriched.[158]

Bachtin's reasoning is instrumental in Crawford's explanations of how Robert Frost's travel to Britain participated in shaping his New England self or why Sorley MacLean's engagements with English-language Modernism and with the North African desert were crucial to his developing a poetic identity which helped him to recreate a mid-twentieth-century Gaelic self. One

might also consider the past of one's own culture as an 'other' culture which the present confronts, questions, and is interrogated by. Last but not least, Bachtin's words may also be applied in placing Kenneth White's writing to the context of the Scottish literary and intellectual scene.

In Gavin Bowd's study, White has been labelled as an 'outsider'; it is tempting to ask a question then: "What does a guy who writes books with titles like *Pilgrim of the Void* have to say to a particular place at a particular time: Scotland now, for example?"[159]

In White's case, both a geographical displacement and a re-reading of one's own past is important in constructing what he calls an 'enlarged identity'. Rephrasing MacDiarmid's famous credo of the Scottish Renaissance, 'Back to Dunbar!', White suggests a more radical shift, 'Back to Finn', indicating the vital link of poetry with Celtic mythology. In his essay "A Shaman Dancing on the Glacier", he writes a paragraph which summarizes in a nutshell his undoubtedly original view of the issue of identity.

> Back to Finn, and via that figure [of a poet, warrior and seer] into that Hyperborean 'white world' from which, as Lévi-Strauss has shown, the Celts derived so much of their myth, and over to the Caucasus where, as Dumézil (Eliade's master) has suggested, Scot meets Scythian (there was a direct connection between Celtica and Iran via Bohemia and the Danube) and we open out on to the whole of the Eurasian steppe. Doing so we will not be losing roots and identity, we will be

> extending them, enlarging them, recovering scope and energies, able to apply them within any specific socio-cultural context, for example, the one now called Scotland.[160]

Idiosyncratic as it may seem, his interpretation echoes the concerns of contemporary theory and evoked critical response. Deleuze and Guattari refer explicitly to this notion in their *Treatise on Nomadology*: "White demonstrates that this strange composite, the marriage of the Celt and the Orient, inspires a properly nomad thought that sweeps up English literature and constitutes American literature."[161]

White's sustained interest in indigenous cultures, shamanism, and Oriental teachings (which will be further discussed) offers yet another, or at least broadens the present scope of the discussion of identity. At this point, I should like to recall one of his numerous definitions of poetry which draws on traditional Sanskrit texts and seems potentially relevant in this context. "Poetry ... implies not only a subtle use of language ... does not mean superior cross-word puzzles but a discipline of the self that renders it open to experience other than the personal. This trans-personal experience means in fact a move from the socio-personal self to the *atmanic* self, which is the *breathing* self."[162] (Hinduism generally distinguishes between *atman*, the individual soul, and *brahma*, the Universal soul or Absolute)

The breathing self needs space – a notion which takes us back to the opening "question of scope and breathing space" of this chapter, which indicates the crucial importance of space in White's poetics. Be it space in which the Scottish landscape

abounds or space in which the 'nomad thought' moves freely or – last but not least – space which is necessary in order to "keep the language open", as White puts it: "With silence incorporated, as it were – like the spaces in Chinese and Japanese painting".[163] The same criteria which White stresses with respect to language, Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?* apply to art in general, referring, coincidentally, to a Far Eastern notion of art:

> ...even the void is sensation ... A canvas may be completely full to the point that even the air no longer gets through, but it is only a work of art if, as the Chinese painter says, it nonetheless saves enough empty space for horses to prance in.[164]

IV. Walking and Writing: White's Poetics of Space

To 'have space',
isn't that a pre-requisite for any kind of decent living?
K. W.[165]

When you think of Kenneth White, you think of movement
Tony McManus[166]

To think is to voyage...
Deleuze - Guattari[167]

Writing and walking, poetry and movement through space are inseparable for Kenneth White. Within the dichotomy of spatiality and temporality, the former is given a significantly greater emphasis in his writing. I tend to use the term 'writing' when referring to the general features of the corpus of White's work which includes prose, poetry and essays. Likened to an arrow, his threefold concept of literary activity corresponds to spatial and dynamic principles which define his poetics and will be further discussed. As White suggests, the three components of his writing are not quite separable.

> The essays, maintaining direction, are the feathers; the prose, ongoing autobiography, or what I like to call 'way-books' ... is the arrow's shaft; and the poem is the arrow-head. And of course the whole arrow is in movement, going somewhere, not just marking time or making remarks about this, that and the next thing.[168]

A further relevant distinction concerning the spatiality of White's writing can be introduced through the opposition of space and place. The former is again a significant one, since spatiality, as opposed to location, allows, to a greater degree, for the perception of motion, and consequently for the perception of a greater heterogeneity encountered in space through motion. Movement becomes his essential strategy for approaching space, a means of getting to know space: "...the spatial...can only be defined by the movement within it, by the way organism figures it out."[169]

Considering the environmental orientation of White's writing, it is worth mentioning that a similar distinction is generally recognised in environmental studies between 'environment' as the space outside the observer regardless of how it is perceived, and 'place', which is reserved for space subjectively located and defined.

> Grounding in place patently does not guarantee ecocentrism, place being by definition perceived or felt space, space humanized, rather than the material world taken on its own terms.[170]

White's emphasis on the spatiality of landscape rather than its individual loci, on the transient atmospheric phenomena and dynamic aspects of landscape rather than on its fixed and static features, accounts for the 'impersonality' of most of his landscape poetry, which largely lacks references to the traditional "poetic persona" and rarely refers to a social context.

The temporality of landscape in his poetry thus seems to go even deeper than to the level of 'geographical time', the 'deepest' level of '*longue durée*' as it was introduced by Fernand Braudel,

a member of the French *Annales* school, which emphasises the idea that "the individual and the event are to be simultaneously surpassed".[171] While Braudel, the historian, speaks about "a history that is almost changeless, the history of man in relation to his surroundings"[172], White is more concerned with the 'surroundings', shifting it to the forefront and making it the main 'agent' of his writing.

Movement through space, in a "nomadic way", is for White "a way of getting out of history and into geography" (at least that particular kind of history associated with 'grand narratives').

Gavin Bowd in his essay on Trocchi and White sees the "facile distinction between history and geography" as a major drawback undermining White's geopoetic project.[173] His view may be justified with respect to some of White's theses expressed mainly in his essays "advertising" the idea of this project. A closer look at his writing, however, reveals the above distinction rather as a matter of a preferential emphasis than a mutual exclusion. An extended variant of a "long durée" history is implicitly present in White's concern – awareness of geological movements of the earth, while his "topography of ideas" would be unthinkable without a sense of a "history of ideas".

A lack of historical consciousness, i.e. a lack of references to traditional 'human history', still does not eliminate a certain immediate sense of temporality in White's writing, although an unusual one. It is mediated through almost omnipresent records of weather conditions and atmospheric changes. The French philosopher Michel Serres, writing in his *Natural Contract* about 'Time and Weather', refers to the French word *temps,* which is used for both seemingly disparate realities ("for the time that

passes and for the weather outside, a product of climate and of what our ancestors called meteors"). He speaks about

> this mobile atmospheric system, which is inconstant but fairly stable, deterministic and stochastic, moving quasi-periodically with rhythms and response times that vary colossally.[174]

Such an understanding of *temps* may well serve White's own concept of temporality in the landscape, adding an opposite pole to the slow movements of 'geological time'.

Still, his reserved view of the importance of history can hardly be denied, and together with the emphasis he puts on spatiality recalls the notion of nomadology as we find it in Deleuze and Guattari. Nomadic space is characterised by the absence of history, "the nomads have no history; they only have geography".[175] White's poetry, growing from the matrix of space permeated with movement, can be read as a testimony of seeking poetics of "the relationship of the human being to the universe"[176] through the experience of movement and displacement, both physical and mental.

In his essay "The Fronting Shore", he quotes approvingly Frobenius' "world-culture" thesis (from *The Destiny of Civilizations*), which involves "thinking that…would be open to direct intuition, direct 'seizures' from the outside – which would require an 'oriental attitude'". The quotation indicates two prominent tendencies in White's own thinking and writing.

The phrase 'seizures from the outside' with its emphasis on force, exteriority and possibly also multiplicity (rather than singularity) – as the use of the plural indicates - is reminiscent of Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadology, which advocates the same

principle: "to place thought in an immediate relation with the outside, with the forces of the outside..."[177] The same strain can be heard in White's programmatic essay "Elements of geopoetics" which, in a typical Whitean 'punning mood', suggests an alternative to contemporary 'information society':

> it will be necessary to stress the importance of qualitative *en*formation and, farther, the notion of *ex*formation: direct contact with the outside, the acquiring of a non-panic sense of dispersion, disaggregation, dissolution.[178]

Various aspects of the 'oriental attitude', equally symptomatic for White, are manifest repeatedly throughout his texts, but one Eastern concept seems especially relevant. Movement and expression, two key notions of his poetics, can be found - not coincidentally - also in the concept of Dao, primarily a spatial, dynamic concept, in which the meanings of "way/path" and "word/saying" converge. While the Chinese character for *dao* means principally a 'way', possibly interpreted also as 'method', 'meaning' or 'principle', the same sign conveys a meaning which can be translated into English as 'to speak' or 'to tell'.[179] Ultimately, *dao* becomes an expression of the supreme 'order' of the world, which, however, is not fixed and rigid but expressed and realised as "movement on numberless ways, back and forth, incessantly."[180] Although White's writing cannot be described as exclusively and explicitly Taoist, the triple meaning of *dao* is perpetually manifested in the content and the method of his writing, supported by frequent allusions and intertextual references to Taoist texts throughout his books.

In White's rendering, the common European concept of nature, largely inherited from the Romantics, is modified by drawing extensively from Eastern and other sources and finds expression in an original dynamic synthesis of *geopoetics.* Coined by White around 1978, the term applies to a multidisciplinary, time-bridging, "earth-linked" field, based on the idea that "every creation of the mind is, fundamentally, poetic"[181]. It supposes a 'new world sensation', which means "moving out of a certain scientistic terrorism that has long prevailed and re-discovering something like what used to be called natural philosophy, as well as something we might call cosmo-aesthetics."[182] Erudite in contemporary physics and astronomy, White is far from advocating a blind denunciation of science:

> These mathematical lines, these angles, exist, others, many others, might *also* exist, but beyond them all, is … a space, that can be apprehended and appreciated … Annoyed by colleagues that had never anything else in their mouths but mathematical formulae, Niels Bohr ended up by declaring that space is blue and that birds fly in it.[183]

In 1989 the geopoetic project developed into the shape of the "International Institute of Geopoetics"[184], an open network of like-minded - nomad-minded individuals world-wide. "The geopoetic project is not one more contribution to the cultural variety show, not is it a literary school, nor is it concerned with poetry considered as an art of intimacy. It is a major movement involving the very foundations of human life on earth."[185] The credo of geopoetics may be summarised by White's statement at

the opening of the Institute in which he declares his conviction that "the richest poetics came from the contact with the earth ... from an attempt to read the lines of the world."[186] In his verse, the same principle is phrased repeatedly, such as in the lines below":

....

for the *question* is always
how
out of all the *chances and changes*
to select
the features of real significance
so as to make
of the welter
a world that will last
and how to *order*
the *signs and the symbols*
so they will continue
to form new patterns
developing into
new harmonic wholes
so to keep life alive
in complexity
and complicity
with all of being -
there is only *poetry*

(my italics)

In the opening lines of White's long poem "Walking the Coast", the world, acknowledged as a continuous flux of "chances and changes", echoes the concept of *Yijing,* the ancient

Chinese Book of Changes, with its twofold, onto-cosmological questioning of being, and its language of "signs and symbols".

His assigning poetry the role of maintaining life in harmony with all beings spans two traditions. That of Taoism and that of Western – Heideggerian thought. In the former, Dao is the highest order of the Universe, which also maintains life in its "complexity and complicity", in the latter, "poetry is what first brings man onto the earth, making him belong to it, and thus brings him into dwelling"[187]. The above lines, hybrid as they may seem (in the sense of combining two other texts together, forming a text in which two separate elements can be detected)[188], may be taken as characteristic of White's notion of 'being in the world'.

The present study is an attempt to "read the lines of Kenneth White" as a text employing different sources of inspiration but with distinctive traits of 'nomad thought' in it, as it was introduced by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus.*[189] Nomadism, in his rendition is not a purely anthropological term expressing the opposite of 'sedentary' but rather "a *practice* and a *knowledge* potentially present in relation to any event, potentially effective in relation to *any* struggle for survival."[190] Understanding philosophy in the Heideggerian way as a thought-path, White combines in his writing aspects of landscape topography with a specific kind of topography of ideas. His texts often resemble 'rhizomatically' linked accounts of notions of space and movement, landscape images and reflections on language and thought, an amalgam from which the key *topoi* of his poetics gradually emerge, scattered along his numberless ways – trajectories or, what he calls, "bird paths".

Fragments and Forces: A Rhizomatic Topography of the Coast

> *If we want to take the phenomenon of movement seriously, we shall need to conceive a world which is not made up only of things, but which has in it also pure transitions.*
>
> *Merleau-Ponty*

Whitean space, dominated by seascapes and coastlines constantly attacked by waves, is an energy field charged with an omnipresent sense of movement, a boundless domain of wind and bird wings, which bring into the landscape a moment of flux and flow. Space is for White primarily an open field of relations, defined by configurations of elements in constant interaction with one another. Weather conditions, climate, light associated with different times of day or movements and sounds of waves, wind and birds participate in the evocation of landscape alongside its physical features such as rocks, groves, mountains and lochs, and affect his perception of being in space.

> if we see things as shape rather than state, as process rather than essence, our notion of reality changes and our living...[191]

The emphasis he puts in his writing on the perception of changing aspects of both, natural scenery and human presence in it, are reminiscent of the concept of *haecceity* as introduced by Deleuze and Guattari, i.e. something which is rather a momentary 'event' than a fixed and changeless substance. They also refer to

"a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance". The individuality they ascribe to particular seasons, days or hours consists in relations of movement and rest, capacities to affect and be affected."[192]

> It was a cold slow-moving mist
> clotted round the sun, clinging
> to the small white sun, and the earth
> was alone and lonely, and a great bird
> harshly squawked from the heronry
> as the boy walked under the beeches
> seeing the broken pale-blue shells
> and the moist piles of mouldering leaves
>
> "Morning walk"

The opening poem of White's collection *Handbook for the Diamond Country* offers a morning mood, a 'poetic presence' at a seemingly still coastal scenery. Yet the mist is "slow moving", the mist, which seems to be the main 'agent' of the poem, while a bird's squawk cuts through the silence momentarily as the boy walks and the leaves 'go on' "mouldering" under "the small white sun". Different modes of existence, different modes of temporality and movements thus meet briefly in the space of the poem, marking the individuality of the moment. White's "poetics of space" is to a considerable extent based on this mode of individuation, characteristic especially of Eastern civilisations and manifested e.g. in the art of haiku, a 'naturalised form' of White's own poetic repertory.

White's poem "The Wandering Jew" which was inspired by a mediaeval 'book of hours' (*Miniature des Heures d'Anne de*

Bretagne) is a beautiful example which may illustrate this concept of individuality. Unusually for this poet, its historical setting is more specific, but still retains a vagueness mediated by the archetypal connotations of the subject of this poem which also lacks a precise origin and destination.

> Comes out of the white wastes
> at four o'clock in the afternoon maybe
> some time in the XVth century or eternity
> wrapped in a dark-blue cloak of grief
> a dog there scowling at his frozen heels

The scene depicted, however, has a clarity and an edge, which delicately hints the atmosphere of the season and weather, the contrast between outside and inside in the transient moment of the man's stepping in.

> looking for refuge at this French house
> where the servants are busy with food and firewood
> (what chance has he?) his foot is on the stair

Suspense and tension of the moment is bracketed in the flow of conflicting thoughts in the third stanza: "(perhaps they will not know him? Have forgotten? / it is so long ago, it would be good to stay…/ perhaps this house needs a secretary?) He enters – ". And in the concluding line, the miniature story moves a full circle, straight to the winter imagery of the first stanza; an ellipsis in place of a crucial breakage point.

> next day along the hedges, a blizzard blowing

If we turn back to a typical Whitean 'milieu', his book *L'Esprit nomade* (in a section discussing the poetry of Hugh MacDiarmid),[193] likens the Scottish (and coastal) landscape to a desert one ("le paysage désertique est écossais"). The title of one of his own long poems then, "Scotia Deserta", bears allusion to a piece of desert poetry by Charles Doughty, *Arabia Deserta.* Both allusions may be taken as an indication of White's awareness that these geographically disparate spaces share in the 'smoothness'. The poem's lines below may well illustrate some of the elements typical of Deleuze's smooth space, filled with living forces, dynamics and intensities. In other words, "intense *Spatium* instead of *Extensio*...", "symptoms and evaluations rather than measures and properties"[194]:

> Have you heard Corrievreckan
> at the spring flood
> and a westerly blowing?
>
> the roaring's so great
> you can hear it twenty miles
> along the mainland coast
> admiralty charts
> show a 9-knot race
>
> to the senses
> that do no calculations
> but take it all in
> it's a rushing white flurry
> birthplace
>
> of a wave-and-wind philosophy ("Scotia Deserta")

The 'model' of White's landscape - mindscape is the Atlantic coast. It would be misleading, however, to say that his poetry is "rooted" there. It is because the notion of roots implies an arborescent model of thought, writing or space; a model based on the "submission of the line to the point". Instead, a different type of biological metaphor can be introduced to characterise the connective logic of White's writing and space.

The 'rhizome' – a subterranean stem such as tubers have, offers a model which, according to Deleuze, "connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature … It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion".[195]

In terms of orientation, we could also speak about a *vector* placed alongside the western coast of Europe, since a vector indicates both direction (i.e. the North in White's case) and movement – velocity, rather than a dimension. This notion seems to correspond better to White's concept of space, which is close to the theory of *smooth space*. Although the coast itself is rugged and fragmented, far from being smooth in the purely physical sense, it is perceived as such, as a territory "occupied by intensities, wind and noise, forces, and sonorous and tactile qualities" which nomadology associates with "the desert, steppe, or ice"[196], in the case of the coast, a territory united by the same 'refrain' of wind, waves and bird cries.

His native western coast of Scotland provided him with an essential paradigm for his landscape imagery, but his approach to it favours the universal, archetypal features of elemental scenery over individualised locations and imprints of civilisation in the landscape.

White's writing is marked by a frequent use of geographical terminology but his treatment of it is rather loose. Among the concepts used, 'topography' is a crucial one. Its Greek origin refers simply to 'a writing of a place', but its modern usage allows for variations in definition. J. Hillis Miller mentions three meanings of the word in English:

> At first the word meant just what is says: a description in words of a place. That meaning became obsolete. The word then came to mean the art of mapping by graphic signs rather than words ... By a further sideways slippage 'topography' has come to be the name for what is mapped, apparently without any reference to writing or other means of representation.[197]

The first and original one and the third meaning are – with certain reservations – applicable to White's writing.

His poems do not give a full description of places. Place names are used in a way similar to that which we find in Chinese scroll-pictures. While the landscape painted is often abstract or anonymous, often based on traditional aesthetic concepts (such as the presence of water and mountain, representing the yin and yang elements retrospectively), the calligraphic inscriptions contained in the pictures mediate uniqueness and authenticity of the moment of origin – creation of the picture. This tension between universality and singularity is to be found in many of White's poems too. Place names often give individual identity to places where the poems originated, but the actual topography of these poems remains largely vague and thus detachable and

interchangeable. What is presented may be called an "atopical topography", almost a "description without place"[198], created simply by naming elements and processes in the landscape, sometimes with a specific symbolic value attached to them.

So his "Broken Ode to White Brittany" opens with a reference to being "once again / on the transhuman road", a road which owes little to traditional itineraries but stresses instead the idiosyncrasies of his rhizomatic, *white* topography.

A nation?
a county?
broken coastlines
here
no one talks
about states ...

'Dull weather,' they tell me
they don't hear the gulls laughing whitely ......

Acknowledged in the very title as 'broken', this 'ode' of White's can, indeed, hardly qualify as "a long lyric poem that is serious in subject, elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanzaic structure."[199]

The following lines, rather than following a prescribed form, are ordered according to the free flow of personal associations. Fragmentary coastal images are linked to equally disconnected statements of an abstract or even mystical nature, not necessarily original in themselves, but always linked to immediate sensory perceptions of space. "Anonymous archipelago", characterised by "blue breakings" and "confused clarities" indicates "reading

beyond the legends" and seems to suggest: "Enough / enough of that, enough of those / this wave breaking / white prose"... without, however, allowing to forget "a little realness / this taste of salt on the tongue."

Interpolated in this text are the often quoted subversive lines, which may serve as a comment on White's heretical treatment of the ode form as well as his ambiguous attitude towards language as a means of expression in general.

> Write poems?
> rather follow the coast
> line after line
> going forward
> breathing
> spacing it out

Place names, which appear in the following stanzas, by no means change or individualise in any way White's vague rendering of the physical experience of a particular place. While on the ridge of Trévézel, we find "rough grass / black stone / and clear wind out of the north", and at the Pointe du Van "this dawn / brain [is] full of waves", "Sunday morning at Plouguerneau" offers "a gull crying / over the mass."

The epigrammatic final stanza, an unspecified quotation with an allusion to Celtic mythology, summarizes the spiritual 'moral' of the broken ode:

> 'When Finn was alive, and the Fianna
> moor and sea
> meant more than any church'

The poem, as with the whole corpus of White's poetry, is a celebration of smooth space of wind and bird trajectories, freed of artificial boundaries imposed on the land by human civilisation.

> Smooth space is filled by events or haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things...in the striated forms organize a matter, in the smooth materials signal forces and serve as symptoms for them.[200]

By sharing some of the features of the neighbouring ocean space, which, according to Deleuze, is a smooth space *par excellence,* the coast seems to participate in its 'smoothness'.

Out of images taken from rhizome-like fragments of different coastal landscapes arises an imaginary territory of the mind which retains the physical characteristics of a coast ("a wind-water place") but does not represent or belong to any particular region.

> Walking the coast
> all those kyles, lochs and sounds
>
> sensing the openness
> feeling out the lines
>
> order and anarchy
> chaos and cosmology
>
> a mental geography
> "Scotia Deserta"

The metaphor of 'mindscape', so frequently used by White, can be associated with this particular smooth 'territory', which features as a constant counterpart to physical landscape in his writing. As such, it corresponds to the concept of "territory", understood as something which "groups all the forces of the different milieus together in a single sheaf constituted by the forces of the earth."[201] (Milieu, in the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, as explained in the English translation of *A Thousand Plateaus,* should be read as a technical term combining all three meanings of the French original, i.e. "surroundings", "medium" and "middle".)[202]

White's mindscape territory freely borrows from various locations – surroundings, uses landscape features as a means of communication (rather than a symbol) of certain ideas, and becomes an ever elusive 'middle', a place of "intension", where the interior forces of the earth and the exterior forces of chaos meet and White's concept of chaosmos originates. "This intense center is simultaneously inside the territory, and outside several territories that converge on it at the end of an immense pilgrimage (hence the ambiguities of the 'natal')".[203] It originates in but is not limited by a particular *locus*; it is a specific kind of smooth nomadic space, which can be localised but not delimited.

White's way of writing, then, is an expression of "nomad thought". It is a kind of writing, which, in terms of Deleuze and Guattari, is not necessarily linked to, in fact rather dissociated from, signifying. "It has to do with surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come… It is open to modifications and experimentation."[204]

The 'nomad thought' with its experimental 'rhizomatic' connections, is, in this aspect, very compatible with the radical

teachings of Vajrajana (Tantric form of Buddhism, practised mainly in Tibet and a prominent source of White's Eastern inspiration). *Tantra*, through its etymology linked to weaving (meaning not only 'fabric' as a particular product, which could be associated with the striated space, but also a shuttle - moving back and forth - or a continuity of something), understands the universe itself as a 'fabric'. A fabric, however, where anything can overlap with anything else or affect and be affected by anything else.[205]

> The Tantras are not usually logically connected pieces of teaching. It is as though the threads of the Sutras [*Sutra* literally means thread] have been woven into a tapestry, in which the continuity of any individual thread may be lost sight of.[206]

Tantra sees the world in terms of *energy,* another Eastern concept adopted by White and not at all contradictory to the 'nomadic' approach.

> If the substantial objects and people, the discrete, separate selfhoods, have all been dissolved into processes, ever changing, then what is left? What you experience are patterns of energy, some more congealed, others more free-flowing.... [207]

With its tendency to seek and exploit 'the most potent energies' in life, we can also speak about Vajrajana and its concern in terms of 'intensities' and 'haecceities' generally attributed to smooth spaces. Last but not least, the tantric approach allows for an almost unlimited scope of correlations between the mundane

experience and the spiritual – transcendental one, which seems to be a significant area of White's writing. While the title of his *Handbook for the Diamond Country* is an allusion to several Buddhist Tantric concepts, mainly to that of a "diamond being", *vajrasattva*, his poem "Of the Territory" suggests a similar 'tantric' experience of the profane and the sacred merged: "Up here in the white country / any tree for a totem / any rock for an altar ..."

The *Topos* of Whiteness

> *...And when the Zen master says: 'The place of the spirit is nowhere, it's like the tracks of birds in the sky', he is referring to the white world, and to the way to it, which is the bird path..."*
>
> *K. W.* [208]

The frequency of such notions as "the white country" or "the white world" in the writings of Kenneth White is a phenomenon which calls for a brief explanation. Tempting as it may seem, it should not be dismissed as a mere narcissistic whim because of the association with his own name (which he claims to be just a bonus). These concepts (alternatives include "the white land" and "the white territory") in which the perceptual and the conceptual, the physical and the spiritual, the 'geo' and the 'poetic' of White's project converge, seem to be endlessly employed but remain endlessly elusive.

Geographically speaking, White's 'white world' is located somewhere in the "northern territory" but its exact location remains, necessarily, unspecified. It can be experienced in different places. The white land emerges in the presence of a particular type of landscape, or rather, through 'presence' in this landscape. It can only be discovered in a landscape dominated by the elementary forces of nature, in the realm of elements, which by nature have no particular place, in the realm of exteriority, since, in White's view, to reach the "white world" means to achieve "a more authentic reality of man-in-the-cosmos." The word 'authentic' in White's use is often synonymous with

'primordial', in the sense of non-hierarchical and non-stratified but by no means fixed and unchanging. Authenticity, in his view, thus rather means participation in the "play of energies" encountered in the landscape.

> From Strathclyde to Whiteness lies the way
> through all the wild weathers of the world
> and through the dog days
>
> "At the Solstice"

The notion of whiteness is generally associated with an 'uninscribed', 'uncoded' space, for which White finds an objective correlative in the northern landscapes and Atlantic seascapes and seaboards. In his poetics, linking the perceptual to the conceptual, presence in such an elemental landscape mediates a direct communication with the other, the non-human chaos – cosmos, which is a prominent idea within 'geopoetic thinking'. The 'white land' thus may be reached on the coast of Brittany, Japan, Siberia, Labrador or, paradoxically, the shores of the Black Sea. Because who can tell where the north of the mind is?

> Gather and control the energy (wakened by movement) of the complete being (the full psychic spectrum), and place it in the midst of naked elements ('nature'), and from there on, I think, you're really on to something substantial...[209]

In his own words, the concept of the "white world" sprang up from visual perception of whiteness in the landscape (gull's wings, breaking waves, snow hills and birches) and gradually

started to open up to a wider geographical, cultural and linguistic complex, drawing on the whole of "hyperborean culture" and Eastern and Western literary and philosophical traditions. The sources of this concept include Japanese, Eskimo, Siberian, Amerindian and Celtic poetry, tales and myths and find further resonance in a variety of literary allusions. Last but not least, Scotland' ancient name Alba must be added to this constellation.

Within Celtic culture, which features so prominently in White's poetic imagery, a topos of *Gwenved,* the "white land" or "white field" as an 'area of concentration with waves of radiance' is a central concept. Sea journeys of Celtic monks described in texts now recognised as 'voyage literature', are also known as 'white martyrdom' and perhaps the most popular one among them, *The Voyage of Bran,* is recalled in several of White's poems.

From Zen Buddhism come the images of "a white heron in the moonlight" and "white waves breaking in the sky", both describing the most highly developed identity. Such a notion of 'identity', however, involves a koan-like paradox; it is an identity which no longer means fixity and oneness but rather a dissolution and multiplicity. Last but not least, white light accompanies the vision of the 'diamond being', Vajrasattva Buddha, a figure, which inspired *Handbook for the Diamond Country,* White's collection of shorter poems.

Talking about the 'white world", White reports: "A flying bird leaves no tracks in the air". In comparison, Deleuze and Guattari claim: "Traits in the nomad space are effaced and displaced with the trajectory". It is only natural that White's white territory, where the physical and spiritual are supposed to

merge, appears in a trait-less, smooth nomadic space, where "the absolute does not appear at a particular place but becomes a nonlimited locality"[210].

where goes the world?
to the white
where goes the white?
to the void
where goes the void?
the void comes and goes
like the light
"The Armorican Manuscript"

Whiteness stems from and leads into the open and the unknown, white is the colour of the void – emptiness and nothingness. These concepts, however are not understood in traditionally Western negativist terms, but rather in the Eastern and also Heideggerian understanding as emptiness – plenitude (of Dao - which also comes and goes). The paradoxical notion of emptiness-plenitude suggests a source of unlimited potential of energy in space for all of being, a source where the "dawn talk" of the landscape and seascape comes from. A Deleuzian reading of these concepts, echoed e.g. in White's "white-blow of the waves / confused beginnings / dissolution and amplitude …"[211] then would interpret them in terms of the being of the problematic, 'positive multiplicities'.

Last but not least such a concept of reality can also be found in the Eastern - Buddhist notion of *sunyata* - emptiness, which however does not mean a negation of reality, but rather a declaration of reality as an expression of innumerable relations

and mutual conditionality and interdependence but at the same time incommensurability of all things.

In his “Mountain and Glacier World”, ”the whiteness is manifest”, together with coldness and eternity at “the high crest of nothingness / where the ‘I’ has no meaning and the self is ecstatically alone / with its aloneness”. In an explanatory note to the final line of the poem: “shall I blow out my brains?”, a desire to “get out of mental cinema into the white” is expressed as opposed to its possible interpretation as a suicide temptation. His “getting into the white” can be understood as attaining a state of *satori,* undiscriminating consciousness beyond the subject – object division. White’s footnote to this poem refers to Blanchot’s talking about “that farthermost region, we can designate only in negative terms as a nothingness, but a nothingness which is also the veil of being”. A similar symbolism of whiteness figures in Deleuze’s writings.

> Signifiance is never without a white wall upon which it inscribes its signs and redundancies. Subjectification is never without a black hole in which it lodges its consciousness, passion, and redundancies.[212]

(Richard Harland in his book *Superstructuralism,* sees the French term *signifiance*, used both by Barthes and Kristeva, as different from *signification.* While the latter is restricted to a fixity and self-identification within a system, the former refers to the opening out of this fixity of meaning.)[213]

White’s attraction to the whiteness is an attraction to “the realms of the asignifying, asubjective, and faceless”[214] His

writing marks a repeated attempt to break through the Deleuzian white wall, as it features in "The Region of Identity":

> that line of white
> that incandescent edge
> advancing
> beyond meaning and problem
>
> How many forms discarded
> how many selves destroyed
> how many dawns and darknesses
> until I reach
> this place of light and emptiness
> where white birds cry
> a presence – or still only a sign?

Whiteness, manifested in so many forms on the Whitean shore, is an everlasting challenge to the poet's desire to get beyond the realm of signification. It is a desire which can be associated with reaching

> the uncertain moment at which the white wall/black hole, black point/white shore system, as on a Japanese print, itself becomes one with the act of leaving it, breaking away from and crossing through it.[215]

In the words of White's poem such a desire is rephrased in the lines below, once again, with the paradoxical notion of authenticity – identity as " being a sign among signs":

Or still yet only sign? –
to cover my naked body
with signs
and be a sign among signs
or to go beyond signs
into the light
that is not the sun
into the waters
that are not the sea …

A tentative conclusion of this brief excursion into the 'white world' might be, that despite its sensuous grounding in the landscape, the image of the 'white world' has evolved into an abstract and more or less arbitrary concept, which is applied to a particular state of mind and a relevant relation between the individual and the world rather than a geographical location. What it has in common with physical whiteness is not so much some ideal of immaculate purity but rather a positive value of 'colourlessness' which is the epitome of unrestricted potentials, the receptive field of connections and communication. Melville's "The Whiteness of the Whale" chapter of *Moby-Dick* foreshadows White's notion of whiteness in its attempt to solve "the incantation of this whiteness" and learn "why it appeals so much to the soul".

> Is it that by its indefiniteness it shadows forth the heartless voids and immensities of the universe … Or is it, that as in essence whiteness is not so much a color as the visible absence of color, and at the same time the concrete of all colors; is it for these reasons that there

> is such dumb blankness full of meaning, in a wide landscape of snows – a colorless, all-color of atheism from which we shrink …?

Just like Melville, White associates whiteness with emptiness but emptiness is no longer a symptom of negation (p. 110) from which he shrinks in fear. His 'white world' is rather

> a world disencumbered of all that lies so heavily on ours, stifling it, preventing any subtle attention to what is actually there. I mean such holdall notions as God, Moral Law, Reason, Progress, Humanity – those big barrage-balloon abstractions that make history.[216]

With White's definition of poetry as signifying "the transcendence of the individual conscience and the introduction to a world (a cosmos, a beautiful whole in movement)" the affinity between the 'white world' and poetry in the sense of 'poetic dwelling' becomes obvious. The French philosopher Michel Serres, in his book *Genesis* employs the metaphor of whiteness in pursuit of a notion not at all dissimilar to White's.

> *Alba is our origin, it is our matrix, under the foundations of the city, it is the mother city. It is, white, the mother city beneath the holy city. It is the place of our birth, its name is Alba the White. To be worthy of thinking, to know how to calculate, to compose music or a prayer or a poem, to be vested with language, to be worthy of dancing, one must have made one's pilgrimage to Alba the White.*

V. The Sea: Romantic Heritage, Nomadic Perspectives and 'Poetic Dwelling'

> *For those who have never accompanied Coleridge or Tennyson or Baudelaire or Rimbaud on the voyage, the waves are difficult to characterize. The characters of typography seem relics, artifacts, tossed up by this snot-green, "scrotumtightening" sea. This green animal below Buck Mulligan's tower is our best image of that fecundating preconscious flux wherein counters (images, words) are lined loosely, like buoys, to their referents in reality, and there let float and move musically, into nonutilitarian combinations. The sea ... induces the chips that mark language's debt to reality to play their own game, to behave for the sake of blue next to green, rather than for the sake of a meaning.*
>
> *James Applewhite*

A psychological reading of landscape themes in literature, such as James Applewhite's study of landscape and consciousness from Wordsworth to Roethke, *Seas and Inland Journeys* proves to be rather stimulating for the present discussion of vital sources of late Twentieth century poetics of landscape. Applewhite's argument for the continuation of "typical Romantic structures and transactions ... (juxtapositions of observer / landscape, house / nature, ship / sea images...)" well into the Twentieth century is by no means irrelevant when talking about Ted Hughes, but Kenneth White 'geopoetics' in particular, with necessary reservations and specifications, seems to have inherited some of the crucial Romantic premises.

The very topography of the core of his poems, the sea, the coast, or wild mountainous landscapes may be called Romantic as well as his constant preoccupation with seeking the *original ground* or *source* of poetic language.

Clearly, many of the sea images and associated metaphors, which feature so strongly in White's writing, may be traced back to nineteenth-century prominent authors while the psychological interpretation of them seems to be surprisingly relevant as well.

Applewhite comments on the poet's reaction to a configuration of wild nature, a panorama "dramatically older and other than the self", to which the individual yet has an essential relation:

> This spatially extended otherness, perceived through the waking senses…stands somehow prior to the individual's history, as a headwaters of psychological origination. We can say that the sea represents a timeless uroboric source anterior to subjective consciousness. The hints and guesses that come as in a sea wind are experienced as the "oceanic" sensation mentioned by Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents*… The point from which such a breeze of sensation blows stands outside the boundaries of discontented society.[217]

The sea, perceived as something 'other' (or Other), thus may be seen as "the locus from which the question of [the subject's] existence may be presented to him".[218] Deleuze, in turn, defines the other as a "structure which grounds and ensures the overall functioning of this world as a whole".[219] White's comment on the

significance of the Atlantic coast in his life and writing ("We are close there to the beginnings of life, we cannot but be aware there of primordial rhythms ...") is not only conformable to the Romantic view of the sea suggested by Applewhite but may be related to either of the notions mentioned above. A text which immediately comes to mind as an analogy of such an attraction towards "the watery part of the world" is "Loomings", the first chapter of Melville's *Moby Dick*: "It is the image of the ungraspable phantom of life; and this is the key to it all."[220] A key, however, which does not present any definitive answers but leaves the question of knowledge of both nature and self-nature endlessly open.

W. H. Auden in his study, *The Enchafèd Flood*, attempts to "understand the nature of Romanticism through an examination of its treatment of a single theme, the sea"[221]. In his view, the sea originally denotes a "symbol for the primordial undifferentiated flux" representing a "state of barbaric vagueness and disorder out of which civilization has emerged and into which ... it is always liable to relapse." From Classical authors, through Anglo-Saxon poetry to Shakespeare, the sea in literature is thus treated as something negative, as "no place to be, if you can help it". As Auden claims, neither Odysseus nor Jason "goes to sea for the sake of the voyage", the mariner in *The Wanderer* or *The Seafarer* is to be pitied rather than admired, and even in Shakespeare's late plays, where the sea appears to have a rather positive, 'purgatorial' function, "the putting to sea, the wandering is never *voluntarily* entered upon as a pleasure".

What Auden singles out as "distinctive new notes in the Romantic attitude" may be easily traced in Kenneth White's treatment of the same topic. They are:

1) To leave the land **and the city** is the desire of every man of sensibility and honour.
2) **The sea is the real situation** and the voyage is the true condition of man.
3) The sea is where the decisive events, the moments of eternal choice, of temptation, fall and redemption occur. **The shore life is always trivial.**
4) **An abiding destination is unknown** even if it may exist: a lasting relationship is not possible nor even to be desired. (my emphasis)

While all four of Auden's notes may be, at least partially, applied in the interpretation of White's poetry, it is the fourth one, which also seems to echo or foreshadow the more general premises of 'nomadic' theories as developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. For the nomad too, "the abiding destination is unknown", and "lasting relationship ... nor even to be desired", as it was mentioned above (see p. 33) it is the path which determines the points - relays of a nomadic journey, ("the water point is reached only in order to be left behind"). In comparison, Tony McManus e. g. characterizes White's 'way books' as prose-narratives in which

> the protagonist starts in the urban context of the Twentieth-century West and moves from there into the landscape, through moments of clarification and illumination which seem to expand the protagonist's

> **presence in the world**, way beyond the confines of urban life and the time frame of the present. He becomes, in a peculiar unification of the material with the abstract, simply 'human presence in the earth', *residence* in the world.

The pattern suggested in the above characteristics is on the one hand notably Romantic – reminiscent of the first of the above Auden's 'notes', of the "man's desire to leave (the land) and the city" (we could also talk about a pattern of movement from the coded space of civilization to an 'uninscribed' natural space or 'wilderness') – and on the other hand allows for a 'nomadic' interpretation, as a pattern of transition from the striated to the smooth.

The potential link between the 'Romantic' and the 'nomad' is further reinforced by Auden's linking the Romantic topos of sea with that of the desert. Among the resemblances he mentions, the first two seem directly relevant to White's writing and to the 'nomadic' approach to space in general.

1) Both [i.e. the sea and the desert] are the wilderness, i.e. the place where there is no community, just or unjust, and **no historical change for better or for worse.**
2) Therefore, the individual in either is free from both the evils and the responsibilities of communal life.

(my emphasis)

Auden, however, is also careful to mention the differences between the above manifestations of wilderness, which may be

summed up in terms of Alpha and Omega of existence for the sea and the desert respectively. While the desert is perceived as a lifeless place, and its "most obvious characteristic is that nothing moves", the sea is a symbol of potentiality, its first characteristic being that of a "perpetual motion" and despite its violence and a potential destructive power it is still perceived by the Romantic as positive. The same attitude to the sea is characteristic for White, for whom the seascapes and associated images are always symbols of energy, of a life-giving force in themselves, despite or rather because of its untamed nature. Auden's formulation of a typical Romantic attitude: "what exists is the trivial Unhappy Unjust City, the desert of the average from which the only escape is to the wild, lonely, but still vital sea" could be applied to a number of White's texts as well.

Last but not least, White is infinitely drawn towards this 'primordial undifferentiated flux' as a *source* which may freshen and empower words. "Real poetry, and the life it implies, begins a few thousand miles, as the gull flies, as the wind blows, away from this 'civilised' compound".[222] Same as the Romantics, however, White seems to struggle with the problem of rendering the 'oceanic sensation' in language. Perceived as a prominent source of his writing, it still appears as something prior to articulated language, a 'chaos prior to utterance' as in "Poet":

> I have said nothing for so many days
> my skull lying at the edge of a tide
> now when I open my mouth to speak
> it is the sea that speaks

White's treatment of the opposite – the inland atmosphere is also fully in accordance with the psychological interpretation of the 'Romantic spirit', which sees the journey to adulthood, or individuation as separation from a timeless ocean and a fall into the chronology of adult consciousness and conventionalized social imitation. Consequently, he may also be a subject to a tension "between a timeless sensation of origins experienced in inspiration, and the need to live and write in time (and in society)" mentioned in Applewhite's study.

With respect to the *topos* of a desert, however, White is not as dismissive as Auden. The space of a desert too retains a transformative potential for the acquisition of what he calls 'enlarged identity', identity of a poet. In his essay "The High Field", writing about the significance of the Tarim Valley, a 'desertic region' referred to in MacDiarmid's *In Memoriam James Joyce*, White concludes: "A desert, pilgrimage, a difficult road, manuscripts … In describing the Tarim Basin I have been describing the territory I have been living in and working in these last few years."[223]

Among the four basic Romantic responses, which Applewhite suggests, two may also be applied to White's life and work. First, by finding a residence in Brittany, he basically remains in the proximity "to the generative source". Second, by choosing to write the way he writes and by the foundation of The International Institute of Geopoetics, he "envisions and attempts to bring about through art a regeneration of time-bound society in the image of the timeless plenitude."[224]

In a 'prolegomena' to his poem "Cape Breton Uplight" he states the constellation of his situation as a poet:

> *Just off Cape Breton, the sea, which elsewhere round the shores of Britain and France remains at the level of the continental plateau, plunges directly to oceanic depths of 5,000 metres and more, once inhabited by some of 'the big fish God created': blue whale, finn whale, goose-beaked whale ... On these ground, the area seemed a good place* ***to settle in a work with for a while*** [i.e. to dwell]. *Always the search for the place and the formula, the essential locality and the few necessary words.* (my emphasis)

When reading White's numerous accounts of seashore walking, such as that which opens "Cape Breton Uplight" below, it does not take much effort to imagine a figure similar to Caspar David Friedrich's Monk, looking across the vista of sea.

In Friedrich's famous picture, as in White's poems, reality is represented by the original elements of earth (a sandy beach or a stony shore), water – an immense expanse of the sea, and air – in both cases represented by light (White usually uses the plural - lights, as in Erigena's phrase *sunt lumina*). "The 'dehumanization' of western art which we wrongly attribute to the Moderns begins with the Romantic's contemplation of nature, his longing to fuse with the Whole."[225]

1.

Is there
    anywhere on the dwindling earth
a man like me
    walking at the edge of the sea
and

But at this moment the continuity of a direct personal utterance is broken by the introduction of the second stanza number and by switching into an impersonal mode of utterance reminiscent of the haiku poets style of writing. The graphic layout of this stanza especially is marked by a deliberate employment of empty spaces which complement the words and assist in fulfilling White's artistic credo of "keeping the language open", by means of 'silence – spaces' (analogous to the spaces in Chinese and Japanese painting).[226] The result is a detached, random reference to the immediate exterior phenomena, with a typical Whitean theorem included at the end. It is a stanza reminiscent of the principles on which Ezra Pound, informed by the skills of haiku masters, based the program of Imagism. Among the Imagist claims, as formulated by Amy Lowell in her Preface to the first of their three anthologies *Some Imagist Poets*, was also a poetry, which presents an image that is "hard, clear, and concentrated"[227] – a claim which could well be called "Whitean".

2.

Blue shingle

smooth pebble

dune-grass

express only the essential

fix the mind

This strategy too, may be interpreted in terms of "a Romantic impulse toward loss of self in the landscape"[228] reminiscent e.g. of Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale", but possibly taken a step

further by loosening the syntactic structure of the stanza and omitting punctuation, thus resigning –at least partially even the 'linguistic order'. What often remains of White's verse is a set, or rather an interdependent series of 'lowly particulars', yet with a symbolic power attached to them. The way he works with his elementary coastal or mountain scenes may be described as finding Eliot's 'objective correlatives', "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion."[229] Stripped of all verbal embellishments and reduced to simple naming of elements and processes in landscape, his rendering of the situations aims at the eliminating of all possible idiosyncratic traces in his writing, at making it as 'impersonal' as possible. Unless, of course, exactly this maximum simplicity and conscious pursuit of impersonality and detachment are seen as those idiosyncratic traces of White's writing. Still, his poetic technique may serve to counterattack the criticism of Eliot's formulation, the objection that, "no object or situation is in itself a "formula" for an emotion but depends for its emotional significance and effect on the way it is rendered by the poet."[230] White's attitude, which presumes that the reader automatically shares his 'formula' of equation of certain 'objects' with particular mental states (rather than 'emotions' which may not sound enough disinterested), seems to rely on the premise that "words do evoke objects, and the discovery or dramatization of an intelligible correspondence between objects and psychic states creates a fresh artistic excitement."[231]

His symbols fall within that category, which was first brought into importance by the Romantics:

> images drawn from direct observation of nature, from personal experience and the immediate environment. Such symbols depend upon interrelationships in the developing context of the poem – that is to say, upon the total structure of landscape imagery and upon the reactions of the observer.[232]

In White, however, there can also be traced a departure from the Romantic attitude to images drawn from nature, a departure which concerns the treatment of the otherness of nature. In Coleridge e. g., the other appears to be subsumed under the identity of the subject: "In looking at objects of Nature …I seem rather to be seeking, as it were *asking* for, a symbolic language for something within me that already and for ever exists, than observing anything new."[233]

The voice of White's poetic persona shares the Romantic self's approach to the not-self of nature, which depends upon just this obscure intuition that the self and the not-self, at some deep enough level, are coextensive and correspond. White, however, looks rather outward than inward for this potential correspondence, he does not stress the identity of the subject, does not aim at some kind of sublimation of the poet's 'self' and identification with the 'whole' of nature but treats the 'objects' of nature as something 'other' from the poet's self.

The third stanza documents a typical strategy of his, to blend the perceptual with the conceptual in a single discourse, in a single stanza, beginning with a direct perception evoking an abstract concept and finishing with a 'down to earth' remark again, coming thus a full circle from and back to a pure sensory perception.

3.

White-blow of the waves
confused beginnings
dissolution and amplitude
the emptiness is plenitude
and the gulls
raise their spontaneous cries

The fourth stanza brings in the same 'rugged' layout one of White's lists of names of bird species – not always strictly scientific (Osprey / gannet / white-arsed petrel), adding thus more 'objective correlatives' of the 'oceanic sensation'. For those who might not understand this 'formula' immediately, White adds a few sophisticated hints by associating the birds mentioned with "pelagians and hyperboreans / tantric gulls" and closes the stanza with a metaphor of "this ascetic shore / the abandoned ground / we haunt" – an allusion to the forgotten proximity of our existence to its 'watery origin'.

It is in the fifth and sixth stanza of the poem that the essentially Romantic spirit surfaces again more significantly. Here, White's view of the effect of losing the contact with the inspirational and creative potential experienced in the proximity of the sea is stated directly. Equally important for the geopoetic approach, however, appears to be the 'contact with the earth'. The notion of the vital importance of the earth voiced in the fifth stanza, is almost reminiscent of Heidegger's essay "Der Feldweg" (man tries in vain to impose order on the earth by his plans, if he has not been 'inserted into the consolation of the field path').

5.

Inland
the lack of reality
the reduction of spirit
is ugly and wearisome
the mind rots
language decays
under cypher and strident opinion
raised up as reason
the earth disappears
from the minds of the living
the real word is lost

The sixth stanza, while still developing the same Whitean (and Romantic) premise of the importance of "maintaining the primordial contact", and further stressing the seminal borderline location of the seashore, also has a Heideggerian resonance. It was Heidegger, who reversed the common notion according to which man thinks and only then 'dresses up' his thought in language, the notion of a person thinking in his or her 'inner self' and then 'expressing' that self, and established the 'primordiality of language'. For him, language doesn't 'dress up' thought, thought is rooted and develops in language. White's reading of Heidegger stresses "leaving the idea of a representation of the world for a presence in the world, which is the *Dasein* (literally 'being there') ...[since] 'The Dasein doesn't emerge from some inner sphere, its primordial way of being means being always outside' ".[234]

6.

At the edge of the world
in the emptiness
maintaining the relations
the primordial contact
the principles by which
reality is formed
on the verge of the abstract

The seventh stanza reads like an essence of White's poetic precept or a footnote to the poem's content : "And always the question / is of unifying / simplifying / penetrating", only to give way, in another leap of though associated with the symbolic contents of a coastal scenery, to the eight section, in which its sexual connotations surface.

8.

Are the waters female?
or is woman a coastline
moulded by the wind?
walk here girl
where everything
answers your nakedness
eye and sex
washed in these elements
and the cry of your body
at one with the cry of the gulls

The final three stanzas (9, 10, 11) tend ever more towards "the verge of the abstract". Though set in a particular situation ("This morning / the coast is transparent"), they gradually 'drift' into enigmatic-epigrammatic enunciations, in which "the highest reaches / of the mind / are in their element" and "the violence of poetry / is still / and goes deep - / to the bone / to the **white"** and culminate in the poem's conclusion:

11.

Many images blur the mind
the highest poetry
is stricken
with poverty of image
when the **white** light
gleams at its blindingest
all objects disappear
the skull like a sun

A significant difference between White's treatment of the sea images and Auden's interpretation of the Romantic attitudes concerns the symbolic meanings attached to these images. Auden's study distinguishes between two pairs of symbols contrasting that of the ship (i.e. the human, the individual or social) which no longer stand as opposites in White:

a) the sky and its creatures vs. the water and its creatures
b) the day and the sun vs. the night and the moon

While these elements also appear in White, the above distinction is blurred, they rather feature "collectively", as e.g. the Celtic

"elements of God", albeit without explicit theological associations, thus rather simply as natural elements, without positive or negative label attached to them. Sky and water, representing in Auden's study Spirit and Nature respectively, merge and stand no longer as opposites. The names of bird and fish species are often pronounced in one breath, although birds clearly dominate the seascapes.

The latter opposition, evoking psychoanalytical interpretation, i.e. the consciousness and the Paternal Principle as opposed to unconsciousness and the Maternal Principle for the day-sun and night-moon pairs respectively, does not seem to be of much importance either.

Last but not least, what is also to be considered in terms of the 'symbolic meanings' present in Romantic 'sea poetry' and modified by White is the phenomenon of visibility and the wind. Fog and mist are no longer perceived in terms of "doubt and self-delusion", they are perceived as either simply being, i.e. neutral (that implies an "oriental attitude", where nothing is good or bad in itself and an enlightened mind no longer distinguishes between the two) or, in fact perceived as rather positive – symptomatic of the rough weather and climatic conditions which enable the access to the 'white land', the true poet's kingdom, true dwelling and true existence.

White's favourite, Baudelaire, in his *Mon Coeur Mis à Nu* simultaneously poses and answers one of the crucial questions of our present discussion.

> Why is the spectacle of sea so infinitely and eternally agreeable? 'Because the sea presents at once the idea

> of immensity and of **movement** ...Twelve or fourteen leagues of liquid in movement are enough to convey to man the highest expression of beauty which he can encounter in his **transient abode**. (my emphasis)

Taking into account the potential influence of Baudelaire on White, the above extract may be instrumental in the positioning of White's writing between the imaginary Romantic and Nomadic poles. Movement, a crucial term for this poet is common for both. And so is the sea itself – an antidote to the corrupted civilisation and a *smooth space* par excellence for the two respectively.

VI. Landscape and Identity 2: 'Hyperborean Connections'

A little of what we are and, above all, of that which we ought to be remains obstinately in the stones, plants, animals, the landscapes and the woods.

A. Artaud

Poetry is always more than merely human. My own predilection is for a pre-humanist or post-humanist world, where what is alive in me is in contact with what is forceful and alive in the universe – forces, life much other than personal

K. W. (Jargon Papers 1964)

A body vector - passing through silences,
learning to disappear

Hector Ortega

White's writing has been markedly shaped by two traditions, the Celtic and that of the Far East. What the two have in common is not only a subtle mastery of nature poetry, but also a special sense of 'being in the world' – being a part of rather than apart from – the world. It is a sense of belonging between man and nature which White finds in the poet and painter Wang Wei, who of "all the Chinese poets is most probably the one who penetrates deepest into the landscape, or, should we say, the one who lets the landscape penetrate deepest into himself."[235]

The 'permeability' of self and landscape which White appreciates in Wang-Wei's poetry, however, is partly helped by the character of Chinese itself; completely uninflected and with frequent omissions of the subject of the verb, the language allows a much greater degree of both conciseness and ambiguity.

> Consequently, Chinese poetry often has an impersonal and universal quality, compared with which much Western poetry appears egocentric and earth-bound. Where Wordsworth wrote "*I* wander*ed* lonely as *a* cloud", a Chinese poet would probably have written "Wander as cloud". The former records a personal experience bound in space and time; the latter presents a state of being with universal applications.[236]

It is repeatedly pointed out in White's essays that a similar concept of nature appears to be innate to the Celtic mind in the sense that

> the Celtic experience of nature ... goes beyond what is socially and materially useful. There is little to be gained from gazing out to sea or listening to birdsong in a wood. Yet there is something going on in these poems, which seems ... to be absolutely essential ... without nature we are literally nowhere and nothing, at least as far as this world is concerned; and if there is another, nature is the way to it, according to Celtic tradition.[237]

Although less 'philosophically loaded' than the Chinese 'form', the example from Celtic poetry to which White repeatedly refers

still conveys a heightened sensibility to nature. Namely, it is a sequence of metaphors equating the poet's self with natural phenomena which appears in Taliesin's verse: "I am the wind that blows over the sea / I am a wave of the sea / I am the roaring of the sea / I am a bird on the seacliff ...).[238] The seeming declaration of 'identity' in the above lines is a paradoxical one, the identity referred to is shifting, changeable and linked to a multiplicity of phenomena rather than to a single fixed form. It amounts to a "dissolution and amplitude" which White sees in "white-blow of the waves" in his poem "Cape Breton Uplight".

The notion of the essential place of nature survives in the Celtic world even after the arrival of Christianity. "The Christian God does not appear in person in the midst of the landscape ... God, though hidden, was still approachable through nature."[239] As an example, White quotes one of the hymns of St Patrick.

> I bind myself today / to the power of the sky / to the light of the sun / to the light of the sun / to the force of fire / to the brightness of lightning / to the swiftness of the wind / to the depths of the sea / to the steadiness of the earth / to the hardness of rocks ...[240]

It is easy to trace a link between White's poetry and the early Celtic Christian poetry, namely that type which was called 'poetry of elements'. In the Celtic tradition, the elements often feature "collectively as 'the elements of God'... in poems and stories about weather, particularly stormy weather...[about] feats of endurance by exposure to the elements."[241] White's rendering of the topic is detheologized but retains the sense of respect for the ambivalent and unpredictable forces of nature.

On the other hand, there is also a sense of an ecstatic 'pagan' joy of dwelling and communication with these primal energies in his writing, a similar direct, 'communicative' attitude towards the elemental which is involved in the Celtic practice of weather-working. Admittedly, most Chinese nature poetry features rather a peaceful, restrained perception, the opposite of ecstatic dwelling mentioned above. Nevertheless, a quality which could be translated as 'unrestraint' (described as the poet's daring ambition to resemble the boundless forces of the elements and the universe) is one of the twenty-four qualities attributed to a poet by Sikong Tu, a late Tang poet and theoretician.[242] White's own approach to landscape deploys a variety of nuances between the receptive and the unfettered one.

Last but not least, what White's poetry and the "outdoor" Celtic spiritual poetry appear to have in common is the meaning of the experience of exposure to the elements. In the early Irish vernacular poetry, "hardship was an acknowledged part of this experience, indeed it sometimes seems to have been deliberately sought out so that nature became a place of challenge and transformation in the face of something greater than themselves [i.e. those seeking this experience]."[243]

White takes the notion of an affinity between Celtic nature poetry and Eastern poetic forms a step further by suggesting an ancient common origin.

> All across northern Europe and Asia, and over to North America the preoccupations, images and concepts which are noted in Celtic poetry and oriental art occur, too, in the shamanistic traditions of those northern

> areas which, perhaps, the classical writers were referring to when they spoke of the 'hyperboreans'.[244]

This notion outlines the context for the discussion of 'identity' in his writing. The lines of a poem by the Iglulik woman shaman Uvavnuk, one of the sources he quotes in support of his argument, may well be taken as a starting point indicating the principles of his own poetics, including the underlying erotic allusion of the concluding line.

> The great sea moves me
> it sets me adrift
> it moves me as a reed on the river
> sky and storms
> move the spirit in me
> and I am carried away
> trembling with joy[245]

What the voices above have in common is an absence of such notions as 'self' or 'opinion', there is little or no concern with 'society' or 'angst'. A Whitean poem too, attempts to "escape the limits of the lyrical 'I' "[246] and seeks to be more about 'becoming landscape' than about the perception of landscape, becoming one with the shore, rock, wind or movement of birds. We might talk about a suppressed subjectivity of the poetic persona, or to describe it in terms of the 'nomad thought': it does not "reflect upon the world" but rather is "immersed in the changing state of things". "It does not repose on identity, it rides difference."[247]

White's (sometimes minimalist) poetic accounts of intensive human communication with the environment range from

relatively ‘mild’ forms, such as: “There he walks / old earth-man / wrapped in weather”[248] to much more radical transformations of identity, such as the one in “The Crab Nebula”

> in this lighted chaos I
> no longer think or feel but am
> involved in this swirling matter
> the form I was no longer holding me
> the form I will be not even imagined

White himself refers to a ‘topology of being’ which he finds in Heidegger. “Beyond subject and object, the ‘being’ is thrown into an ex-static presence (a *Dasein*), in which he knows a ‘tuning’ (*Stimmung*) which isn’t just an internal psychic event, but is a delivered way of being in the world.”[249] His understanding of *Stimmung* is sometimes interpreted as universal means of communication between human beings and the world; rather than being an expression of subjectivity, interiority, it reveals a dialogic character of the world, it belongs to exteriority.[250]

It is such a ‘tuning’ that is perceptible e.g. in the atmosphere of the poem “Near Winter” which offers yet a different account of human presence in landscape. “Let winter now come” is a simple refrain, a sort of invocatory appeal which frames the poem and concludes each of its stanzas. In between, there is a list of transient landscape phenomena – a feature indicating an author cognizant of the art of haiku masters.

> (ox-laden sky / cold spume of rivers / nakedness of moors / mist in the forest / let winter now come… the

spoor of animals / blue in melting snow / the sun polished hard / birds and berries / bronzen shadow / water icy and thin / black crust of earth / hoar glint of stone / let winter now come…)

As the title suggests, the time setting itself is transitory, in between seasons, while the image of a fishing boat adds an element of 'restrained' waiting and contemplation. (Fishing itself may perhaps be considered a 'semi-mystical' activity, a sort of mundane meditation.)

seaweed covers the moon
wind harrows the firth
the islands glint in fog
I fish in cold waters
my boat black as a tar
the horned rowlocks
creak to the oar

let winter now come

"Winter wood" is also a 'seasonal poem' featuring a human – nature encounter, echoing the 'hyperborean' sensibility and informed by the Far Eastern poetics. The latter in particular is perceptible in the first stanza. The device used here (reminiscent of many of Wang Wei's poems) is that of evoking a colour without explicitly mentioning it by naming a detail commonly associated with it instead.

So I have put away the books
and I watch the last apples fall
from the frosty trees

The initial images of white and red then reappear in the following stanzas transmitted to "acorns stretching red shoots / into the hard soil" and "the white bark of the birches" which "was more to me than all the pages", while the whiteness of the pages, in turn, is only implied. In the next stanza, the metaphors used associate a more elementary and radical experience of nature than the refined opening lines, an experience which could be called shamanic.

> and what I read there
> bared my heart to the winter sun
> and opened my brain to the wind

And finally, with the recognition of a kind of a 'primordial' knowledge, prior to the literary one, in a moment of 'epiphany', the experience of a 'time-less' presence comes in which the distinction between the wood and the poet is dissolved.

> and suddenly / in the midst of that winter wood / I knew I had always been there / before the books / as after the books / a winter wood / and my heart bare / and my brain open to the wind

This kind of presence in the landscape also recalls the Heideggerian term *Gelassenheit,* a term originally applied to works of art; however, it seems to be equally relevant in reference to the perception of landscape. It implies a state of restrained perception, dwelling in openness, patience, exposure or the ability to abandon oneself.

The 'human component' in White's writing is often incorporated into the field of relations embodied in the landscape to an extent which recalls Zhuangzi's phrase: "subject and object are 'being born' simultaneously, with the separation between them becoming dissolved". "On the moor in January", another 'winter poem', employs the stock Whitean imagery of whiteness, emptiness and wind-swept spaces in which this type of extreme confrontation between individual identity and natural forces occurs.

> Moor wind and snow
> the roaring of nothingness in my ears
> the bite of it on my skin
> the craziness that takes hold of me
> so I lurch like a madman
> and laugh and cry
> and lose all proportion

The notion of nothingness here, just like the notions of emptiness and void elsewhere in White's writing, is associated with sharp sensations indicating anything but oblivion or numbness; it is a symptom rather than a negation of being. And craziness – is it not an extrinsic aspect of an ecstatic state as manifest in the shamanic trance or the 'lunacy' of ancient Chinese 'mountain poets – sages'?

> then the tree appears in its grotesquerie
> black and twisted , solitary
> and I hug it like a brother
> more than a brother
> rooted unrooted together

In White's view, the experience of exposure to the openness, wandering in space permeated by elemental energy (so symptomatic of his coastal landscapes), acceptance of the diversity of rhythms of the outer world in all its otherness, leads, paradoxically, towards a greater coherence of the individual. Stepping out of oneself, dwelling in the openness is not a singular event but a constant becoming leading towards acquiring a 'larger identity', which is, in his view, essential for a true 'poetic dwelling'.

The next step in the direction of a 'non-attachment' to the 'self' (a Buddhist notion – not at all irrelevant in the context of the present discussion of White's poetics) might well lead to Deleuze's and Guattari's concept of deterritorialization. In the case of the lines below (from the poem "Walking the Coast"), it would be a deterritorialization of oneself - "by renouncing, by going elsewhere".[251]

ah, the gulls: ...
...all haphazardly manoeuvring
a hymn to chaoticism
out in the wind
and the lifting waters
and myself there maybe no more
staring from my mind's wide open door
than *faoileag an droch chladaich*
the gull of a stony shore...

Human presence in space / landscape in White's verse may well be referred to by means of Deleuze and Guattari's term *haecceity*, more precisely as "a *haecceity* in constant interaction

with other *haecceities.*" Haecceity thus should not be understood as something related merely to the environment or background. Haecceity is constant becoming in which the subject dissolves in an event. It has itself, in the words of Deleuze and Guattari, "the individuality of a day, a season, a year...a climate, a wind, a fog..."

> This pool of water
> holding rock and sky
> traversed by the wing-flash of birds
> is more my original face
> than even the face of Buddha
> "The Region of Identity"

White's own fascination with the elements, his attraction to mapping of unknown territories is imprinted on his characters of exiled or deterritorialized poets and wanderers. In a number of poems, he expands and transforms the archetypal figure of a Romantic pilgrim into a more complex and less clearly defined character, which draws on Western as well as Eastern and various indigenous traditions.

In Buddhist tradition, by all means relevant to his writing, the practice of pilgrimage (not necessarily a visit to a particular sacred space) is intimately related to the notion of a "religious" (or transcendental) experience as a process (ongoing practice). In Japanese, the word for "walk" is used for Buddhist practice as well. The practitioner *(gyoja)* is then also the walker, one who does not reside anywhere, who abides in emptiness.[252]

A similar resonance (as pointed out by Gary Snyder) is to be found in "the word for Zen monk in Chinese, *yun shui,* literally

'clouds and water' taken from a line in Chinese poetry, 'To float like clouds, to flow like water…'". White himself includes a reflection on the idea of a Zen-journey in his retracing of the route of Matsuo Basho's *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* published originally under an intentionally ambiguously sounding French title *Les cygnes sauvages.*[253]

> The idea of a Zen-journey, or, let's say, meditative travelling (*tabi:* travelling without aim or purpose), was to 'let yourself go with the leaves and the wind', drifting along, attached to nothing (*hoge*). It meant living in *fuga* (*fu:* wind; *ga:* the beautiful), that is with a sense of fleeting beauty. It meant 'carrying in our heart the play of heaven', while enjoying the world, able to see it as interesting, lovely and bright.[254]

Such an attitude can be ascribed to what White calls his own 'travel – travail' ("*'bonjour, beaute',* I said / in passing, to the world / sea-cloud in the sky / *ozeanisches Gefühl*"), which always aims at "opening up of a larger consciousness, discovering a larger spatial realm of human experience".

It is worth mentioning that, despite his frequent and informed usage of Eastern concepts, White's notion of going beyond the self is not necessarily linked to any particular 'ego-less' doctrine; it could be summed up as acquiring a larger and more flexible self/ identity. "It is better, in short, to have an ego (not a *fixed* ego, but a *multiple* ego – like a flight of migratory birds) with perspectives than no perspectives at all…"[255]

I saw myself disappearing
and it was good
for I was still there
another

eliminate the intermediary me

I was Gauguin
I was a Chinese scholar

totally relaxed
plenitudinous
reality…
"The House of Insight"

Movement of body and thought as suggested by White, nomadic travel with no fixed paths may lead beyond the 'self', but that going beyond is complemented by coming back – transformed – in an ongoing process of physical and "psychomental" deterritorialization and reterritorialization, a process, which, in a way, mirrors the mode of movement ascribed to Dao. "The movement of Dao consists in returning" and "To go on is to be far, to be far is to return." [256]

Back in the Celtic world, White finds a model of a wanderer *par excellence* in the legendary Irish figure of Brandan.[257] Drawing on the stories recorded in the manuscripts of *Voyage of Bran* and *The Voyage of St Brendan* (dating from circa 8th – 10th century), he constructs a character of a voyager who epitomizes a type of a 'deterritorialized' poet, a potential alter-ego of White himself in a poem "Brandan's Last Voyage".

One had always wished to wander farther
Brandan by name and a name it was
that had sea in it
the breaking of waves and the memory of a poem...

The mentioned Celtic legends are complex, at least partly religious texts, "touching on the reputation of a historical king and incorporating a paradise myth, several prophecies, an unfamiliar cosmology and a myth of divine fatherhood."[258] White's use of the source material is eclectic, stressing the voyage element in it and evolving the connotations of St. Brendan's epithet 'the navigator'. His treatment of the Christian element in it, on the other hand, is almost heretical, if we take into account his casting doubts on the very existence of Brandan's faith in a section of his poem "Scotia Deserta".

Brandan was maybe a believer
but that's neither here nor there
first and foremost
he was a navigator
a figure moving mile by mile
along the headlands
among the islands
tracing a way
between foam and cloud
with an eye to outlines ...

It is quite symptomatic that spatial and dynamic metaphors are also used in the poem to define the meaning of God for the voyager. "God for him was the great gesture / that had set

everything in motion" and "a great idea sailing through space / brighter than the sun and the moon".

Brandan's long sail is a passage through the foreign space of the sea, a foreign element with respect to the earth, a space which is traditionally associated with the 'uninhabitable'. His quest for the 'Land of Promise' in White's rendition, may well be described in terms his reiterated topos of 'poetic dwelling' which is understood as synonymous with dwelling in the elemental. Michel Haar, in his Heideggerian study *The Song of the Earth*, comments on the subject of such dwelling in a similar strain:

> Thus opening itself to a vaster time and place, a dwelling always comprises and 'ek-static' dimension by which its inhabitant is drawn outside of the sphere of intimacy, of the hearth in the sense of the center, in order to be delivered to the opaque remoteness of an Earth and to the luminous distance of a world ... The suffocating in-stance [en-stase] of the at home must be broken, opened up so a free dwelling can take place ... for the poet, the desire for the free dwelling manifests itself as a desire for the abode among the elements.[259]

> Brandan the voyager would be Brandan the poet
> only if he could write a poem
> brighter and stronger than all other poems
> a poem full of the rough sea and the light
>
> oh, the words for it, the words for a dawning!
>
> to build a boat is good
> to sail the faraway seas is good

but to write a poem on which
the minds of men could sail for centuries
that was his ambition now…

Unlike the legendary Bran / Brendan, the hero of White's poem never gets to the desired island, at least there no explicit reference to the final stage of his voyage in the poem which finishes with an ambiguous open-ended couplet: "Farther and farther they pulled away / into the white unknown …". It is an ending fully in accordance with White's poetics, suggestive of the Eastern concept of pilgrimage which equates the path with the goal.

Last but not least, the account of Brandan's sail in White's poem is reminiscent of the notion of empirical, "nomadic" navigation, based on the wind, light and noise, the colours and sounds of the sea, as Deleuze and Guattari put it - and it is the 'exteriority' of these elements, these forces of the outside which the poet-voyageur is trying to 'translate' into poetry. Such a task, however, is not an easy one. For White (and his alter-ego Brandan), as for Saint-John Perse, the elemental seems to be the symbol of the effacement of every sign and every name, in the encounter with being – and yet, at the same time, a challenge:

Up here in the white country
any tree for a totem
any rock for an altar
discover!
this ground is suicidal
annihilates everything
but the most essential
poet – your kingdom ("Of the Territory")

A Voyage into the unknown, dwelling in and the mapping of a new territory is always potentially linked to poetics and poetry in White's writing. His own trip to Labrador – also a " journey to the north" described in his 'way-book' The Blue Road, was in the words of the author: "a search for a new area of thought in which the earth, the world might be revealed to us in a different way, which implies a new poetics".[260]

White's tribute to one of his 'spiritual ancestors' in a poem "Hölderlin in Bordeaux" stresses the same idea of a need for a 'new poetics' inspired by an encounter with the otherness of 'northern' landscapes.

the landscape had changed
utterly changed
he'd felt it crossing Auvergne
that awful night
losing his way
in the ice and snow
he's felt it
the landscape had changed
colder
craggier
more massive –
poetry itself would have to change

No gods to sing to
in a sun-filled theatre
a nothingness to face in an open expanse ...

It is symptomatic that it is always a move to the north which initiates the change of perception, the opening up of the consciousness. The northern (and coastal) landscape, on which White based his image of the "white land", is – perhaps more than other landscapes (except for the space of deserts and seascapes, the latter forming part of White's stock imagery as well) – perceived as more elemental than human space. It is 'chaotic', resistant to imposition of some kind of human or monotheist divine order. "In the northern landscape, a number of natural 'forces' can be encountered, a common (universal, general) unifying order, however, is missing … Its character is defined by a number of incomprehensible details, which influence one another."[261]

A move to the north in White's writing is almost a kind of a pattern symptomatic for deterritorialization. For White's exiled Ovid, "the north" is situated "on the cold and foggy banks of the impossible Black Sea"; a place "hard to swallow" at first. It is a marginal place dominated by the elements, a "white territory" which renders invalid all his previously acquired, 'civilized' knowledge.

> We all know Europe (or we think we do) …
> …but where we are now
> everything's uncertain
> all we've got
> is a host of questions

As early as the third stanza, however, the tone of his fictional monologue changes: "In fact, strangely, in time / I found exile to

my liking ...I've come up North / where I fill my expanded lungs / with a sharper air".

> Here we are at the world's edge
> a land of wind and shadow
> on the banks of this rolling obscurity
> a place of storm
> and hard to navigate:
> shallow waters
> with short, quick, jabbing
> waves
> thick fog rising over them
> through it as times you'll hear
> a wild swan whooping

White ascribes to his Ovid a notion of 'poetic dwelling' which, as we have seen, consists in stepping out of the 'ordered interiority' of the personal and the social, which means a deterritorialization. Hence his – Ovid's realization that "I've had enough of the all-too-human scene", that "what I've always been after / and rarely found / was what would take me / the farthest possible out of myself".

White's Ovid, who, same as "Hölderlin in Bordeaux", has undergone the transformational therapy of exposure to landscape (in his case to the "wind-blasted, storm-swept shores of the Black Sea") starts to write again, but with "none of the old decoration" ... "It's a new roughness I'm out for now / a new clearness" he confesses – naming again the principles of White's own poetics. A section in the latter part of the poem which reflects Ovid's

changed sensibility is notably reminiscent of the accounts of shape-shifting shamanic trance-journeys.

> I've been
> the flight of a crow
> I've been
> a shower of rain
> I've been
> black waves breaking in the sky
> I've been
> an unknown horizon

The shaman figure, which features in several White's poems, is equally at home in the open, in touch with the elements and the otherness of exteriority.

For White (as for Ted Hughes or Gary Snyder) this figure embodies a kind of ur-poet. The shamanic quest is understood as a form of *becoming*, a kind of deterritorialization, which links the practice of pilgrimage (also "psychomental") and poetic creation. In an ecstatic trance, which is a form of initiation and ultimate religious experience, the shaman leaves his body, passes through a series of 'heavens', and communicates with various spirits, seeking and gaining knowledge for the welfare of his community. But at the same time, he usually lives apart from the community he protects.

> There's a bear's head / and a crow's wing / at my door / I walk between / blue forest and / white shore / nobody knows what I'm doing here / what I'm looking for
>
> "Another little shaman song"

According to Eliade, a person called to be a shaman "seeks solitude, becomes absent-minded, loves to roam in the woods of unfrequented places, has visions, and sings in his sleep." Except for the initiatory trance, such a description could easily fit an adept of the hermit tradition. And in Ancient China, indeed, the two were closely connected.[262]

I share the spirit of running water
with the hunter and the fisherman

with the hunter
I share hare, deer and duck

with the fisherman
I share seal, whale and cod

but night and the mist
blue sky, the East and the West
and the beauty of young girls
are mine alone

If the final lines of the above poem sound surprisingly egotistic and 'un-shamanic' with respect to the shaman's vocation of a healer, White's essay "A Shaman Dancing on the Glacier" provides an explanation. There, he recalls that apart from the shaman's concern with individual sicknesses and collective problems in the tribe, he also practises simply "for joy".

> What the shaman … is out for, is an ecstasy (getting outside one's self as well as outside history), and de-

> conditioning. Starting out from a reduction (renunciation of social identity etc.) ... the shaman achieves a transcendence, a capacity for experiencing total life ... The Total experience of the earth is also a *luminous* experience ... which may be represented by deities (Mother of the animals, Supreme Sky Being) but it may also be de-theologised and reduced to 'white light' or 'the girl of the forest', the birch tree. It's with the 'forest girl' that the sexual element comes in, sexual relationships with 'the powers', outside the reproductive (family-domestic) chain, being part of the shaman thing.[263]

The element of *eros* in White's rendition of the shaman persona is thus in line with his concept of poetry which is based on the notion of the poet not as a "person with substance" but as he puts it, as "an I (undefined) with a desire". Commenting on his early collection *The Most Difficult Area*, White interprets such a desire – *eros* as something which "pushes to purification, tends towards liberation of the mind, drives you towards your real self, leads to a direct contact with light, to a spiritual density". [264]

The movement which permeates White's poetry and defines all of his characters ("what we are concerned with ... is the itinerary of a self towards its summit") is understood by the author himself as a movement "comprising of both *eros* and *logos* within a landscape that is chaos-cosmos".[265]

In Lieu of a Conclusion: Landscape and Mindscape

> *I think of two landscapes – one is outside the self, the other within. The external landscape is the one we see – not only the line and color of the land and its shading at different times of the day, but also its plants and animals in season, its weather, its geology, the record of its climate and evolution...* ***One learns a landscape finally not by knowing the name or identity of everything in it, but by perceiving the relationships in it – like that between the sparrow and the twig...***
>
> *The second landscape I think of is an interior one, a kind of projection within a person of a part of the exterior landscape... the speculations, intuitions and formal ideas we refer to as "mind" are a set of relationships in the interior landscape with purpose and order... The interior landscape responds to the character and subtlety of an exterior landscape,* ***the shape of the individual is affected by land as it is by genes.***
>
> *Barry Lopez*

Keith Sagar, in the essay "Hughes and his landscape" (*The Achievement of Ted Hughes*, Manchester UP, 1993) notes the disproportionate number of Welsh, Scottish and Irish poets which would be included in a list of the best twenty living British poets. As a possible reason of such a ratio, the deeper influence of landscape upon Celtic poets is suggested. In comparison with their English counterparts, they are "more likely to live in a landscape, as opposed to a town, and that landscape is likely to be more dramatic, insistent and wild than most English landscapes which are gentler and more amenable to human purposes and perspectives." What Sagar talks about is not only the availability of landscape as "subject matter"; it is landscape

as a "fund of vital images" and "a paradigm for [the poet's] understanding of life itself and his own inner being".

Such a prominent affinity with landscape, however, cannot be attributed to the Celts exclusively. Kenneth White, indeed, is a Scottish poet but much more likely to be labelled 'cosmopolitan' than 'Celtic', while Ted Hughes, to whom Sagar himself ascribes the above mentioned quality, grew up in the North of England. Still, the shaping influence of landscape upon their poetry is no less palpable. Although the "maps" created by their verse obviously differ, the conceptions of landscape and mindscape are inseparable for either of them. Incidentally, the three major theories applied throughout the previous chapters (Taoism, Heidegger's late philosophy and Deleuze's nomadology) suggest a similar tendency towards a certain parallelism between spatiality (way - path, topography, geography) and thought.

This study has also been designed as a kind of a map in which sometimes contrasting but complementary traces of thoughts and images intersect, a map which according to Deleuze is "open and connectable in all of its dimensions … detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification" (see p. 71).

The present interpretation of *The Remains of Elmet* is predominantely Taoist; it suggests the supremacy of the natural order (of Dao, of heaven-and-earth) as opposed to an imposed, man-made order - represented by religious and industrial 'colonization' of the region. There is a space, however, for other "entryways", too. The topos of nothingness epitomized by the empty space of the moors in Hughes recalls not only the Eastern concept of *sunyata* but also (the lesser-known) Heidegger's notion of Nothing which belongs to Being. Last but not least, the landscape of many of the *Elmet* poems may be seen as a

Deleuzian space of encounter of the 'smooth' and the 'striated', as a landscape that is, as Kenneth White puts it, "chaos-cosmos". It is interesting to note, that Hughes, in "Pennines in April", symptomatically likens the Pennine moors to the sea, to a 'smooth' space *par excellence* according to Deleuze: "If this county were a sea … these hills heaving / Out of the east, mass behind mass … landscapes gliding blue as water …". A distinct awareness of the elementary 'forces of the outside' is perceptible throughout the whole collection. Always, however, confronted with a sense of human presence in the landscape, of dwelling of the mortals "on the earth" and "under the sky" and overtly related to a personal experience.

> The geography of his childhood world became his map of heaven and hell; the distinctive interplay of the elements in that place gave him his sense of the creating and destroying powers of the world; … This landscape was imprinted on his soul, and in a sense, all his poems are about it. (Sagar)

Kenneth White's concept of landscape-mindscape originates in his childhood experience as well. In the essay "A Shaman Dancing on the Glacier" he writes about an area which he used to call 'up the back' when he was about eleven or twelve.

> This area took in about ten square miles of territory in Ayrshire, comprising field, wood, moor and hills … There would be the animals … But there were mainly birds: first of all the gulls circling and caterwauling round the cowp; hordes of crows in a sycamore wood; and, in a beech copse farther up, a band of heron – in

> spring, the ground would be strewn with broken pale-
> blue shells, blood-smeared, smelling of the sea.

Most of his verse, however, lacks such a direct personal dimension. Unlike Hughes, whose *Elmet* poems enact a "magical change from description to metaphor to myth" (Sagar), White consciously avoids such an approach: "no metaphor-mongering, no myth malarkey" ("Ovid's Report"). The sharpness, clarity and movement perceived in landscape make him think of lines "like lightning flashes", lines that "in their flying energy / would make things / touch and radiate in the mind" (ibid.). White's poetry does not aspire to the creation of a unifying "myth" of a particular region. The landscape of the extreme west of Europe he most often writes about is "scattered, precarious, fragmented – yet each fragment is *exact* in itself, there is no vagueness in this plurality" ("The Birds of Kentigern"). His mindscape then, parallels the plurality seen in the landscape. It involves a "movement of thought that goes beyond person and text"; hence his set towards linking perception of landscape with abstract notions rather than with personal, psychological or social aspects of existence, and his frequent use of quotations which "break the text (the writer's 'property') and open a multi-voiced network" (*Coast to Coast*).

Dwelling and drifting, identification and orientation – two forms of being in space, two aspects of being in the world, and consequently two contrasting but complementary concepts of landscape-mindscape. The poetry of Ted Hughes and Kenneth White might be seen as representing the above dyad respectively but in both of them, there is a tendency to embrace the other form.

There is the Ted Hughes "building" a myth of regeneration and paying tribute to the *genius loci* of the Calder valley and West Yorkshire moors in *The Remains of Elmet* (1979), and there is the Ted Hughes acknowledging in *Flowers and Insects* (1986): "I was still a nomad. / My life was still a raid. The earth was booty" ("Daffodils"). And there is also Kenneth White – a paradigmatic *homo viator* and an "intellectual nomad" who, nevertheless, attempts to reconcile in his vision of a "greater residence" Deleuze and Heidegger.

Résumé

Krajina „jako taková" nám nikdy není dána,
existují jen různé způsoby jak ji „mapovat"
J. Hillis-Miller

Krajina patřila vždy mezi základní témata poezie, přičemž básnické pojetí tohoto svébytného fenoménu se samozřejmě měnilo v závislosti na historickém a kulturním prostředí a v průběhu staletí podléhalo žánrovým a estetickým konvencím.

Předkládaná práce se však pokouší o „mapování" krajiny současné v dílech dvou britských básníků, Teda Hughese a Kennetha Whitea. Zároveň také sleduje určité paralely mezi jejich ztvárněním krajiny a pojetím prostoru v současné filosofii, zejména v knize Gilla Deleuze a Félixe Guattariho *Tisíc plošin.*

Součástí úvodních úvah o krajině v první kapitole je pak mj. i krátké zamyšlení nad pojetím přírody a krajiny v čínské kultuře a východní filosofii, k nimž se oba zmiňovaní básníci, byť v různé míře, obraceli jako ke zdroji inspirace. Příroda, a tedy i krajina, která je „podobou a tvarem přírody" (Š-Tchao), není v čínském myšlení a poezii projevem Stvořitele, ale něčím, co existuje samo o sobě (čínský pojem *zi-ran* označující přírodu lze přeložit jako „svébytnost" či „samo sebou"). Další čínský výraz pro přírodu, *cau-chua*, označuje „vznikání a proměňování" (či „tvoření a zanikání" a reflektuje tak chápání přírody jako neustále probíhajícího procesu, jehož součástí je i člověk. Toto vědomí sounáležitosti se projevuje i v přístupu k uměleckému ztvárnění krajiny, jehož předpokladem je eliminace vnímaného protikladu mezi subjektem a objektem, neboť „nahlížena jako objekt, věc není postižitelná, každá věc je poznatelná, jen poznáváme-li ji z ní samé" (Zhuangzi). Je také možno rozlišovat mezi vnímáním

(v buddhistickém pojmosloví *vedaná*) a poznáváním (*vidžňána*). První pojem označuje receptivní postoj, bezprostřední vnímání či „cítění“ věcí, zatímco druhý má blíže k porozumění a rozlišování. Otevřenost a vstřícnost je předpokladem prvotního, pojmově nezprostředkovaného vnímání krajiny, jež je považováno za prioritní. „Vnímání jež by následovalo až po poznání, není to pravé vnímání“, uvádí ve svých Malířských rozpravách, v kapitole o krajině, Š-Tchao a naznačuje tak určitou hierarchii způsobů malířského, básnického (ale i snad i obecně lidského) vztahování se ke krajině. Krajina není obrazem, akt přestavování (representatio) nestačí k jejímu pochopení. Intencionalita, s níž se běžně vztahujeme ke svému okolí, je ve vztahu ke krajině shledávána nedostatečnou. Poznání na základě „rozumem vyprojektovaných vztahů mezi jednotlivými komponentami daného fenoménu“ není schopno postihnout její holistickou povahu. Ta může být zakoušena spíše prostřednictvím „zdrženlivě vnímavého“ postoje, pro který Martin Heidegger (ve vztahu k umění) oživil starý termín *Gelassenheit*, tedy prodlévající vstřícnost, trpělivost, vystavenost, schopnost vystoupit ze sebe sama. Takovýto postoj se pak jeví jako nejbližší ekvivalent taoistického pojmu *wu – wej*, který je výrazem absolutní receptivity a lze jej přeložit v tomto kontextu jako neusilování (jindy jako nečinění či nezasahování do běhu věcí).

Obracíme-li se v další části úvodní kapitoly k pozdním esejům Martina Heideggera, je to proto, že jeho vymezení pojmu *bydlení* nepřímo odkazuje ke krajině, kterou lze také chápat jako prostor mezi *nebem* a *zemí*. „Bydlení je způsob, jakým jsi ty i já, jakým *jsme* my lidé na zemi ...“ Ale být „na zemi“ zároveň znamená být „pod nebem“ (Bauen Wohnen Denken). Heidegger pak dále

upřesňuje svůj pojem *bydlení* a oporu při tom hledá, jak je pro něj příznačné, v etymologii tohoto slova, která jej přivádí k závěru, že bydlení znamená být v míru na chráněném místě ale zároveň také chránit a uchovávat to, co člověka obklopuje. Zde se tak poprvé objevuje ekologická dimenze jeho filozofie, neboť „uchovávat zemi znamená více nežli z ní čerpat nebo ji využívat“.(ibid.) Krajinu lze však také nahlížet prostřednictvím Heideggerova pojmu „věc“, neboť i krajina, či spíše jednotlivá místa v krajině mají schopnost v sobě „shromažďovat“ to, co Heidegger nazývá „čtveřinou“ (tj. země, nebe, božští a smrtelní), a tedy zpřítomňovat vzájemné vztahy mezi nebem a zemí, člověkem a tím, co jej přesahuje. Smyslem bydlení je potom „uchovávat čtveřinu v tom, u čeho se zdržují smrtelníci: ve věcech“. Tak Heideggerův most, jako „věc“ v krajině „nespojuje pouze předem dané břehy řeky. Teprve díky spojnici mostu vystupují břehy jako břehy … Most shromažďuje zemi jako krajinu kolem řeky“ (ibid.) a tedy **sjednocuje** prostředí v **jeden celek.** V Heideggerově topografii má tak místo prioritní postavení před prostorem, teprve místo, jako „věc“, prostor otevírá. Krajina u Heideggera je krajinou humanizovanou, jejímž **středem** je vždy nějaký symbolický „most“, který předtím skrytý význam krajiny odkrývá. Krajina jako taková tedy získává svou hodnotu teprve prostřednictvím mostu.

V poslední části první kapitoly se pak zabývám teorií „hladkého“ a „zvrstveného“ prostoru („smooth“ and „striated“ space), kterou ve své knize *Tisíc plošin* rozpracovali Gilles Deleuze a Félix Guattari. Heideggerův model prostoru lze podle této teorie chápat jako prostor zvrstvený, typický pro usedlý – nekočovný („sedentary“) způsob osídlení, prostor, v němž cesty, zdi a lidská sídla rozdělují, ohraničují a strukturují krajinu. V

takovémto prostoru jsou linie a trajektorie podřízeny bodům a pohyb probíhá mezi těmito pevnými body. „Hladký“ prostor je naopak definován jako prostor „nomádský“, v němž jsou jednotlivá místa v krajině pouhými přestávkami na cestě, jejíž směřování není předem přesně určeno, a „bydlení“ samo (dwelling) je pak podřízeno cestě – trajektorii pohybu. (Jde tedy o zásadně jiné pojetí *bydlení* než u Heideggera.) Nomádský poměr k prostoru není vlastnický, stopy nomádského pobytu v prostoru jsou pouze dočasné a ten tak zůstává „hladký“, nestrukturovaný a nevymezený. „Hladkým“ prostorem tak může být nejen poušť a step, ale třeba i moře nebo polární krajina. Zároveň je však třeba zdůraznit, že hladký a zvrstvený prostor spolu vždy koexistují, hladký prostor je neustále „převáděn“ na prostor zvrstvený a ten se naopak obrací v prostor hladký. Zásadní místo v Deleuzově pojetí hladkého prostoru má pojem „haecceity“, termín, který označuje „naprosto odlišný způsob individualizace“ než jaký představuje „osoba, subjekt, věc nebo substance“, a který propůjčuje individualitu tak přechodným a proměnlivým a „nezformovaným“ fenoménům jako jsou roční období či atmosférické jevy (vítr, mlha, pohyb mraků po obloze). Základními charakteristikami „haecceity“ jsou pohyb a proměnlivost, schopnost ovlivňovat/působit a být ovlivňován působením jiného („to affect and be affected“). Deleuze a Guattari sice vycházejí z antropologických výzkumů ale zároveň ukazují, že principy „nomádismu“ lze aplikovat na jakoukoli oblast lidské činnosti. „Nomádské myšlení … nerozebírá svět na jednotlivé složky, neredukuje jejich mnohost na identitu „Jednoho“ … ale pohybuje se volně ve „vnějším prostředí“ („element of exteriority“). Závěr první kapitoly pak konfrontuje Heideggerovo a nomádské pojetí „bydlení“ s interpretací tohoto

pojmu v textech Kennetha Whitea, který se pokouší tyto dva rozporné postoje smířit. Zatímco Heidegger zdůrazňuje ve své koncepci „dwelling“ aspekt „setrvání v místě“, ve Whiteově pojetí jde spíše o kontrapunkt klidu a pohybu, o sounáležitost dvou forem lidské přítomnosti v prostoru / krajině, které označuje jako *errance* a *residence*.

Druhá kapitola se již obrací interpretaci krajiny v konkrétnímu básnickému textu, sbírce *Zbytky Elmetu* Teda Hughese (poprvé vydané v roce 1979). Tato sbírka, v níž Hughes vzdává poctu rodnému kraji (Elmet je jméno keltského království, které se kdysi rozkládalo na západě dnešního hrabství Yorkshire, a které nejdéle odolávalo anglosasské expanzi), zásadním způsobem transformuje obvyklý pohled na Teda Hughese spojovaný s jeho přídomkem the „animal poet“ a představuje jej jako básníka krajiny, která je v jeho pojetí živou a činnou silou, základnou, z níž člověk vzchází a jež mu zároveň klade odpor. V procesu vzájemného spolupůsobení je člověkem přetvářena a zároveň prostupuje každodenním životem člověka a stává se tak dimenzí lidské existence i mírou přináležitosti a odcizení člověka a přírody. Je konkrétním regionem s vlastní historií i metaforou mýtického universa. Hughes rozkrývá spletitou síť vztahů a vazeb mezi jednotlivými složkami krajiny, která, při zachování jejich plurality, je podřízena pouze vesmírnému řádu, „zákonu nebe a země“. Právě proto, že tato sbírka opakovaně zmiňuje tyto dva prvky krajinné konfigurace, které zároveň odkazují k vesmírému řádu Dao, nabízí se možnost taoistické interpretace vybraných básní, což je navíc opodstatněno skutečností, že Hughes se v období, kdy sbírka *Zbyky Elmetu* vznikala, o tuto filozofii intenzivně zajímal. V souladu s čínským myšlením lze

potom básně *Elmetského* cyklu interpretovat jako metaforu neustálého procesu změn, odumírání a regenerace, jenž se dotýká jak přírodního prostředí tak objektů člověkem vytvořených i člověka samotného. Krajinu *Elmetu* je možné také interpretovat jako prostor střetávání „hladkého" a „zvrstveného" prostoru v intencích Deleuzovy teorie nomádismu. Například v básni „Starý kostel v Heptonstallu" („Heptonstall Old Church") je stavba kostela spojena s představou ustavení určitého centra, s nastolením řádu v „hladkém" prostoru vřesovišť. Tento pokus o stratifikaci „hladkého" prostoru je však pouze dočasný a obraz trosek kostela v závěru básně signalizuje opětovnou „reteritorializaci" původního chaosu („The valleys went out / The moorland broke loose"). Tato sbírka je však také výrazem vzájemné spřízněnosti člověka a krajiny, výrazem touhy po „dialogickém propojení a integraci na základě vstřícného porozmění". Hughesovo básnické gesto pak lze shrnout slovy autora *Malířských rozprav*: „ Krajina to byla, jež mne pověřila, abych za ni promluvil, a je to ona, jež ze mne nyní vyvěrá ..." (Š-Tchao).

Kenneth White (1936), který se narodil v Glasgow, ale od šedesátých let žije ve Francii, je autorem, jehož dílo (básně a esejistické prózy) lze v mnoha ohledech spojovat s Deleuzovou koncepcí nomádismu. Zároveň však nepřestává být básníkem skotským, zejména básníkem skotské krajiny, kterou v jeho případě nejčastěji představuje východní pobřeží Atlantiku.

Třetí kapitola, nazvaná „Landscape and Identity 1: On Scottish Ground", se pokouší zařadit jeho básně do skotského literárního kontextu. Jeho proklamovaná preference geografie před historií, která je také jedním z rysů teorie nomádismu („The

nomads have no history, they only have geography."/Deleuze/), není totiž ve skotské literatuře ojedinělá. Podobnou tendenci k upřednostňování krajiny jako protějšku neuspokojivé historie lze najít v románech N. Gunna nebo L. G. Gibbona. Whiteova poezie je však zejména blízká některým básnickým textům pozdního H. MacDiarmida („On a Raised Beach", *In Memoriam James Joyce* či *The Kind of Poetry I Want*), a to nejen tematicky, ale i stylově. V labyrintu mnohačetných analogií a metafor, se kterými oba pracují, neexistuje pevná hierarchie: obrazy, myšlenky, jména a citáty jsou volně spojovány v proudu asociací. Tato technika na jedné straně připomíná surrealistické postupy, ale lze ji také přirovnat k tomu, co Deleuze nazývá „rhizomatic logic" (rhizom - dosl. „oddenek"), což je stejně nehierarchický způsob spojování, který umožňuje propojit kterýkoli bod se kterýmkoli jiným při zachování jejich plurality (multiplicity).

Ačkoli White bývá někdy považován za „outsidera" (G.Bowd), a jeho poezie je výrazně ovlivněna východní filosofií (taoismus, buddhismus), jeho „identifikace" se skotskou krajinou zůstává natolik patrná, že jej lze zařadit do té kategorii básníků, kterou Robert Crawford nazývá „identifying poets", neboť kategorie „identity" je v jeho pojetí dynamická a proměnlivá („For identity is dynamic, it alters ..." /Crawford/).

Čtvrtá kapitola („White's Poetics of Space") se zamýšlí nad pojetím prostoru ve Whiteově poezii, ale zároveň si všímá i ekologické dimenze jeho tvorby, která se promítá i do činnosti „hnutí", které nazval „International Institute of Geopoetics". Způsob, jakým Whiteova *geopoetika* dává do souvislosti básnické slovo a pohyb v prostoru upomíná na významy jež se váží k čínskému pojmu Dao, neboť i ten lze přeložit jednak jako

„cesta“ (případně i princip či metoda) a jednak jako „říkat“ či „mluvit“. Dao je však také dynamický kosmický řád, který udržuje veškerý život v jeho rozmanitosti pohybem „nekonečným množstvím cest, tam a zpátky, bez konce“ (O. Král). Princip sounáležitosti člověka a přírody v neustálém pohybu a proměnlivosti, k němuž pojem Dao odkazuje, je stejně typický i pro Whiteovo pojetí (původně Heideggerovy koncepce) „básnického bydlení“.

V další části (oddíl „White's Rhizomatic Topography“) se tato kapitola vrací k Deleuzově nomádismu, zejména k pojmům „hladký prostor“, „haecceity“ a „rhizome“ a naznačuje možnost čtení Whiteových básní prizmatem těchto koncepcí.

Na úvahy o prostoru pak navazuje oddíl nazvaný „The *topos* of Whiteness“, který se zabývá interpretací významu(-ů) bělosti, barvy, která je ve Whiteově poezii neustále zdůrazňována (přičemž pozoruhodná shoda s básníkovým jménem je, dle jeho tvrzení, skutečně jen náhodná). Jednu z příčin Whiteova zaujetí bílou předjímá ovšem už Melvillův *MobyDick* v kapitole „Bělost velryby“: „Je to snad proto, že svou neurčitostí předznamenává nemilosrdné pustiny a nekonečnosti vesmíru … Nebo snad proto, že bělost není v podstatě ani tak barva, jako spíš viditelný nedostatek barvy, a přitom sloučenina všech barev? Je to proto, že v zasněžené širé krajině nás ovane zvláštní němá prázdnota, plná významu …?“ White sice také spojuje bělost s prázdnotou („emptiness“), ale nikoli již s děsivostí, neboť prázdnota pro něj není symptomem negace, ale spíše, v souladu s východním myšlením, potenciální plnosti, („White-blow of the waves / confused beginnings / dissolution and amplitude / the emptiness is plenitude … /„Cape Breton Uplight”/).

Obrazy moře, oceánu a pobřežní krajiny, ke kterým se White neustále vrací, upomínají na romantické pojetí moře, jak o něm ve své studii *The Enchafèd Flood* píše W. H. Auden. Pátá kapitola („The Sea: Romantic Heritage, Nomadic Perspectives and 'Poetic Dwelling'") vychází z této Audenovy interpretace, která se v některých rysech překvapivě shoduje s Deleuzovou koncepcí nomádismu, zejména pokud jde o nedefinovatelný cíl putování („an abiding destination is unknown"), popření trvalého vztahu k místu („a lasting relationship is not possible nor even to be desired") a ahistorické pojetí („hladkého" prostoru) moře a pouště („there is … no historical change for better or worse"). White, stejně jako romantici, se také obrací k moři jako k nevyčerpatelnému „zdroji" inspirace a básnického jazyka samotného. Na rozdíl od romantiků však White ve svých básních nevyjadřuje touhu po „splynutí s přírodou" a moře pro něj zůstává prostorem „jinakosti" (J. Applewhite ve své knize *Seas and Inland Journeys* hovoří o „spatially extended otherness").

Poslední kapitola se vrací k interpretaci pojmu „identita" ve vztahu ke krajině, tentokrát s podtitulem „Hyperborean Connections", což je výraz, který White používá pro svou vizi kulturní spřízněnosti rozsáhlého teritoria, které se táhne od původních keltských oblastí přes sever Evropy a Asie až po Čínu a Japonsko. („All across northern Europe and Asia … the preoccupations, images and concepts which are noted in Celtic poetry and oriental art occur, too, in the shamanistic traditions of those northern areas which, perhaps, the classical writers were referring to when they spoke of the *hyperboreans.*") Čínská a keltská poezie a šamanské písně, které White uvádí jako jeden z důležitých zdrojů své inspirace, ovšem představují zcela jiné

pojetí identity než tradice západní. Neosobní charakter čínské přírodní lyriky, který implikuje „prostupnost" básnického subjektu a krajiny, i zdánlivé „ztotožňování se" s přírodními živly, které se objevuje v poezii keltské a šamanské, směřují spíše k popření identity jako něčeho stálého a neměnného a implikují existenci identity jiné, kterou White nazývá „rozšířená" („enlarged identity"). V jeho básních zprostředkuje dosažení takové „identity" právě krajina, a to krajina divoká, necivilizovaná, prostoupená energií přírodních živlů. Interakci mezi subjektem a krajinou ve Whiteově pojetí lze také interpretovat prostřednictvím Deleuzova pojmu „haecceity" („Haecceity is constant becoming in which the subject dissolves in an event.") V takové krajině se pak pohybují postavy básníků-poutníků, v nichž se prolínají rysy romantického poutníka a putujícího buddhistického mnicha s archetypem šamana a poustevníka. Každou z nich lze přitom chápat jako Whiteovo *alter-ego*, ať je to legendární irský mnich a mořeplavec Brendan („Brandan's Last Voyage"), Hölderlin vzpomínající na zimní horskou krajinu Auvergne („Hölderlin in Bordeaux") či Ovidius v exilu na pobřeží Černého moře („Ovid's Report").

Jedním z charakteristických rysů obou zmiňovaných básníků je směřování k otevřenosti („movement … from closure to openness"/Craig Robinson/), přičemž v textech Kennetha Whitea patří i toto slovo samo k nejfrekventovanějším. O stejném principu lze pak hovořit i pokud jde o předkládanou studii, jež si neklade za cíl systematizovat a vyvozovat jednoznačné závěry, nýbrž se snaží „mapovat" básnické teritorium. A právě mapu, podle Deleuze, lze chápat jako otevřenou strukturu. („The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions, it is detachable and reversible, susceptible to constant modification …")

NOTES

[1] Fitter, Ch., *Poetry, space, landscape*: Toward a new theory, Cambridge UP, 1995, p. 1
[2] Hillis-Miller, J., *Topographies*, Stanford University Press, 1995, p.6
[3] Gifford, T., *Green Voices:* Understanding contemporary nature poetry, Manchester University Press, 1995
[4] Quotations in the order mentioned: 1) Greening, J., *Poetry Review,* Vol. 83, No. 2, summer 1993, p. 21; 2) Astley, N., publisher of *Bloodaxe*, in The *Guardian*, 11 Aug. 1993, G2, p.4; 3) Morrison, B., Motion, A., eds., *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry,* Penguin 1982; all quoted in Gifford (1995), p. 2
[5] Llewellyn-Williams, H., *Poetry Wales*, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 69
[6] Gifford, T. (1995), p. 13
[7] Schama, S., *Landscape and Memory*, HarperCollins Publishers 1995, pp. 526-530
[8] Abrams, M. H., *Glossary of Literary Terms*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1985, p. 127
[9] Borgeaud, Ph., *The Cult of Pan in Ancient Greece*, Chicago 1988; quoted in Schama (1995), p. 526
[10] Schama, S. (1995), p. 526-7
[11] Ibid. pp. 527-8
[12] Ibid. p. 528
[13] Both quotations: Ibid. p. 529
[14] Abrams, M. H.,(1985), p. 128
[15] Ibid.
[16] Procházka, M., *Romantismus a Osobnost,* Subjektivita v anglické romantické poezii a estetice, Kruh moderních filologů, Pardubice 1996
[17] Abrams, M. H., *Natural Supernaturalism*, W.W. Norton &Company, New York. London 1973, p. 74
[18] Ibid. p. 88
[19] the two basic categories are complemented by a third, largely aesthetic concept of the *picturesque*, derived from the sublime with its vastness and formidability diminished
[20] Abrams, M. H., (1973), pp. 98, 101-102
[21] Robinson, C., *Ted Hughes as a Shepherd of Being.* New York: St. Martin's, 1989, p. 3
[22] May, Reinhard, *Heidegger's hidden sources,* East Asian Influences on his work, Routledge 1996
[23] Petzet, H. W., *Encounters and Dialogues with Martin Heidegger, 1929 – 1976*, Chicago 1993, p. 73; quoted in May, R. (1996), p. 3
[24] *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* quoted in May, R. (1996), p. 25
[25] Deleuze, G. *Difference and Repetition*, New York, Columbia UP, 1994, pp. 267, 269
[26] May, R. (1996), p. 25
[27] Král, O.,*I-t'ing , Kniha proměn*, Maxima Praha, 1995, pp. 13-14
[28] *Der Spiegel* 23 (1976), quoted in May, R. (1996), p. 8
[29] Both quotations from the English translation (of *Unterwegs zur Sprache*), *On the Way to Language,* New York: Harper &Row, 1971, pp. 5 and 8 respectively
[30] In an interview with Graham Parkes mentioned in May, R. (1996), p. 106
[31] Extract from his 1959 essay 'Hölderlins Erde und Himmel', *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* 11, (1958-60), quoted in Graham Parkes' 'Rising sun over Black Forest': Heidegger's Japanese connections, published in May, R. (1996), p. 104
[32] Robinson, C., (1989), pp. 1-2
[33] Robinson, C., (1989), p. 2
[34] Bowd, G., *'The Outsiders'*, Alexander Trocchi and Kenneth White, Akros 1998, p. 34
[35] *Coast to Coast,* Interviews and Conversations, Open World: Glasgow 1996, p. 68
[36] Amar, G., "Du surréalisme à la géopoétique",*Cahiers de Géopoétique,* 3, 1992, p. 22
[37] *Le Plateau de l'Albatros*, Paris: Grasset, 1994, p. 78; quoted in Bowd (1998), p. 33
[38] a phrase used in Brian Massumi's translator's foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus*, in definition of the word 'plateau' in Deleuze and Guattari; Athlone Press, 1996, p. xiv

[39] Š' Tchao, *Malířské rozpravy mnicha Okurky*, Votobia: Olomouc 1996, p. 45 (tr. O. Král)
[40] Chuang Tse, *Ve světě taoismu,* Avatar 1992, p. 153
[41] Sádlo, J., „Krajina jako interpretovaný text" in Kratochvíl, Z. *Filosofie živé přírody,* Herrmann a synové, Praha 1994, p. 179
[42] Ibid.(„krajin je živou soustavou")
[43] Schama, S., (1995) p. 10
[44] Ibid. p. 7
[45] Norberg-Schulz, Ch., *Genius Loci,* Odeon Praha 1994, pp. 6, 32
[46] Liu, James J. Y., *The Art of Chinese Poetry,* The University of Chicago Press, 1962, p. 49
[47] Lomová, O. *Poselství krajiny, obraz přírody v díle tchangského básníka Wang Weje,* DharmaGaia 1999, p. 22
[48] *TaoTeh Ching,* transl. John C. H. Wu, Shambhala pocket classics, Boston & London, 1990, p. 7
[49] Liu, James J. Y.(1962) p. 49
[50] Čuang-C' in *Kniha Mlčení,* Mladá Fronta 1994, p. 98, Czech translation from Chinese Oldřich Král
[51] The five *skandhas,* broadly translated as form, feelings, intelligence, behaviour, and consciousness, are traditionally used to demonstrate that there is no unchanging soul or self.
[52] Š'-tchao (1996) p. 26; commentary: O. Král
[53] Sobotka, M., *Descartes and Metaphysics,* quoted in Czech, J., *Znění ticha*, Pražská scéna, 1994, p. 24 (my translation)
[54] Heidegger, M., "Building Dwelling Thinking" in *Poetry, Language, Thought,* Harper and Row Publishers, 1971, p. 149
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid. p. 150
[60] Ibid. p. 151
[61] Ibid. pp. 152-3
[62] Ibid. p. 154
[63] Ibid. p. 155
[64] Ibid. p. 155
[65] Miller, J.Hillis, *Topographies,* Stanford UP 1995, p. 241
[66] Miller, J.Hillis, (1995) p. 242
[67] Miller, J.Hillis, (1995) p. 243
[68] Deleuze, G., Guattari, F., *A* ***Thousand Plateaus:*** *Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* The Athlone Press, London 1996, p. 478
In all subsequent references to this book the abbreviation ***TP*** is used
[69] *TP,* p. 23
[70] *TP,* p. xii,xiii
[71] *TP,* ibid.
[72] *TP,* p. 380
[73] Anny Milovanoff, "La seconde peau du nomade," *Nouvelles littéraires* no.2646 (July 27,1978), p. 18, quoted in *A Thousand Plateaus,* p. 557
[74] *TP*, p. 380
[75] "Building Dwelling thinking", p. 152
[76] *TP,* p. 385
[77] *TP,* p.386
[78] *TP,* p. 381
[79] *TP,* pp. 381-2
[80] Haecceitas – as the last perfection of a thing...constitutes the individual in its receptive character and consequently in its material being. (Efrem Bettoni, *Duns Scotus, The basic Principles of His Philosophy,* Washington, D. C. 1961)
[81] *TP,* p. 261
[82] *TP,* p. 479
[83] *TP*, p. 474
[84] *TP*, p. 382
[85] *TP*, p. 383
[86] *TP*, p. 495

[87] *TP*, p. 482
[88] *TP*, p. 482
[89] *TP*, p. 379
[90] Anny Milovanoff , "La seconde peau du nomade," *Nouvelles littéraires* no.2646 (July 27,1978), p. 18, quoted in *A Thousand Plateaus,* p. 557
[91] K. W., "Elements of Geopoetics", *Edinburgh Review,* No. 88
[92] Ibid.
[93] Š' Tchao (1996), p. 47 (paraphrases)
[94] *TP*, p. 474
[95] Hughes's interest in Taoism is discussed e.g. in Leonard M. Scigaj's book *Ted Hughes,* Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1991
[96] *TaoTeh Ching,* transl. John C. H. Wu, Shambhala pocket classics, Boston & London, 1990, p. 1
[97] Lao-C', *Tao te ťing,* DharmaGaia, Praha 1997, p. 30, commentary B. Krebsová
[98] Král, O., *I-t'ing* , *Kniha proměn,* Maxima Praha, 1995, p. 8
[99] Ibid. p. 9
[100] Š' Tchao (1996), p. 47 (paraphrases)
[101] Gifford, T., Roberts, N., *Ted Hughes, A Critical Study,* Faber and Faber, 1981, p. 232
[102] *Tao teh Ching,* (1990), p. 7 (section 5)
[103] Helpach, W., *Geopsyche*; quoted in Norberg-Schulz, (1994), p. 32
[104] Kratochvíl, Z., *Filosofie živé přírody,* Herrmann a synové, Praha 1994, p. 95 (my translation)
[105] Eliade, M., *Patterns in Comparative Religion.* Cleveland and New York, 1963, pp. 269, 369; quoted in Norberg-Schulz,(1994), p. 27
[106] Eliade, M., *Patterns ...,* p. 242: quoted in Fitter, Ch.(1995) p. 27
[107] *TP,* p. 383
[108] The significance of the Hermetic/Neoplatonic myth of the imprisonment of Divine Light in Hughes' Elmet poems is dealt with in greater detail in the study of Ann Skea: "Regeneration in *Remains of Elmet*", first published in *The Challenge of Ted Hughes,* (Ed.) Sagar, St. Martin's Press, London, 1994
[109] *TP,* p. 311
[110] Ibid.
[111] *TP,* p. 312
[112] Ibid.
[113] *Tao teh Ching,* (1990), p. 7 (section 5)
[114] Ibid. p. 111(section 78)
[115] Ibid. p. 10 (section 8)
[116] Ibid. p. 2. (section 2)
[117] Ibid. p. 34 (section 23)
[118] Robinson, C.,(1989), p. 208
[119] Hughes, T, notes to *Elmet*, Faber and Faber, 1994
[120] Gifford, T., Roberts, N.,(1981), p. 242
[121] Braudel, F. *On History,* The University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 12
[122] Norberg-Schulz, Ch.,(1994), p. 6
[123] Gifford, T.(1995) p. 128
[124] MacCaig, N., *Collected Poems: A New Edition,* London 1990, p. 297
[125] Crawford, R. *Identifying Poets, Self and Territory in Twentieth Century Poetry,* Edinburgh UP 1994
[126] "The Ballad of Kali Road"
[127] *Verse,* Vol. 6, No. 3, June 1989, p. 18; reprinted in White, K., *Coast to Coast, Interviews and Conversations 1985 – 1995,* Open World 1996, pp. 54 - 55
[128] McCrone, D., *Understanding Scotland, The Sociology of a Stateless Nation*, Routledge 1922, p. 185
[129] Ibid.
[130] *On Scottish Ground,* collected essays, Polygon 1998, p. 2. Here, White explains the reasons for his preference of Alba to Scotland. He considers Pokorny's argument in *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie,* which points out the fact that all places linked to the name Alba in Italy are mountainous and suggests that its non-Indo-European root means 'heights'.
[131] "The White World Interview", *Circles* magazine, Autumn 1989
[132] *Westcoast* magazine No.6, p. 17

[133] *SG,* "The High Field", p. 176
[134] Bowd, G. (1998) p. 37
[135] *The History of Scottish Literature. Volume 4: Twentieth Century* Craig, Cairns ed., Aberdeen University Press, 1987, p. 218
[136] *TP,* p. xi; On p. 379 of *A Thousand Plateaus,* Deleuze further comments on "the classical image of thought" associated with the State apparatus as follows: "the striating of mental space it effects, aspires to universality". The nomad thought, on the other hand, "rejects this image … it does not ground itself in an all-encompassing totality but is on the contrary deployed in a horizonless milieu that is a smooth space, steppe, desert or sea.",
[137] *TP,* p. 21
[138] *The History of Scottish Literature. Volume 4:* (1987), p. 226
[139] Abrams, M. H. (1985), p. 183
[140] Bowd, G.,(1998) p. 35
[141] Subtitled 'Collected Shorter Poems 1960-1990' and 'Collected Longer Poems' respectively, both books were published by Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, the former in 1990, the latter in 1989
[142] *TP,* p. 12
[143] *The History of Scottish Literature. Volume 4* (1987), p. 226
[144] McManus, T., "Kenneth White: A Re-sourcing of Western Culture", *Chapman 59,* January 1990
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[263] "A Shaman dancing on the Glacier" in *On Scottish Ground*; it is interesting to note that Deleuze and Guattari refer to a similar, 'non-reproductive' notion of sexuality in connection with the Yin-Yang philosophy of Tao. It is contrasted with the Confucian understanding, which stresses the 'procreative ends', "the side facing the strata, organisms, State, family…"(*TP,* p.157)
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