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## The Symbolism of Irish Motherland in Eavan Boland's selected poems: Postcolonial Perspective

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### Abstract:

Symbolism is a conscious movement born in France as a reaction against naturalism; the word "Symbolism" was first used by Jean Moreas in *Le Figaro* in 1886. On the other hand, Motherland, as a term that appeared around the late 14th century or the beginning of the 15th century, had the same meaning as fatherland, but the last is older, defined as the native country in which one was born. Eavan Boland made different explanations for motherland symbolism, such as the times (past, present, future), and occasionally Motherland refers to the language, literature, and general culture. This study aims to investigate the Irish Motherland's symbolism in Eavan Boland's selected poems and how she attempts to employ some Irish symbols to disclose their absent culture. Boland separates the symbols into two kinds, the first is traditional, and the second is a personal symbol. Traditional symbols, for instance, the "rose", symbolize beauty or woman. In contrast, the poet devised personal symbols from traditional symbols for national purposes, to express the fleeting imitations passing through his mind or to convey his own sense of his life. Also the other purpose of this study is to study the features, principles, and conceptions of symbols in Boland's poetry by the postcolonialism theory. This paper concluded that the colonizer deliberately hid the Irish Motherland's symbolism to finish the Irish culture.

**Keywords:** Eavan Boland, Motherland, Exile, Colonization, Symbolism.

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### 1. Introduction:

The *Lost Land* (1998) is a collection of poems that Eavan Boland wrote about her time living in exile; it is the ninth book of Boland, which had twenty-nine poems; most of those poems had a deep longing for her origin or her childhood in Ireland. She succeeded in presenting the natural face of colonialism and then showed a painful truth about the deconstruction of Ireland society. Boland was born in Ireland, but she moved with her family to live between England and the U.S.A; she tasted the meaning of exile from the early years of her age; therefore, she continued to search for heaven. "The lost land is paradise lost but yearned for" (Gelpi, 1999, p. 18). The conception of the motherland is one of poetry's most prominent abstract themes, as well as nostalgia; it is a natural emotion that arises in humans when they are deprived of something they value or have lost. This is what had been embodied in many writings of the poets, such as Eavan Boland; she declared in one previous conversation when she had been asked about the painful memories in exile and how it's reflected in her poetry "The *Lost Land*." Boland confirmed that the suffering caused by the exile is, in fact, always present for her. She refers to a few poems in "The *Lost Land*" that depict the transformation that has taken place throughout Dublin and Ireland as a whole, and then she says, "We will always be exiles" (Villar, 2006, p. 59).

In her book "The *Lost Land*," Boland describes the agony and the longing for her motherland. In order to shed light on some difficulties, such as colonization, exile, homeland, and colonization, Boland uses a strategy that involves navigating the insider-outsider dynamic. When she visited her birthplace as an adult poet, she reestablished her connections to her birthplace through her verses, just like other poets who had addressed the history and culture of their nations (Alexander & Heidi Stohs, 2011). One of the many poets who struggled due to the ravages of colonialism is Boland; she was one of those poets who believed in the importance of her art. When Boland wrote, "The lost land," which symbolizes the poet's arm being used to help or restore her lost homeland, she was convinced

that poetry or literary works needed to improve and develop to be an active tool for confronting colonialism and its effects. The *Lost Land* makes it clear that Boland is sure that writing about political conflict needs a style that keeps on pushing. As the title of the book suggests, this is a new way of looking at things that grew out of the old, and Boland's later poetry will be dominated by geographical metaphors like these. Her goal, as suggested by the structure of *Object Lessons*, is to connect specific memories to larger personal and political thoughts. "the lost land is not a place that can be subdivided into history, or love, or memory" (Collins, 2015, p. 40). Because she believed that English was the language of the colonizer who had invaded and raped her country and then imposed his cultural and civilizational norms on the people of Ireland, Boland had been compelled to write in English despite her opposition to doing so. In point of fact, a significant portion of Ireland's cultural and civilizational legacy may be traced back to the period of British colonization that lasted for seven hundred years. "Such a metaphoric relation also implies particularly in the trope of the pure and passive virgin ruined by the English a pre-colonial state of grace- an idyllic pure authentic nation or origin" (Taylor, 2001, p. 65). Although Boland wrote in English, she was obligated to write in it. "The English language is in many ways antagonistic to their gender... English is a transplanted language, one imposed on the Irish by those who colonized their country" (Robertson, 1994, p. 4). The word "colony" denotes suffering, strife, and defeat in *The Lost Land*. In 'The Mother Tongue,' Boland confesses to adopting the colonizer's language when she writes, "I was born on this side of the Pale. / I speak with the forked tongue of colonization." This historical allusion to "the Pale" refers to the English pale, a region in Ireland where only the English held control for generations after the invasion in 1172. In the book, where the geographical position is of significant importance, several pictures of Ireland emphasize a hazy North/South division. Specific locations in the rural West of Ireland are contrasted with metropolitan Dublin, representing Gaelic Ireland and a modern city. The 'forked

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tongue' thus depicts the political split between the language of colonized and the colonizer in this context (Arnison, 2008, p. 66)

Ireland and Britain both have different perspectives on the area they inhabit due to the unique historical conditions of their respective countries. Boland attempted to critique the manner which is used against her motherland by the colonial state (Riley, 2009). The English colonizer regarded the land of Ireland as nothing more than an aestheticized object, but for the people of Ireland, the term "motherland" had a much broader and more nuanced connotation; it evolved into something beyond a simple economic and political category, becoming known as "the torn victim of imperial penetration." Boland considered the land a significant social, political, and literary type. She uses a literary picture of the occupation of the homeland to convey her point. Boland expresses profound sympathy for the Irish people and the pain they endured under colonial rule throughout her body of work, particularly her poetry. Boland demonstrated the link between the poets and the "absentee landlord" for three primary reasons, and he also showed how these causes were all interconnected with one another. In the first place, the poet would want to discuss the primarily masculine position of poets. Because her homeland has always been portrayed as feminine, imperialists have the desire to represent Ireland as being in a position of inferiority and lesser status. Britain was always referred to as masculine in this representation since it was shown as the dominant colonial state with superior male rate. As a result, Boland portrays the poets as landowners, so expressing them in a manner that is male and superior. The second motive for selecting the poets as "absentee landlords" maybe because Boland wants to give them the noble qualities and grandeur of British landowners in her country during the colonial era. This may be the reason why Boland appoints the poets as "absentee landlords." The homeland's last and most symbolic level may relate to the Gaelic landowners who were forced to flee and abandon their property following the battle of Kinsale in 1601. This conflict took place in 1601. After the Gaelic order of her region was overthrown, Boland felt exceedingly depressed and mournful. In this context, Boland refers to Irish poets as the native race, stating that although they may be "absentee," which means they are located overseas, they did not pass away (Argaiz, 2005, pp. 182-183).

There are several connections between these notions and their historical and cultural ramifications in global literature, such as "Exile literature," which suggests that the colonizer and the colonized philosophy had somewhat influenced the sense of location and displacement (Ngoe, 2017, p. 6). Place and displacement are roughly related; they constitute one of the most fundamental values in colonized nations. Location and displacement illustrate the complexity of colonial peoples' experiences and the significance of place and geography in identity formation. A sense of place can be reflected in history, language, culture and folklore without becoming a cause of contention and conflict until colonialism's discursive engagement is extensive. Indeed, all colonizers convey a sense of dislocation between the motherland "environment" and the new one as portrayed in the imported language; hence, there is a significant gap between the original site and its portrayals in the colonization language (Ashcroft & Gareth Griffiths &

Helen Tiffin, 2007, pp. 161-162). Gender is key to understanding the systems that create colonial personae. Colonial discourse feminizes colonized countries, which are often described as feminine in contrast to the manly values espoused by colonizers' metropolises. Due to gender and ethnicity, colonial women often felt compounded tyranny and persecution. Postcolonial society views indigenous women as sexual objects whose only value is reproduction (Moares, 2019, p. 9).

It is more manageable for the reader to grasp what a poet means when she uses expressions like "The Lost Land." Suppose we try to relate them with the opinions and thoughts of postcolonial literature, such as a homeland, a language, a culture, or exile. In view of this, it is best to base an analysis of Boland's poetry on the above postcolonial themes.

## 2. The Symbolism of Irish motherland Boland's My Country in Darkness.

The first poem of "The Lost Land" is "My Country in Darkness," the name of this poem may be borrowed from Pablo Neruda (Randolph, 2014, pp. 136-137). My Country in Darkness is a poem about a poet caught between two worlds. As it starts, the world of Gaelic is falling apart around him. "After the wolves and before the elms," Boland says, "the lost poet fits into a framework of extinction." "He has no comfort, no food, and no future," she said. The last place the Gaelic order can hide is in its own language. But in the poem, even this is ruined by history because he can't keep up with his tradition. His life as a poet is ending because history is taking away what it means to be a poet. When the poet "shuts his eyes" on his memory of that world, it falls into darkness because he is one of the last people to see it: "Limerick, the Wild Geese and what went before-/ falters into cadence before he sleeps:/ He shuts his eyes. Because of imperialism, the Irish language and its culture have disappeared, and they are no longer recoverable. It is maybe the only poem in this volume where the poet explicitly her opinion about the traditional idea of the colony. Boland opens this poem with an introspective reflection to narrate the perfect moment or details about the Gaelic word perished, as she said: "After the wolves and before the elms/ the Bardic Order ended in Ireland". One can note in this poem Boland used her first-person pronoun for the title of the poem, "My Country" the poet tried to show it is something that belongs to herself, and it is darkness. She did not distinguish between the north and the south. All of these images symbolize her motherland as a victim influenced by colonialism when they lost the Gaelic order.

The poet desires to create a melancholy picture as a symbol of her homeland during the protracted period of transition and after the Bardic order has been completed. Boland argued that her family had lost her sons because of the fall of the Gaelic order and that those sons had departed and lived in exile since the order had been abolished. She tells her imagination on her comeback to Dublin, not as a tourist or sightseer, but as a voyeuristic historian because she intended to show the brutal oppression of English colonial rule. This is why she reveals her fantasy.

This poem addresses head-on Irish history, including its people, places, and events, as well as the repercussions of those

things. In this poem, Boland focuses on the benefits and qualities of her motherland that are lost or damaged due to English colonial rule. Her fascination with Gaelic stems from the language being the most crucial resource for reconstructing Ireland's historical narrative. The complexity of this poetry points in several distinct directions. In his explanation of how the colonial government dealt with the colony's history, which is still relevant today, Boland demonstrated the difficulty of the situation. She wants to offer some symbols to the reader which reflect the art prevalent in her homeland at the time of the Gaelic literature, so Boland travels back in time to the distant past and recalls the ancient literature and skills of the Irish country. She references the shady side of a poet's personality, which may lead to extinction. She reverts to the poetry of Gaelic literature to demonstrate the significance and richness of Irish poetry, which was eradicated over time. Since Irish poets began writing in English, Boland suggests that this is the cause of Irish art's demise, explaining it as "a dead art in a dying land." In other words, when Gaelic poets started thinking in a language that had been colonized, it marked the beginning of the end for the traditional Gaelic order, and the actual colonization process got underway. This poem demonstrates that language is the single most significant instrument that can be used to represent any given nation's culture accurately. Given the above, it is better to rely on what Spivak says Western society insists on talking about other cultures in its language. She is concerned about whether Westerners can talk about other people without maintaining colonial rhetoric (Spivak, 1988, p. 73).

In the fourth stanza, Boland emphasizes the Irish person that somewhat is staying in darkness, she reminds some of his attributes, such as:

**Reader of poems, lover of poetry—  
in case you thought this was a gentle art  
follow this man on a moonless night  
to the wretched bed he will have to make:  
(My Country in Darkness, 1998, 11-14)**

Boland told the readers that if they liked art, they should follow him. The poet talks about some essential things. First, she tries to draw attention to the beauty of the Gaelic language, which is an art form that the colonials have hidden or covered up. The second thing is that the poet may have made a subtle reference to how creative and noble the Irish people are. Third, when she tells the reader to follow that man in the dark night, which she calls a "moonless night," it's a hint and symbol that this society was calm and safe before the English came and took over. Now, all of the poem's parts and images take on the meaning of Boland's home country. Boland's promise that her unknown bard could symbolize all of Gaelic, and he was also dull and careless. The darkness that comes over him is conducive because it means that Boland can still tell us something about the Gaelic world.

It is also important to comment on how Boland explains the oppression of the Irish country and land under the regulations of the colonial government, which resulted in the loss of literature and a mute nation. If one looks closely at this poem, it is clear to see that the poet uses more than fourteen terms consistently; all of which are "my country, elms, wolves, Bardic order, a dying land, a dead art, a man, Flanders and

Madrid, Youghal to Cahirmoyle, gentle art, Limerick, Gaelic world, Wild Geese, this is its home," All of them have direct symbolism that relates to Eavan Boland's motherland in one way or another. "the Gaelic world and to the "my country" of the title, For Boland, language is the most visible aspect of Irish culture, both culture and country darken (Helton, 2010, p. 51). (The poet uses "Limerick" which refers to the Treaty of Limerick 1691 that seemed an agreement between the Irish and the English armies after long times of war) (Foster, 1998, p. 137).

### **3. The Symbolism of Irish motherland Boland's Imago.**

"Imago" is the fifth poem of the lost land by Eavan Boland. The title of this poem means the image in the Latin language (Persoon & Robert R. Watson, 2009). In other words, this poem depicts many pictures and symbols of Boland's motherland symbolism. In the begging, there are some facts in this poem "Imago" need to be explained; Boland illustrates the attempt to break the contemporary silence for lost Irish heritage. The poet suggests the images and symbols by which she had to know about her motherland and the community; she recognized that the signs or pictures exist to enlighten the myths, legends, and stories from the past. In every stanza, Boland expounds on the necessity of history, which should become a genuine part of each person when it reveals and understood. We can note how the poet explains more of images, which symbolize her motherland, as she wants to say that the monuments of Irish civilization that formed into her mind throughout history and literature are the accurate representations of the nation of her motherland.

In this poem, Boland outlines how alien/colonizer culture abused the Irish literature legacy when colonial powers came to Ireland. She recognizes that many practices still practiced now have their roots in colonialism and that during that period, women were subject to a great deal of oppression. In this poem, Boland portrays a woman as a beautiful, ageless, and silent object rather than as a human being who can stand on her own as an independent entity by herself. This is because there was an unfavorable impression of the conventional interpretation of interacting with a woman. Boland shows that the thinning of the shape and role of women in society caused her to become extremely thin, and the fluffy creature is an offence, an insult, and a confiscation for her place in life and society. The extent to which romanticized pictures of women have diminished them to the status of merely decorative souvenirs or decorations that speak for a nationalist ideal is something that Boland is aware of.

**Head of a woman. Half-life of a nation.  
Coarsely-cut blackthorn walking stick.  
Old Tara brooch.  
And bog oak.  
A harp and a wolfhound on an ashtray.  
(Imago, 1998, 1-5)**

In the opening stanza, Boland lists several images that have remained in her memory for as long as she can remember. She does so because these images signify or symbolize the motherland for her. The opening five lines of the poem contain several words and objects that make references to Irish culture. One of these is the word "blackthorn," which refers to a

specific kind of wood that is put to various applications in Irish culture. As Caffrey (2018) points out, one of those purposes is as a weapon, as the traditional tradition considers it a weapon for protection; this is one such use. In spite of the fact that the “Old Tara Brooch” is the most essential thing, according to National Museum of Ireland describes it as a representation of the most outstanding achievement of Irish metalworkers in the medieval period (Wikipedia, 2020), the Old Tara Brooch is one of the most essential artefacts of Irish history. It is now contained inside the parts that have been preserved for future generations. Then, in this poem, Boland attempted to express her criticism of how “images” had depicted the “bog oak” that stood for the great culture in the collective memory of the Irish people. In this poem, the bog oak is maintained, wrapped, and then sold as an ornament; it symbolizes an aspect of culture that has been kept alive. In the end, she made use of the symbolism of a “wolfhound,” which has been present throughout Irish education and civilization, as well as in the ancient dynasty of the wolfhound that originated in Ireland. It played a significant role in Irish poetry, as well as in the country’s mythology and literature.

During the second stanza, Boland thinks back on her past traumatic experiences. Because Boland tried to make inner relations between herself as a mother and her land as a mother, and both of them had lost their sons. That is because she lived in exile, or she may refer to the history of her motherland as childhood. Either way, it is possible that she did so because Boland tried to do so. The poet expresses her regrets over her youth; she says that she utilized the image “for the truth,” and then Boland discusses those icons.

**I see you now for what you are.  
My ruthless images. My simulacra.  
Anti-art: a foul skill  
traded by history  
to show a colony  
the way to make pain a souvenir.  
(Imago, 1998, 8-13)**

In the next lines of the poem, Boland places emphasis on the absence of a national identity, which helps us comprehend the manner of nationalist colonialism that reflects Ireland’s history. This intention is clear in Boland’s poem “Imago”. When Boland uses phrases such as “My simulacra,” “Anti-art: a foul skill,” “traded by history,” and “to show a colony” (Imago, 8-11), the poet makes it abundantly clear that she disapproves of and rejects that technique. Surely, she was attempting to explain the counterfeiting and fraud that occurred throughout her nation’s history. The poet has created very powerful connections between critical language and nationalist artefacts; these connections, taken as a whole, provide an image with idealized symbols. The concept of nationalist iconography arises as a direct outcome of colonial awareness; more specifically, it is a reversal of the collective amnesia that the colonizers impose. They made an effort to impose that ideology on the people under their control. Imperialists used the images her speaker now scorns to keep a nation tied to expressions of self that had outgrown, as Boland’s speaker outgrows thinking they are true. Once imperialism has transformed Ireland, these images, potent symbols of Gaelic culture, can no longer accurately reflect the changed nation. To force them into such a service is to cause a sort of psychic pain. Therefore, in Boland’s view, the icons that interpret this poem

are there in each line of the poem as melancholy mementoes of things that have been gone. By doing so, she portrays Ireland in her poem both as an image and as a colony in this way. Riley (2009) said (This nation has been created by a “foul skill” and “traded by history” to “show a colony” rather than through the voices and of actual). As a result, the reader can conclude with Spivak’s claims that Western economic and political goals always tainted information about the culture of the third world. She argues that “research” or “knowledge” has been used to justify European colonialism, which included conquest, slavery and facts confused about “Other” cultures (Spivak, 1988, pp72-73).

#### **4. The Symbolism of Irish motherland Boland’s The Colonists**

The ninth poem in the sequence titled “The Lost Land” is titled “The Colonists.” Within the context of this poem, the poet declares, “I am ready to go home / through an autumn evening”. In this poem, Boland creates an imagined nation called “Ireland” symbolizing her inner tendencies, vision, and the psychological process of her return to her motherland. Boland discussed her feelings about her birthplace using a variety of approaches, all of which placed emphasis on the link between the two countries. At other times, she focuses on the Irish customs and traditions that have been lost as a result of colonization. She aims to highlight the Gaelic language and poetry that were destroyed by the colonized. Sometimes, she attempts to show the parallels between herself as a mother, symbolizing Ireland as a mother. As a result, the poet intends to convey the idea that the English colonizer is the sole source of all of the harmful issues that exist in the poet’s homeland throughout the entirety of The Lost Land. When Boland attempts to come to terms with her exile, she explains the genuine meaning of losing the land as a mother. She will portray the advantages and sorrow of that mother in “The Colonists,” as well as the strong relationship between the two mothers, Boland and Ireland.

By this poem, Boland paints a picture symbolizing that location that is both stunning and captivating. She describes the day when she was getting ready to go home, and the mood was calm and autumnal. At that moment, she witnessed armed intruders occupying the city or hamlet, which was horrifying. The poet created an intellectual image that connected two different periods of time and locations to serve as a bridge between two different worlds. When she wants to go back to her home, she narrates the current situation that she is experiencing in her home. Then, as if she had built a time portal from her space-time to the past, she demonstrated the location and era in which her country, which had been subject to various forms of colonialism, had been living. The situation described in the poem’s opening vision, in which the speaker declares, “I am ready to go home,” alludes to the speaker’s journey from her current residence to the previous era in her home in the motherland.

**I am ready to go home  
through an autumn evening.  
Suddenly,  
without any warning, I can see them.  
They form slowly out of the twilight.  
Their faces. Arms. Greatcoats. And tears.  
They are holding maps.  
(The Colonists, 1-7, 1998)**

When Boland references “maps” in connection with unusual

people, he is very certainly referring to the maps used exclusively by colonial forces to guide them through unfamiliar territories. She uses maps as a symbol to represent geographical terms in her motherland as historical evidence about the suffering caused by the grabbing of land and changing of borders and marks of the historical, geographic, social, and literary aspects of Irish society by English colonizers. This evidence comes from her motherland, which is located in Ireland. Once again, Boland mainly depicts that stranger's aim, which is to change and hide the culture and identity. She imagines the group of colonists as ghostly who have lost their way. And had old colonial maps made by the fading daylight. "their tears, made of dusk, fall across the names". Helton (2010) said, "the sun, it seems, has set on their map, conception, and control of Ireland". Therefore, the poet concludes that there is no map that will be safe and immutable with thereof the cultural and military colonialism.

In general, "The Colonists" deals with several topics, such as living in exile, the loss of the Gaelic order, and lost culture, in addition to the imagination of confused colonists that the poet had exhibited represent deep symbols which depict her motherland country. In this poem, the poet and other people are going "to go home" to their country, which Boland refers to as the motherland. It is essential; the concept of returning to one's roots always serves as the driving force behind the subjectivities of migrant poets. By concentrating her attention squarely on her victim position, she can fulfil her objective of presenting her poetry. As demonstrated throughout this poem, the result of all of the colonialism in Boland's history is the country we know today. The English colonizers had exploited the Irish society, and all of the exiles of that society had difficulty finding a feeling of place that waited for their "motherland" while they were away from it. The heavy implication is that Boland may have borrowed thoughts and symbols from Bhabha's, *The Location of Culture*. In the introduction to his collection, he states that the solution to the question of culture lies beyond the point of transition, where space and time meet to produce complex figures of difference and identity, present and history, inclusion and exclusion, inside and outside, with motion and maneuvering in the "supplementary space of contingency" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 185).

##### **5. The Symbolism of Irish motherland Boland's The Lost Land**

In "The Lost Land," Boland assumes the role of a mother who has experienced the most common type of child loss: in this poem, she draws images and symbols for a mother as if her daughter has grown up and moved away from the family home. It is about feeling grief over a history that has been destroyed and tainted. The poetry "The Lost Land" may be found in Boland's "THE LOST LAND" collection. This poem will find its way onto the shelves of individuals who deeply appreciate the written word. The Lost Land will leave a lasting impression on both the reader's head and their emotions. The poetry of Eavan Boland gives rise to many concerns about identity, particularly in her roles as an Irish woman, mother, poet, and exile. Where bigotry against the Irish gave her a strong sense of who she was and where she came from. Her work also heavily incorporates aspects of Irish history and mythology.

This poem, "The Lost Land," is about a mother who has to

come to terms with the fact that her two daughters are moving on to their own individual lives, despite her strong feelings of attachment to them. She speaks with wistful yearning about how she wishes she had a "piece of ground" so that she could "say mine. My own. / And Mean it" (lines 7-8). The presence of a private relationship that the mother had with her two children is symbolically represented by the land in the poem, and this relationship, like the land, has been lost. Therefore, the poem's title, "The Lost Land," carries a lot of weight. At first glance, the final few words appear to be difficult to understand: "I see myself / On the underworld side of that water, / All the darkness coming in fast, saying / All the names I know for a lost land: / Ireland. Absence. Daughter" (lines 31-35). However, after studying Ireland's history, it became clear that Ireland's past does, in many respects, resemble that of the long-lost island of Atlantis. Ireland, much like Atlantis, is three hundred miles long and two hundred miles wide, with its breadth most remarkable in the centre. In addition, they both have a core plain that is exposed to the ocean and surrounded by mountains on all sides. It would appear that no other island anywhere in the world even comes close to fitting this description. As a result, the three words Ireland, Absence, and Daughter each conjure up feelings of grief or yearning in the listener.

Boland states that she longs for "one piece of ground" that she can call "my own" Even though Boland refers to the "piece of ground," she wants it to be understood that it is bounded. She does not crave a location that can be seen as an inclusive area, but rather for "one city trapped by hills. One urban river. / One island in its element." In the verses that follow, she starts to dismantle these symbols implying that her yearning for "one piece of ground" is, in fact, another way of expressing the same passion for her girls. Two more lines that continue this deconstruction want to follow this line. She argues that a new sort of memory has shifted love from relationships to landscapes, but this landscape is a stand-in for her children.

According to "The Lost Land," Boland seems to have constructed a poetic geography more out of his relationships with people than with specific locations. Her conflation of daughter and land enables Boland to sympathize with the colony's daughters, who are required to depart Dublin on a nighttime mailboat:

**Is this, I say  
how they must have seen it,  
backing out on the mailboat at twilight,  
shadows falling  
on everything they had to leave?  
And would love forever?  
And then**

The sensation of being apart from others gives rise to panic, which she imagines as feeling like she is drowning in "the underside world of that water, /the darkness coming in fast." The fact that Boland refers to "a lost land" by three different symbols/names – "daughter," "absence," and "Ireland" – illustrates how her sense of belonging to a particular original location has changed over the years. The concept of "Ireland" appears in her earliest recollections, such as those recalled in "In Which the Ancient History..." This may be because she was

born in Ireland. Soon, two different kinds of “absence” will take Ireland’s place. The first time this occurs is when Boland is a child and she is taken away from her “old house.” The second time it happens is when Boland is an aspiring poet in Dublin, and she rejects the ideological discourse of Ireland as a nation and patria. Finally, she satisfies the emotional desire for a place in the final stage, which Boland agonizes over losing here, by taking on the mother responsible for the interest and protection of her daughters. At this stage, to lose her role as a mother is like losing her “country.”

**Conclusion:**

This study concludes that in all four above poems, which are “My Country in Darkness”, “Imago”, “The Colonists”, and “The Lost Land.” Boland depicts different versions of the colonization who killed and hid the symbolism of the motherland and then produced several generations of Irish society that live in Exile. Through these poems, Boland highlights how traditional anti-colonization stories of past Ireland are counteracted by different descriptions of Ireland, such as a nationalist colony or the common interests of the two countries. Boland explores and investigates the fragmented identities in Ireland, which the colonizer deliberately hides or avoids in the past, kills in the present, and confiscates in the future, all that had happened to the Irish community after the falling of the Gaelic Order and demise it. Therefore, the outcome is a crumbling culture experienced by the colonized society; also, Boland presents herself as a result of the colonized past. She describes herself as a wounded victim that cannot escape or stay with a history ordeal of the lost homeland. Nevertheless, the motherland does not just represent a historical issue for Boland, but she explains the sorrow and pain of the Irish community in Exile for the previous, current and next generation.

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