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International Perspectives in the Poetry of Derek Mahon

Derek Mahon has always operated outside the comfortable and comforting confines of Irish poetry. In an interview with Harriet Cooke, he has said that Irish writers "should be judged by London, New York standards",¹ in effect distancing himself from the Irish literary scene. On the one hand, Mahon dislikes the cosiness of a literature which does not look beyond its immediate environment, which does not search for the major theme among the minor ones; on the other, he is attracted to an art which transcends its localism without compromising the integrity of its sources, work by writers such as Tate, Faulkner and Camus. If we find an unusual degree of cosmopolitanism in Mahon's poetry, therefore, it is not because he wants to desert the unfashionably provincial for the appeal of the international but because his yearning for the major theme masks a commitment to brightening and making sense of the chaos of home. He sees himself as a poet rather than an Irish poet, yet the experience which informs his poetry validates claims that there is a reciprocity at work. Mahon is obviously aware of the mutually enriching nature of this relationship.

There are two clear ways in which Mahon's poetry assimilates the international values and universal artistic themes to which he is drawn. They provide the dynamic for a work that is grounded in emotional unease and political stasis but which is fundamentally nurtured on this discord. Firstly, Mahon's *oeuvre* is well-stocked with versions of work by poets from Villon and Ovid to Brecht and Pasternak; he has published a version of Nerval's *Les Chimères*, selected and translated Jaccottet's *Selected Poems* and produced versions of two Molière plays. Secondly, his output to date contains many poems which owe their inspiration to paintings and writings by artists ranging from Uccello and de Hooch to Hamsun and Camus. This essay aims to examine how these two modes of assimilation function. It will also suggest that Mahon's internationalism is intrinsically a method for self-examination and self-understanding and that the universal aspect of his work affords an opportunity to

1. "Harriet Cooke talks to the Poet Derek Mahon", *The Irish Times*, 17 January 1973, p.10.

look at the question of artistic commitment and the validity of poetry in a new light.

Mahon's passion for re-working his poetry, as evident in the numerous revisions of and amendments to texts in *Poems 1962-1978* and *Selected Poems*, encourages a retrospective approach to his work. With this in mind, it is most appropriate to begin this examination of these two assimilative methods by looking at those 'art' poems which find their primary stimulus in the work of European writers and painters. The basic characteristics of these 'art' poems are a descriptive and interpretative urge complemented by an effort to personalise or internalise the works in question. It is clear that personalisation of a work of art by the spectator or reader is the correlative of universalisation by the artist, just as analysis returns a poem to its "stereoscopic origins — the way it existed in the poet's mind".² The 'art' poems themselves invite a universal view of life but also suggest methods for their deconstruction.

The poem "Courtyards in Delft" (p.120)³ is a case in point. Inasmuch as it gives enough detail about the painting under scrutiny it is descriptive — a study of de Hooch's piece confirms the accuracy and attentiveness of Mahon's eye. However, the poem is actively interpretative in three ways. To begin with, the vocabulary employed goes beyond the function of mere description. "Oblique", "thrifty", "modest but adequate", "clings", "trim composure" — all of which occur in the first stanza — contribute to Mahon's effort to convey an image of "chaste / Perfection". His diction is partisan. It eases the task of stanza two, effacing itself to an extent because of the tenor it suggests. If stanza one is largely concerned with telling us what the painting is, stanza two informs us as to what it is not. The conventions and details prominent in seventeenth century Dutch painting are absent from this example from de Hooch. We may "miss the dirty dog, the fiery gin", yet this austerity is, one feels, a true reflection of life. Mahon applauds de Hooch's refusal to force a point. In any case, we are left with a strong impression of a place where "nothing goes to waste".

The third interpretative effort coincides with Mahon's personalisation of the painting and poem. Here, he imagines himself as having lived as a boy in the house whose courtyard is depicted by de Hooch. Mahon has explained his attraction to de Hooch and Vermeer as stemming from a recognition of their protestant bourgeois

2. Joseph Brodsky, "In the Shadow of Dante", *Less Than One* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p.105.

3. All page references are to *Selected Poems* (London and Oldcastle: Viking and Gallery, 1990) unless otherwise stated.

townscapes, so reminiscent of his native Belfast.⁴ Now, the link is established by this imaginative leap and the authenticity of the descriptions, as if from memory:

I lived there as a boy and know the coal
Glittering in its shed, late-afternoon
Lambency informing the deal table,
The ceiling cradled in a radiant spoon.

Mahon contrasts himself with his "hard-nosed companions" who dream of warfare while he contents himself with "a taste for verse". The final line of the poem, however, shifts the focus entirely. Obviously referring to Dutch colonial expansion in the Africa of the time, Mahon describes one theatre of war as "parched veldt" but it is not until the last word that his personalisation of the painting is given a concrete political basis. The "fields of rain-swept gorse" conjure images of the Williamite campaign in Ireland, a central historical event in the culture not only of Mahon's Belfast but of the whole island. The incongruity of the word "gorse" in a text whose ostensible exercise is criticism of a European work of art allows for an alternative reading of the poem, one in which Mahon is attempting to understand his own cultural heritage. The device in the poem paradoxically enables the objectivity needed to evaluate one's own past.

The European character of "Courtyards in Delft" is an example of the type of tensions in Mahon's poetry. He urges us to make the connections available to us in a text where the discordant images facilitate a deeper interpretation. The internationalism of this method of investigation draws attention to the universality of local themes, suggesting that a Dutch masterpiece depicts ordinary people and objects and that the present political chaos in the North is related to the abstract historical entity of Dutch colonialism. The complexity of Mahon's poems reflects a complex political understanding.

Another poem which derives its impetus from this two-way relationship is "Death and the Sun" (p.192). Here Mahon constructs the polar relation between the global and the provincial in a more obvious way by alternating between Ulster and the international terrain of Camus's writings. The initial tactic here is to establish a temporal bond between himself and the subject of this elegy. Camus's death is related side by side with details of Mahon's teenage activities at the time, thus, grounding the international in the familiar. We relate to Camus through Mahon.

4. In a lecture and slide-show, "A Poet Looks at Paintings", in the National Gallery of Ireland, 6 March 1990.

A web of influence and shared outlooks is elaborated, establishing Ulster as a counterpoint to Camus's universality and aligning Mahon's philosophy with humanist existentialism. The mention of his mother in stanza one is a deliberate link with *The Outsider*,⁵ suggesting a connection between Mahon and Mersault. This connection is extended in stanza three when the racial tensions of French Algeria, which provide a metaphor for Mersault's inner conflicts, are transferred to the pre-1968 sectarian Ulster of Mahon's youth. Initial naivety gives way to a dour worldliness.

This level of personalisation is a mode of interpretation which dexterously balances a summary of the Northern situation with an overview of Camus's development as a writer and philosopher. The internal tensions erupt into a plague of violence and rats where the "cordon sanitaire" and "St. James Infirmary" occupy the same topography.

Thus, familiarity with Camus's work leads Mahon to examine more judiciously the real environment of Ulster on which a study of Camus is intended to throw light. In stanza four, Mahon depicts a province rigidly entrenched in its own social anachronisms, signified most adequately by "Wee shadows fighting in a smoky cave / Who would one day be brought to light". Mahon both embraces Camus's "kind" and indicates how he feels his home province might escape its plague. A radical shift in how Ireland perceives and deals with its problems is urged. The disabling and stagnant rituals of myth need to be supplanted by an existentialist mode of political and social expression, making the social individual and not the anonymous tribe the focus of its activity.

The scenario suggested by "smoky cave", "Sisyphus' descendants" and "neolithic troglodyte" is one where evolution, if not time, has stopped. Mahon's poetry, with its philosophical undercurrents, is invariably forward-moving and here the humanist existentialism of Camus, rejecting suicide and political stagnation, prompts Mahon in the final stanza to envisage the day when the caveman quits his "dark cinema" to stand

... at last,
Absurd and anxious, out in the open air
And gazes, shading his eyes, at the world there.

"Death and the Sun" is not in itself proof that Mahon sponsors the existentialist approach. However, it does illustrate how he has

5. Albert Camus, *The Outsider*, trans. by Joseph Laredo (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983).

assimilated that "style of philosophizing",⁶ what his sources are and to what purpose he applies its concepts of thought and action. The attempt to discuss the North, so bogged down in the stasis of opposing mythologies, within the parameters of a Continental mode of thought that has hardly taken root in Ireland and Britain, is itself a radical contribution to a political dispute. If Mahon's internationalism highlights Ireland's insularity it also offers the opportunity for participation in universal dialogues.

Mahon's 'nuclear' "Tithonus" (p.168) is in many ways a synthesis of his techniques and aims in the 'art' poem. Prompted by Tennyson's poem rather than a version of it, it transforms nineteenth century Romantic despair into modern existential anxiety. Its points of reference are numerous, from the epigraphs quoting Beckett and the Bible, to Greek legend and Heraclitus. Its history is truly international — Genghis Khan, Krakatoa, Thermopylae, Hiroshima — and yet minutely local — "the leaf-plink // Of rain-drops", "the lizard-flick // In the scrub", "the changing clouds". "Tithonus" functions as a condensation of the strains between the individual and the social, between the minute and the international. Its formal structure enhances the impression that Tithonus's misery comprises mental youth but physical decay, the stanzas so compressed that a rhythm is barely maintained to link the catalogue of observations.

Mahon utilises the Tithonus legend as a metaphor for his own artistic condition. The majority of his poems involve a conflict with history in which artistic independence is set off against the historical forces at work within the "tribe". In "Tithonus" the voice of the poem is wearied by the hopeless march of history and terrified by the prospect of "Another eternity, / Perish the thought". The metaphor dramatises Mahon's situation by making connections from the unfamiliar to the familiar, projecting his case onto a screen where the various symbols are universally recognisable and accepted.

However, the more fundamental significance of this myth is that, in relation to Northern Ireland, it implicitly includes the tribal and sectarian unrest there in its weary catalogue of a destructive history. Vast campaigns of terror and annihilation, holocausts, nuclear devastation, barbarity, all merit just a mention in Tithonus's inventory of past events. Now, "nature is dead" and an "unquiet silence" reigns. The victim can speak for the first time:

The irony here
Is that I survive
While the gods

6. John Macquarrie, *Existentialism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), Chapter 1.

Who so decreed,
 And so many more,
 Are long since dead.

The metaphor implies that only outside or beyond history can the artist speak, but with no community to hear his words, the freedom is useless. Thus, Mahon imaginatively dramatises his own dilemma. The corollary of this is that the futility of violence — the standard historical mode of human expression — is brought to its logical end. The prophetic tone here is merely a rarefied form of fear since Mahon's distaste for conventional historical being is nevertheless tempered by a genuine belief in humankind. Basically, Mahon's objectivity and philosophical detachment are methods of understanding. His attraction to international art is both a means of giving himself creative space and a way of investigating his own frailties in a wider cultural and social context.

Mahon's versions and translations underline his "commitment to change".⁷ Basic thematic fidelity is nevertheless not a restriction on Mahon's ability to incorporate these poems into his *oeuvre* in a revelatory way. Of course, he is free to choose which writers he translates but the degree to which they are accommodated only makes their choice more interesting. Versions of Villon and Corbière, for instance, highlight a motif common in Mahon's poetry, that of the lonely artist, severed from his community, suffering with "A lifelong intimate ... called Ennui" in order to write yet questioning the merit and relevance of what he produces. This is a fundamental concern in Jaccottet also. To be sure, Mahon's attraction to these writers provides a new perspective on his work in the way that *Imitations* does on Lowell's. Common ground is a good basis for critical enquiry.

However, the most notable point in these poems is that the vocabulary and use of language are entirely Mahon's. This is a prerequisite for sensitive translation, of course, but in Mahon the familiarity extends to content. Jaccottet's mistrust of words and poetry, Nerval's phenomenological enquiry into spirituality, Pasternak's fundamental faith in human beings, are all themes intrinsic to Mahon's poetics.

Looking to 'international' London and New York for his critical yardstick, Mahon has adjusted Yeats's advice by learning a good deal of his trade from international writers. Summoning a community of artists who share the same concerns as himself, he authenticates his own poetic stance both by showing evidence of an orbit of themes

7. John Byrne, "Derek Mahon: A Commitment to Change", *The Crane Bag*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Greystones, 1982), pp.62-72.

beyond the narrowly local and by identifying with that artistic circle. Translation is almost an ideal medium for this since the basic concepts of the original remain intact and yet they have been domesticated or familiarised by virtue of the translator's poetic diction.

"Brecht in Svendborg"⁸ is a fascinating example of how Mahon 'translates'. The poem is, in fact, a collage of excerpts from English versions of Brecht's *Svenderborger Gedichte*⁹ blended into a typical Mahon form, a sort of hybrid of version and 'art' poem. "Brecht in Svendborg" is divided into two parts, "A Danish Refuge" and "To the Unborn". Already we can recognise hints of common Mahon themes — exile and apocalypse. In the first section, we are presented with a picture of Brecht at work, exiled in Denmark while the Nazis perform naval manoeuvres in the nearby sea. The scene is one specific to Brecht, detailed by the mention of *Galileo*, a poster from the Schiffbauerdamm and a short catalogue of other mementoes from home, to "make everything familiar". It is this detail which establishes the pain of Brecht's exile and this pain registers as familiar with readers of Mahon. In other words, up to this point, Mahon's attraction to these Brecht poems is primarily on a thematic level since there is little scope for personalisation. The final stanza, however, strikes a note which recalls his own effort to understand exile:

This could be home from home
If things were otherwise.
Twice daily the mails come
Up the sound in a ship.
I notice that the house
Has four doors for escape ...

This is an unmistakable echo of the second part of "Afterlives" (p. 50) in which Mahon returns to Belfast, painfully conscious of himself as a stranger in his home town. The point is, however, both for Brecht and Mahon, that things are not otherwise. The necessity of escape is physically evident, both as a theatrical metaphor for Brecht and a shattered reality for Mahon. The linking image in each is the ship, bringing mail from home for Brecht, bringing Mahon home to the unrecognisable "places I grew up in".

The second section of the poem, "To the Unborn" is much more obviously re-worked by Mahon. An apocalyptic air pervades the

8. In *The Hunt by Night* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.17. I have chosen this version of the poem since Part 2 is not included in *Selected Poems*.

9. Bertolt Brecht, *Poems 1913-1956* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1979).

poem, one not so easily dispelled as it is in "One of these Nights" (p. 150). Here, the unborn symbolise the judgemental future generations, confronting Brecht just as the "ideal society which will replace our own"¹⁰ seems to exercise Mahon. Imagining an extreme future — of kindness or of vegetable and mineral dominion — polarises the argument which in turn highlights deficiencies, as Mahon's international themes reflect on what is narrow-mindedly local in Irish literature. Thematically, this section focuses on the notion of artistic responsibility. Conscious of living in "a dark time" Brecht suffers anxiety over the morality of his occupation as a writer and the ethics of surviving in exile, pained by the thought of what is happening at home — in the real world — yet somehow inoculated against it. Like Tithonus, he suffers in spite of his concern, a victim of his own artistic conscience.

"To the unborn who will emerge / From the deluge / In which we drown" Brecht begs for lenity. Again, this is reminiscent of Mahon's numerous "ventriloquised"¹¹ pleas to the gods not to abandon us. There is a fundamentally Christian mind at work here in which the fear of abandonment, of being banished to a godless eternity like Tithonus, compels a rigorous self-examination. Mahon is willing to adopt the voice of the poet as speaker and observer. The issues tackled here encompass more than Brecht's Nazi Germany or Mahon's sectarian Belfast. Specific ills are merely symptoms. Although they must be faced, only a broader knowledge will make the prospect of a "kind future" feasible.

Mahon's version of Brecht typifies a technique of his whereby the translator's magnet is run over the disparate elements of content, form and diction in both parties to the operation, realigning the pieces into a new, conglomerate whole. In "Brecht in Svendborg" we witness Mahon's urge to prophesy, a compulsion that is born of his lack of belonging to and distance from the world. In "Pythagorean Lines",¹² a more faithful rendering of Nerval's original than "The Mute Phenomena", Mahon reveals to us one of the sources of his phenomenological approach to man's loss of spirituality. Again, this is a mode for approaching the universal ills of man. Mahon adopts the same indignant tone as Nerval,

Man, do you think yourself the one reflective
Thing in this lively world?

10. "The Mute Phenomena", p. 64.

11. Seamus Deane, "Derek Mahon: Freedom from History", in *Celtic Revivals* (London: Faber, 1985), p.157.

12. Derek Mahon, *The Chimeras* (Dublin: Gallery, 1982), p.20.

[Homme, libre penseur, te crois-tu seul pensant
 Dans ce monde où la vie éclate en toute chose?¹³]

incredulous of man's false superiority and sounding a note of warning to those who do not exist within nature. He captures the brightness of tone and delivery which saves Nerval's original from self-righteousness. In "The Mute Phenomena" Mahon is far less patient with those who "disregard the satire / Banded among the mute phenomena". He mocks their empty sense of self-importance:

Be strong if you must, your brusque hegemony
 Means fuck-all to the somnolent sun-flower
 Or the extinct volcano.

Both of Mahon's versions enumerate the ordinary inanimate objects amongst which not only a 'civilisation' exists but God hides. Translating Nerval enables him to provide a thematic focus for work such as "The Studio", "Lives", "Ovid in Tomis" and "Table Talk", where this notion of susceptibility is also an affirmation of the rich possibilities of life. Of course, the distance insinuated between a fatigued humankind and the deprived "soft / Vegetables where our / Politics were conceived"¹⁴ and the "Shy minerals"¹⁵ establishes a polarity in order to scrutinise the human species. Mahon uses contrast to achieve clarity, subjecting all to a rigorous scientific investigation in a country where "the fog / Of time receives the ideologue".¹⁶ His awareness of the imaginative possibilities of life beyond the inadequacy of political interaction serves as a base from which to work towards understanding.

Mahon's ascription of life to inanimate things is a written variation on a painter's technique, one to which he draws attention. In "The Studio" (p.30), originally entitled "Edvard Munch", Mahon brings the earthy quality of Munch's studio a logical step further, imputing to the "deal table", the "ranged crockery", the "frail / Oil-cloth" and the "simple bulb in the ceiling" an organic desire to return to their roots or at least escape the "quivering silence" of the man-made environment. Similarly, in "A Portrait of the Artist" (p.20), originally entitled "Van Gogh among the Miners", Mahon has the artist explain his painting as

13. Gérard de Nerval, "Vers Dorés", *Oeuvres*, Vol. I (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), p.8.
14. "The Golden Bough", *Poems 1962-1978*, p.66.
15. "The Antigone Riddle", *Poems 1962-1978*, p.67.
16. "Derry Morning", p.123.

A meteor of golden light
 On chairs, faces and old boots,
 Setting fierce fire to the eyes
 Of sun-flowers and fishing boats,
 Each one a miner in disguise.

Likewise, Mahon seeks to celebrate life. If "God gutters down to metaphor", then Mahon responds to life in its alternative, imaginative manifestations.

"Pythagorean Lines" is more explicit in its handling of this theme. Although close to Nerval's original, it echoes Mahon's earlier version and thereby implies a sense of apocalypse, as if human life was about to be replaced by a God-sponsored hegemony of inanimate objects. In other words, Mahon uses this theme to invigorate his search for clarity and not necessarily to promote a non-human civilisation. His development of the theme is almost scientific, lacking the sensuality of Baudelaire who also touched on this idea in "Correspondances".¹⁷ The "occasional cries of despair" from Munch's furniture symbolise an awareness of our divorce from our original selves and perhaps Mahon is conscious of how faint his voice is in a dehumanised and dehumanising society of advanced technology and jaded ideologies.

Nevertheless, the poet must continue to speak with integrity and honesty, no matter how faint his or her voice. This fundamental belief links Mahon to Philippe Jaccottet with whom he shares a profound doubt about the validity of poetry and the poetic act, but in the face of which he nonetheless continues to write. "The Sea in Winter" (p.113), "Rock Music" (p.100) and "Table Talk" (p.139) depict the poet in isolation, cut off from the rest of the world by the nature of his occupation. It is this distance from the 'real' world which initiates doubt since operating on the periphery of life invariably begs questions about relevance and responsibility. Jaccottet's poetry is similarly abundant with images of the poet in solitude, ill at ease with the world outside yet dissatisfied with his own contribution to it.

The uniformity and evenness of Mahon's translations of Jaccottet attest to the common ground they share. They appear to occupy a space close to Beckett, their doubts seeming to invite silence rather than active change. However, Jaccottet finds Beckett "too systematic"¹⁸ and is more prepared to articulate his doubts even if he

17. Charles Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Paris: Librairie, José Corti, 1968), p.34.

18. Philippe Jaccottet, *Selected Poems*, selected and trans. with an introduction by Derek Mahon (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), Introduction, p.9. Page references are to this edition unless otherwise stated.

does not attempt to formulate a theory of man from them. In this respect he differs from Mahon who not only presents us with difficulties but tries to make sense of them within the poem; Jaccottet is often content to bring disparate ideas and images into a new relationship, suggesting connections without making statements.

Mahon's consciousness of Jaccottet's doubts reflect on his own relation to society. "It's easy to talk and writing words on the page / doesn't involve much risk as a general rule" (p.121) is a typical Jaccottet utterance and one which points to anxieties in Mahon's work. Regarding himself as a writer of "obsolete bumph" and "an ephemeral stream of literature", Mahon is certainly aware of poetry's marginality yet there is also a sense that his defiant stance has pushed him to the periphery of a hostile society. Doubts about poetry are invariably a means for strengthening his commitment to what is, by definition, a lonely trade.

The poem which begins "Afraid, ignorant, scarcely alive," (p.95) is a concise dramatisation of these doubts. Committed to the search for truth, the poet is always consigned to the edges of a materialist society. The sought-for truth, however, is relevant to that society and the poet's peripheral position inevitably raises questions about his or her credentials for the task. No one is more conscious of this than the poet:

Me, a sheltered poet,
retrieved, hardly suffering
to go staking out tracks down there!

A possibility here is to give up one's position, to stop taking the "easy" option of talking and writing, yet the poet perseveres:

Now, my lamp extinguished,
my hand more shaky, wandering,
I slowly start again in the open air.

A poet's human frailties will always entail digressions and sorties into counter-productive areas yet the optimism of a continued search is surely preferable to the stasis of silence.

In "End of Winter" (p.61) this fundamental faith in the act of poetry receives a slightly more whole-hearted vote of confidence:

Not much, nothing to dispel
the fear of wasting space
is left the itinerant soul

Except perhaps a voice
unconfident and light,

uncertainly put forth,
with which to celebrate
the reaches of the earth.

The Beckettian landscape suggested here, in which the hostile world prompts despair but reveals the genesis of hope and affirmation, seems to be an elemental counterpart to Mahon's eve of the Apocalypse. This is the classical notion that the human being *in extremis* discovers his or her own nobility.

Despite Jaccottet's move away from traditional forms, these translations offer an illuminating perspective on Mahon's own work. Jaccottet is equally ready to "discern the halo round a frying-pan"¹⁹ while his concern with the act of poetry serves to re-focus attention on Mahon's notions of art and responsibility. The translations afford an opportunity to understand how Mahon perceives his own functioning as a poet.

The international aspect of Mahon's writing is thus both an intrinsic characteristic of his poetry and a means to an end. A closer look at the *modus operandi* of the 'international' poems reveals a two-way process at work in which the cosmopolitan, enlightened voice is interchangeable with an uncertain, doubtful one. The confidence of pieces which internalise the major concepts and trends of European art is often moderated by an awareness of the divisions out of which that art was created. A poem such as "Knut Hamsun in Old Age" (p.132), for instance, merges details from Hamsun's novels and life, presenting as a source of conflict artistic excellence and personal doggedness and indifference. Hamsun's social and political *faux pas* are regarded in the light of his art so that Mahon draws attention to all the forces which contribute to the man and the work. The artifice of Mahon's poems, in effect, disguises their personal and political origins.

As with Hamsun, the major question for Mahon is how artistic integrity can be maintained in relation to society. Andreas Tangen in *Hunger*²⁰ flouts all social conventions, behaving like a madman in public as a physical and spiritual hunger saps his energy, unable to write without bodily sustenance yet afraid to stop up the taps to his creative sources. Mahon exists in this dilemma. His work raises and suggests answers to questions about art and society, just as his Europeanism confronts notions about a national literature and re-defines its constituencies. Watching us as a citizen of the world he is waiting to come home.

19. Jaccottet, *Selected Poems*, Introduction, p.13. John Byrne quotes the same phrase to describe Mahon's poetry in his *Crane Bag* article, p.62.

20. Knut Hamsun, *Hunger*, trans. by Robert Bly (London: Picador, 1976).