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YEATS'S RE-ENCHANTED NATURE

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In his introduction to the *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1936), W. B. Yeats charted his generation's "defeat" of Victorianism. Amongst the charges held against nineteenth-century literature, he tells us, the poets of the 1890s levied "scientific humanitarian pre-occupation, psychological curiosity, [and] rhetoric" (*OBMV* xxvi). However, Yeats frames these as symptomatic of a deeper flaw, which he traces back to the Enlightenment, during which the natural world began to be seen as "steel-bound or stone-built" rather than as a constant "flux" (*OBMV* xxviii). "The mischief began," he suggests, "at the end of the seventeenth century when man became passive before a mechanized nature" (*OBMV* xxvii). This railing against a disenchanted natural world was one of the constants of Yeats's literary career, and was pithily summed up in his diary for 1930: "Descartes, Locke, and Newton took away the world and gave us its excrement instead" (*Ex* 325).¹ Yeats's image of post-Enlightenment mankind as "passive" before nature hints at his interest in magic and mysticism, as well as his desire to search in and through nature and its "great memory" for deeper, original truths (*Ec&I* 28). However, the statement also posits his work, and the work of his contemporaries, as an attempt to combat and reconfigure a mechanized nature, and to reformulate it as something active, mysterious and, in many ways, occult.

Recent criticism has begun to reassess the "secularization thesis" associated with modernity, which characterizes modernization as coterminous with increasingly rational modes of thought and with the rejection of spirituality.² Revealing a re-enchantment with both the natural world and the mind in early and high modernist writings, this turn has emphasized the rejection of Enlightenment values in the art of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth- centuries. Indeed, Yeats's attraction to occult spirituality has been central to such understandings of modern writing. Timothy Materer has traced clearly Yeats's rebellion against his father's positivistic skepticism, and the foundational work of earlier scholars such as Kathleen Raine and George Mills Harper has been harnessed in recent criticism to situate Yeats's anti-Enlightenment philosophy in the broader context of modernist enchantments.³ Fundamental to this new interest in magical or occult thought in modernist writings is the fascination with reimagining the world in ways contrary to post-Enlightenment positivism. Yeats's assertion that his generation combatted a vision of "mechanized" nature places him firmly within this active reimagining.

If, as Wilson suggests, “positivism asserts the inert nature of objects in the world” and, viewing “the operations of nature from a distance [...] sees nothing but the mechanical operation of forces on objects,” then the project of re-enchantment suggests both that it is possible to act within, and to be effected by, an animated and spiritualized nature.⁴ Unfortunately, despite the renewed interest in modernist re-enchantments, there has been little explicit focus with regard to the work of Yeats on the changed relationship to the natural world which such re-enchantments precipitate. However, this changed relationship is fundamental to Yeats’s poetry, philosophy, and self-mythology. The imposition of rationalism onto the natural world during the scientific upheavals of the seventeenth century led, as Rupert Sheldrake has shown, to nature being “denied the traditional attributes of life, the capacity for spontaneous movement and self-organization.” More specifically, “the souls that animated physical bodies in accordance with their own internal ends were exorcized from the mechanistic world of physics,” leading to a world of inanimate and passive matter governed by overarching scientific laws.⁵ If the Enlightenment was in part a process which effected the disenchantment of nature (as Yeats recognized then, and a number of philosophers have suggested since), then a reassertion of faith might simultaneously advocate a counter-Enlightenment literature and a revised vision of the natural world and mankind’s place within it.⁶

As Jane Bennett summarizes:

The eighteenth-century Enlightenment sought to demystify the world according to faith, where nature was God’s text, filled with divine signs, intrinsic meaning, and intelligible order. In the face of belief in an enchanted cosmos, the Enlightenment sought to push God to a more distant social location; in the face of unreflective allegiance to tradition, it sought self-determination and self-conscious reason; in the face of a view of knowledge as mysterious divine hints, it sought a transparent, certain science; in the face of a sacralized nature, it sought a fund of useful natural resources.⁷

Reacting in part against the rationalism of his father, who had rejected Christianity and “adopted the methods and conclusions of Mill, Comte, and Darwin long before they had become fashionable among the intellectual community,” Yeats propounded an extensive anti-materialism and anti-rationalism in his poetry and his critical writings, positing symbolism, mysticism and occult knowledge as a modern antidote for the mechanization of nature in the post-Enlightenment worldview.⁸ At the heart of his literary project, then, is a re-conception of nature as by turns animate, symbolic, and imbued with divine immanence. The common conception that disenchantment and secularization followed modernization is countered by Yeats and other proponents of occult religions at the *fin de siècle*. His artistic philosophy, by his own account, is

rooted in a changed experience of the natural world which came via the rejection of materialism and rationalism.

Despite this, there has been significant critical disagreement with regard to what constitutes this new vision of nature, and how Yeats situates poetry, and the poet, within it. Richard Ellmann, for example, notes Yeats's early Romantic dream to live "not in unnature, but in nature," and emphasizes Yeats's constant negotiation between the material and spiritual worlds.⁹ Ellmann's double negation—"not in unnature"—deftly draws our attention to a key tension in Romanticism between appreciation of the physical world (as in Wordsworth) and a disdain for it (as in Blake), suggesting that, in his early life at least, Yeats was more attracted to the idyll, the Romantic landscape, than to a Blakean world of symbolic "unnature." George Bornstein, however, insists on a closer application of the contrary pairing of art and nature in Yeats's works. Referring to Yeats's relationship to Romanticism, Bornstein argues that, just as Blake saw physical nature as a "Delusive Goddess," an "antagonist to imagination," Yeats "took over Blake's projection of nature and art or intellect as contraries or antimonies."¹⁰ In one of the most memorable instances of this, in "Sailing to Byzantium," Yeats's speaker asks to be taken "out of nature" and "Into the artifice of eternity" (VP 408). For Terry Eagleton, Yeats's symbolism effects a bypassing of physical nature, revealing it as merely representative, rather than actual. Eagleton quips that Yeats is often to be "found cavalierly converting the real to the symbolic, turning a swan into an emblem the instant it glides into view."¹¹ However, from the earlier poetry of the 1890s (especially his verse play *The Shadowy Waters*) onwards to his last poems, the natural world is not so easily escaped, nor is the desire to escape it left unquestioned. As Yeats himself asserts, "Natural and supernatural with the self-same ring are wed" (VP 556): there is a constant relationship between physical and spiritual, between symbol and symbolized, which is an enduring fascination for the poet.

Yeats's early attraction to the physical, natural world is reflected in his youthful enthusiasm for natural history. The poet was a keen naturalist in his youth, shocking his classmates by proclaiming himself to be an evolutionist, writing a school essay on "Evolutionary Botany," and reading the works of Darwin, Tyndall, Haeckel, and Huxley.¹² However, Yeats was soon to reject materialist science in favor of a pervasive spiritualism, seeing the two as innately antagonistic. As in the "Autobiography" of his contemporary, J. M. Synge, Yeats's early encounter with natural science is repositioned in the author's self-mythology as a moment of initial deprivation which led to a more far-reaching sense of spirituality. After reading a book by Darwin, Synge tells us, the younger writer eventually "renounced Christianity" and "made [himself] a sort of incredulous belief that illuminated nature and lent an object to life without hampering the intellect."¹³ Implicit in this statement is Synge's life-long belief in the truth of

evolutionary theory and natural history, and his successful reconciliation of a spiritualized natural world with the revelations of positivist science. Yeats's account, however, is much more openly antagonistic towards those scientists whose theories he had held faith with in his younger years, combatting what he would later term the "mechanized nature" of post-Enlightenment thought with a mystical world based on folklore, poetry and the imagination:

I am very religious, and deprived by Huxley and Tyndall, whom I detested, of the simple-minded religion of my childhood, I had made a new religion, almost an infallible Church of poetic tradition, of a fardel of stories, and of personages, and of emotions [...] I had even created a dogma: "Because those imaginary people are created out of the deepest instinct of man, to be his measure and his norm, whatever I can imagine those mouths speaking may be the nearest I can go to truth" (*Au* 115–16).

Huxley and Tyndall were both proponents of a version of atomic theory based on the concept of solid, indestructible particles of matter which underpinned their materialist worldview. As Alex Owen notes, this particular form of materialism was discredited by the end of the nineteenth century by the discovery of subatomic particles, but late-Victorian occultists (such as Yeats) took as their point of attack the materialist universe of these popularizers of natural science.¹⁴ In the above passage, the move from a disenchanting natural world to the creation of "a new religion" marks Yeats's own sense of the beginning of a literary project of re-enchantment, whereby his negative reaction to materialist science is seen as the starting point for a new ascendancy of thought based in mystical experience and original or "instinctive" truths. The "imaginary people," figures out of folklore, myth and memory, are linked directly to the creation of a new religion, itself rooted in a view of nature as animate and symbolic, and this connection is elaborated over the course of Yeats's career.

In this way, Yeats diverges significantly from his Blakean model, though his critical writings on his "master" (*UPI* 273) often suggest a confluence rather than a divergence of approach. Sinéad Garrigan Mattar characterizes Yeats's essay, "The Symbolic System," which was his contribution to his joint edition with Edwin Ellis of the *Works of William Blake* (1893), as an "extraordinary, vicarious expression of his antimaterialist manifesto," and indeed we must be careful to emphasize the presence of Yeats's own poetic ideals even as they are presented through the prism of Blake.¹⁵ Indeed, as Billigheimer shows, "Yeats derived inspiration from Blake but much of it was his own invention."¹⁶ The key point of divergence between Yeats and Blake (though it is usually underplayed or hurried over by the later poet) are their contending views on nature. On Blake's part, he makes it clear that the natural world is a

reflection, a corresponding symbol of realities which exist beyond it: he characterizes it, therefore, as a delusion, an antagonist to true vision. Though Blake asserts that "There exist in that Eternal World the Permanent Realities of Every Thing which we see reflected in this Vegetable Glass of Nature," he also rejects the natural world as a source of true knowledge.¹⁷ Distinguishing himself from Wordsworth, who displays the "Influence of Natural Objects In Calling forth and strengthening the Imagination," Blake writes that "Natural objects always did & now do weaken, deaden & obliterate Imagination in me."¹⁸ Rather than opening up to the influence of physical nature, Blake seeks a visionary state which sees through the "glass" to "the Permanent Realities." In other words, unlike his Wordsworth, Blake rejects a sense of natural objects as "enchanted," denying their ability to "influence" his imagination.¹⁹

In the critical introduction for the 1893 edition of Blake's *Works*, Yeats and Ellis both demurred to and subtly diverged from Blake's view:

Nature, he tells (or rather he reminds) us, is merely a name for one form of mental existence. Art is another and a higher form. But that art may rise to its true place, it must be set free from memory that binds it to Nature.

Nature,—or creation,—is a result of the shrinkage of consciousness,—originally clairvoyant,—under the rule of the five senses, and of argument and law. [...]

In imagination only we find a Human Faculty that touches nature at one side, and spirit on the other. Imagination may be described as that which is sent bringing spirit to nature, entering into nature, and seemingly losing its spirit, that nature being revealed as symbol may lose the power to delude.²⁰

Although Yeats later suggested that his main contribution to the *Works* was the essay "The Symbolic System," the terms used here in the "Introduction" are repeated throughout Yeats's critical writings on Blake, showing familiarity with (if not authorship of) the ideas put forward in this passage.²¹ Here, Yeats and Ellis emphasize Blake's theory as one of non-representational, or at least non-naturalistic art, wherein the imagination sets art free from its connection to nature. To see only phenomenal nature, they suggest, is (for Blake) the result of a "shrinkage of consciousness." However, as Mary Flannery observes, Yeats and Ellis's understanding of the imagination, and its role in relation to the natural world or "creation," is not consonant with Blake's own view. In the above passage, imagination is seen as an enchanting faculty, "bringing spirit to nature, entering into nature"; in other words, the imagination animates, or imbues the natural world with spirituality, thus revealing it to be a symbol of something beyond its material existence. Although this is still an anthropocentric concept, it goes some way to asserting the value of an enchanted nature. Flannery argues that "this represents a definite misunderstanding of Blake, for whom nature

was evil; it is a solidly Yeatsian concept.”²² Later, Yeats would further diverge from the Blakean idea that “creation” was evil, or antagonistic to imagination. Emphasizing the primacy of the imaginative arts as “the greatest of Divine revelations,” Yeats wrote that Blake’s concept of the imagination led to the idea that “the sympathy with all living things, sinful and righteous alike, which the imaginative arts awake, is that forgiveness of sins commanded by Christ” (*E&I* 112). Blake’s “natural objects,” which “weaken, deaden & obliterate Imagination,” are thus transformed in the Yeatsian concept of the imagination into forms of empathy, whereby art encourages an ecological consciousness of an animate and sentient world, rather than a natural world which is solely a “delusion” and something to be rejected by the true mystic.

Indeed, Yeats’s theory of magic, as outlined in his 1901 essay on the subject, places such ideas at the center of its exposition. Taking cues from folkloric motifs and cures, Yeats insists on the hidden properties of natural objects, and on their essence as a portion of, or access point to, the “Great Mind” of nature. He begins the essay by outlining his belief in three central “doctrines” of magic:

1. That the borders of our mind are ever shifting, and that many minds can flow into one another, as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy.
2. That the borders of our memories are as shifting, and that our memories are a part of one great memory, the memory of Nature herself.
3. That this great mind and great memory can be evoked by symbols (*E&I* 28).

Yeats’s conception of magic, therefore, helps to distinguish his relationship to nature from that of Blake. Whereas, for Blake, the natural object is a delusion, a hindrance to imagination, and an obstacle to true vision, for Yeats the comingling of the human mind with the mind and memory of “Nature herself” is effected through natural objects, and through symbols especially: “Such magical symbols as the husk of flax, water out of the fork of an elm-tree, do their work, as I think, by awakening in the depths of the mind where it mingles with the Great Mind, as is enlarged by the Great Memory, some curative energy, some hypnotic command” (*E&I* 50). This sense of latency, of something inherent (and occult) in natural objects is pervasive in Yeats, so that the physical world becomes, in many ways, a source of (rather than an impediment to) mystical potential and poetic inspiration.²³

For Yeats, the mind becomes porous, open to the influence of nature on the imagination. This is contrary to the secularization thesis propounded by a number of twentieth-century philosophers. Charles Taylor, for example, emphasizes the development of a “buffered” mind as a result of disenchantment. Rather than a world in which external agents (natural objects in particular) were often seen

as the locus and agents of spirituality (as in Yeats's early work), secularization results in a worldview in which "the only minds in the cosmos are those of humans [...]; and minds are bounded, so that [...] thoughts, feelings, etc., are situated 'within' them."²⁴ In the enchanted world, however, "the meaning is already there in the object/agent, it is there quite independently of us; it would be there even if we didn't exist."²⁵ Hence, "To be a buffered subject, to have closed the porous boundary between inside (thought) and outside (nature, the physical) is partly a matter of living in a disenchanting world."²⁶ Yeats's conception of magic as an act of re-enchantment creates a sense of communion and of communication with nature at large, in which there is (in his paraphrase of Swedenborg) "a continual influx from God to man" (*Ex* 38). Rather than nature being an obstruction, the mind of the enchanter allows for it to be conceived as porous: in other words, it is reconfigured from the "stone-built" and "mechanized" nature which followed the Enlightenment and is cast once more as constant "flux" (*OBMV* xxviii). Mankind, likewise, is made again an active rather than a passive component. Thus, Yeats's ecologies run contrary to any proposed progression from the animistic to the secular, the "porous" to the "buffered" self.

The immanence of spirituality in nature, and the poetic potential of this, was central to Yeats in his prose writings, letters, and reviews, and can be traced throughout his poetic work. In common with Yeats, Blake saw "the ancient Poets" as animators of the natural world and held this as a symptom of the "enlarged & numerous" senses of these writers. The root of the modern priesthood, Blake saw, was in the severance of the imagination from the object, so that animistic thought was eventually harnessed by men as a method of control and restriction.²⁷ Yeats was quite persistent in attributing a sense of inherent divinity, even poetic imagination, to animals and plants, and he used this to underpin his revised vision of the natural world. However, if poetry is, for him, an imaginative art that encourages "the sympathy with all living things, sinful and righteous alike" (*Ec&I* 112), it is also rooted in his early feeling for the *difference* of nature as something separate from (and thus more valuable to) mankind.²⁸ In an early letter to Katherine Tynan, written on April 20, 1888, Yeats records watching robins and sparrows making their nests in the garden underneath his window, and asks, "I wonder what religion they have." He continues:

When I was a child and used to watch the ants running about in Burnham Beeches I used often to say "what religion do the ants have?" They must have one you know. Yet perhaps not. Perhaps like the Arabs they have not time. Well they must have some notion of the making of the world (*CLI* 63).

This readiness to assign an independent life and thought to birds and insects is continued in Yeats's early poetry. Nicholas Grene, for example, notes the

predominance of instances of animals dreaming in the poems of the 1890s.²⁹ Even if we allow, as Sinéad Garrigan Mattar suggests, that Yeats's engagement with animism was short-lived, this pseudo-animistic tendency in Yeats's early thought is important not simply because it establishes one aspect of Yeats's understanding of his relationship to the natural world, but because its effects are felt throughout his theory and his conception of poetry.³⁰

In his early reviews, Yeats is careful to distinguish between the use of nature in "modern" poetry, and that of an ideal original, written "when the world was fresh." In the second of two articles on Samuel Ferguson, written and published a few months after the elder poet's death, Yeats held up Ferguson's verse as a rare example of poetry in which the natural world remains with its visionary potential intact. Here, anthropocentric Victorianism is avoided, and instead nature is revealed again as immanent with spiritual correspondences:

At once the fault and the beauty of the nature-description of most modern poets is that for them the stars, and streams, the leaves, and the animals, are only masks behind which go on the sad soliloquies of a nineteenth century egoism. When the world was fresh they gave us a clear glass to see the world through, but slowly, as nature lost her newness, or they began more and more to live in cities or for some other cause, the glass was dyed with ever deepening colours, and now we scarcely see what lies beyond because of the pictures that are painted all over it. But here is one who brings us a clear glass once more (*UPI* 103).

Again, Yeats returns to Blake's image of the "glass"; however, here the poem (and not nature itself) is a "glass." Before the Enlightenment, the poem had the power to help the reader to "see the world" because "the world was fresh," and this was reflected in the "freshness" of language and the spiritual capacity of the poet. Rather than being the product of post-Enlightenment "egoism," which resulted in the "sad soliloquies" of nineteenth-century verse, the poem was marked by a more porous subjectivity. Yeats lays the blame on urbanization, on the build-up of cliché and hackneyed language for an unclear vision of the natural world related to a solipsistic "egoism," but what is most important here is the link he draws between the "clear glass" of the poem and the "clear glass" of the natural world (or how it is perceived in the modern West). Ferguson's avoidance of anthropocentric nature description, to the contrary, is characteristic of a revelatory mysticism, of a way of the self being within the world (and a way of the poem being within the world) which reveals, once more, the "newness" of nature, the clarity with which it allows us to see beyond "the pictures that are painted all over it." Thus, it is not physical nature itself that is antagonistic to vision, but the built-up "dye" of associations which have obscured it over the years. Following this, a reimagined poetics is imbued with

the ability to return both writer and reader to an original conception of nature which recognizes its existence outside of the ego of the poet. This is in part an ecocentric ideal which argues for the revelatory nature of a changed understanding of the world in relation to the mind and the imagination.

Yeats's primitivism is latent here: in fact, his description of Ferguson echoes his descriptions of the Irish peasantry in *The Celtic Twilight* and elsewhere, and often aligns with his own self-presentation as both a Celt and a mystic. If, as Edward Hirsch suggests, "The central animating goal of *The Celtic Twilight* was to affirm that the supernatural world exists and to demonstrate that the Irish peasantry had a unique commerce with that world," it also had at heart the goal of revealing Yeats himself as a poet sensitive to the natural world and to supernatural experience.³¹ A storyteller in *The Celtic Twilight*, for example, possesses "the visionary melancholy of purely instinctive natures and of all animals"; an old man "is certain too that the cats, of whom there are many in the woods, have a language of their own"; indeed, "to the wise peasant the green hills and woods round him are full of never-fading mystery" (*Myth* 5, 60, 90). The connection with the peasantry, in this respect, is an implicit measure of sensitivity to the natural world. Later, in comparing the ballad poetry of the Irish peasantry to the poetry of James Clarence Mangan, Yeats again made recourse to his theory that much modern poetry used nature merely as a reflection of "nineteenth century egoism": "Nature with these men was a passion, but in the poetry of Mangan are no beautiful descriptions. Outer things were only to him mere symbols to express his own inmost and desperate heart. Nurtured and schooled in grimy back streets of Dublin, woods and rivers were not for him" (*UPI* 153).³² By contrast, Yeats repeatedly emphasizes his own history in Sligo, his childhood spent in woods forming in him a receptivity (like the peasantry he depicts in *The Celtic Twilight*) to an enchanted Irish landscape.

Yeats often repeats phrases in both his reviews and his literary prose, revealing a connection in his thought between a certain Irish aesthetic and a view of nature that opposes the "mechanized" Enlightenment. Reviewing Lady Wilde's *Ancient Cures, Charms, and Usages of Ireland* (1890), for example, he notes (echoing James Frazer's famous assertion that a primitive person "hardly conceives the distinction commonly drawn by more advanced peoples between the natural and the supernatural"³³) that "In Ireland this world and the other are not widely sundered; sometimes, indeed, it seems almost as if our earthly chattels were no more than the shadows of things beyond" (*UPI* 172). The same phrase is repeated almost verbatim in his short prose piece "Concerning the Nearness Together of Heaven, Earth, and Purgatory."³⁴ Likewise, his comment in *The Celtic Twilight* that, for the Irish peasant, nature is "full of never-fading mystery," is repeated in an article on "Irish fairies," first published in *Leisure*

Hour in October 1890 (*Myth* 90; *UPI* 182). Hence, Yeats continues the work of Matthew Arnold and Ernest Renan in refashioning the Irish as a people particularly sensitive to spiritual influences, and as possessing a tradition which might counter a disenchanted and Anglicized modernity. Furthermore, he extends this to a vision of literature. Not only is a counter-Enlightenment view of nature characteristic of the Irish peasantry, but it is central to Yeats's sense of the aesthetic and philosophical value of Irish writing, too.

Such observations underpin Yeats's own self-image as a poet sensitive to an enchanted nature. His comment, in his *Autobiographies*, that his construction of a new "Church of poetic tradition" led to a renewed belief in the truth of the imagination and the imagined words of "imaginary people," is continually invoked as a means of emphasizing Yeats as a man for whom nature had visionary, even magical potential. As a young child, for example, he tells us that he used to visit the home of his great aunt Mary (or "Micky"), spending much time in the gardens of her house: "Under one gable a dark thicket of small trees made a shut-in mysterious place, where one played and believed that something was going to happen" (*Au* 19). Here, the older writer locates the natural world as central to his poetic vision, being consonant both with his interest in magical experiment (the sense that perhaps "something was going to happen," that his playing might effect a natural or supernatural event), and his insistence on a vision of nature as "mysterious." Such an idea is repeated in "Enchanted Woods," published as part of *The Celtic Twilight*, in which Yeats links himself to an Irish peasant—again, a man whom Yeats is not sure "distinguishes between the natural and supernatural very clearly" (*Myth* 61). Yeats uses this as a stepping stone for his own admission of belief in the enchanted state of the woodland:

I often entangle myself in arguments more complicated than even those paths of Inchy as to what is the true nature of apparitions. But at other times I [...] believe that all nature is full of invisible people [...]. Even when I was a boy I could never walk in a wood without feeling that at any moment I might find before me somebody or something I had long looked for without knowing what I looked for. And now I will at times explore every little nook of some poor coppice with almost anxious footsteps, so deep a hold has this imagination upon me (*Myth* 63).

Returning to Yeats's insistence that a rejection of a positivist, mechanistic view of nature led to his creation of a poetic tradition, and his belief in the original truths of the imagination, this passage reaffirms the link between a re-enchanted worldview and Yeats's own artistic enterprise. Rooted in a vision of folklore as "the collaborative Ur-text of a spiritual and imaginative faith," Yeats insists on his own receptivity to "apparitions," his own blurring of the boundary between

natural and supernatural, not only to claim kinship with a re-imagined Irish identity, but as an anti-materialist protest which places the imagination, and a sense of nature as animated or immanent with spirituality, at the root of his literary and philosophical project.³⁵

The relationship between this re-enchanted nature, the “invisible people,” and Yeats’s poetic endeavors, is particularly pronounced in his play *The Shadowy Waters*.³⁶ This play, which in many versions only thinly veils its autobiographical nature, concerns the magician Forgael, who is sailing on “the deck of an ancient ship” (VP 221) with a crew of sailors, in search of “a woman, / One of the Ever-living” (VP 231). Part and parcel of this quest is Forgael’s aim to pass beyond the self, beyond the material world, and beyond images, into “a place in the world’s core” (VP 231), a source of original light. In this way, he mirrors a Blakean quest for a mystical vision, Blake’s “constant attempt to overcome the material world.”³⁷ “All would be well,” Forgael says, “Could we but give us wholly to the dreams, / And get into their world that to the sense / Is shadow, and not linger wretchedly / Among substantial things” (VP 230). Due to the fact that *The Shadowy Waters* was composed and revised over a number of years, it exhibits many of the formative concerns of Yeats’s work: apocalyptic thought, druid rites, magic, animism, folklore, and occult symbolism all appear and are emphasized in different manuscript drafts. In fact, as A. J. Bate has noted, Yeats wanted to include three versions of the play in the same collected edition in 1907, showcasing the various concerns and themes of each.³⁸ Prior to a major revision in the late 1890s, as many critics (including Yeats himself) have observed, the play became overloaded with symbolism, weighted down by the influence of Maeterlinck and Villiers de l’Isle-Adam and the occultism of MacGregor Mathers.³⁹ Writing to John O’Leary regarding Florence Farr’s desire to stage *The Shadowy Waters*, Yeats termed it “a wild mystical thing carefully arranged to be an insult to the regular theatre goer who is hated by both of us” (CLI 384); however, he perhaps worried that the “insult” might, in fact, fall flat under its weight of “legendary detail,” making it so abstract as to be “unfit for any theatrical purpose” (CLI 407). The struggle to be concrete in a play about the struggle to leave the substantial world hints at a key tension in Yeats’s work during this period, which William O’Donnell has suggested separates Yeats from his protagonist, Forgael: the former being an artist, the latter an adept proper. Whereas Forgael wishes to leave nature behind, Yeats (as an artist) feels compelled towards it.⁴⁰

The earlier, Blakean versions of the play feature a backstory, in which the Children of Aoifu have performed two tasks for Forgael (robbing hazels from a tree overhanging Connla’s Well and stealing leaves from a northern oak tree); later, Forgael himself performs versions of these labors, penetrating Connla’s Pool and sailing under the roots of the oak tree, which is said to divide the

Place of Briars from the Place of Stones. In these early versions, the oak and the hazel “symbolize [...] the unreality of the created world,” and thus align the play with a Blakean vision of nature (*DC* 10, 22). In fact, Forgael explicitly refers to physical nature as the fragmented version of an original unity, seeing creation itself as a series of clothing, masks, and costumes which, like the occult adept, he is able to control.⁴¹

All things among the winds waters, & all things ^{that ha}
 That hang among the winds, & all that
 Among the winds, all things that build the fire
 All they that build the fire & all things that life
 That wander [?] in the woods & water & woods or hang
 Among the winds have perished
 In water & woods or
 All ^{For all} souls that build the fire. & all things ^{souls} that life ^{live}
 Wrapped up in fur or ^{and} feather & bright with scales
 Are but malevolent masks for my own ^{that my} lips press
 And cry through & ^{for} ^{and} the woods & waters & winds
 Are robes but the robe I wrap about my head
 And from of old have shaken with my sighing (*DC* 176–77).

In this passage, Forgael is clearly revealed as possessing an ability to manipulate nature; in fact, physical nature itself becomes entirely anthropocentric. Each living thing, and each element, is made a “mask” for Forgael to “cry through,” and Forgael’s emotions are reflected directly in the movements of “the woods & waters & winds.” This is the very antithesis of Yeats’s later accusation that the failings of nineteenth-century poetry were due to mankind being “passive before a mechanized nature”; rather, Forgael is active, commanding nature, even placing himself and his mind as the source of its animation. In this way, Forgael’s divergence is twofold: he is both an active component in the natural world, and an antagonist to any view of it as “mechanized,” or unable to be affected by mankind.

However, Yeats himself, though he may have passingly conformed to this view of the poet as adept, as a master of magical arcana, propounded a view of magic and nature subtly different to that of the protagonist of *The Shadowy Waters*. Whereas Sidnell, Mayhew, and Clark have suggested the correlation between Forgael’s vision of nature as “mask” and Blake’s work (*DC* 29), Yeats’s understanding of the relationship between mankind and nature, discussed in his essay “Magic” and finding fuller form in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (1917), is less anthropocentric in its conception of visionary art. In *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, Yeats returns to the “Great Memory” outlined in “Magic,” explaining that the images therein “had a relation to what one knew and yet were an extension

of one's knowledge" (*Myth* 345). Such receptivity in the mind requires not control over nature, but a concentrated awareness of its movements and meanings. The images in *Anima Mundi*, for Yeats, are subject to growth and evolution in the same way as natural objects, and these images (indistinguishable from "apparitions") become "mirrored" in the mind (*Myth* 352). This is a theory of correspondences; however, in this case, the movements of images in *Anima Mundi* are key to the apparently illogical processes occurring in phenomenal nature. Apparent irrationality, Yeats contests, is underpinned by the order and logic of the non-phenomenal world.

From this point, Yeats propounds a vision of an ensouled and spiritualized natural world which (though *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* was written more than a decade later than the final version of *The Shadowy Waters*) is reflected in the correspondences between nature and spirit in his earlier verse play.

The dead living in their memories are, I am persuaded, the source of all that we call instinct, and it is their love and their desire, all unknowing, that make us drive beyond our reason, or in defiance of our interest it may be; and it is the dream martens that, all unknowing, are master-masons to the living martens building about church windows their elaborate nests; and in their turn, the phantoms are stung to a keener delight from a concord between their luminous pure vehicle and our strong senses (*Myth* 359).

The physical world, in this passage, is influenced and expanded by the world of the "Great Memory:" the "concord" between the two creates a form of mystical "delight" between the physical and non-physical worlds and, again, the irrationality or unreason of the material world is rooted in the logic and truth of the unseen. As in his 1888 letter to Tynan, where Yeats wondered about the religion of the robins and sparrows building nests underneath his window, here the poet connects the birds with a dream-world, considering their relationship to some unknown religious entity, though now he goes one step further, suggesting that their nest-building might itself be a reflection of an unseen spiritual order.⁴² Yeats earlier couched *The Shadowy Waters* in such a theory, writing a series of prologues and prefaces to the text, each of which reveals the particular import of the redrafted story to the developing mind of the poet. The earliest version of the play opens with a prologue given by an old man, in which Yeats reveals the visionary intentions of *The Shadowy Waters* as both an attack on "realistic art" and an insistence on the transformative nature of symbolism and archetypes. The old man arrives, dressed in peasant costume, holding a large crystal globe. Behind him, there is a curtain covered with constellations and "representations of all kinds of birds / & beasts & fish." He addresses the audience:

Look children of a day upon
 this globe. In it you will
 see the woods & the hills &
 the heavens & the face of the
 deep & all other things reflected
 as your own faces are to others
 but set apart that you may
 gaze & wonder. Look children
 of time upon the globe of realistic
 art.

O world O Time look upon thy
 face [?] & weep.

(he is bath[ed] in a red light
 He lifts the globe above his head
 He who looks long shall see it
 cloud & then shall the clouds
 break & the woods & the the
 hills & the heavens & the face
 of the deep & the face of man
 shall be seen there again but
 transformed into t by the light of
 the interior spirit change into
 types & symbols & metals[? = elements?] of
 the inferior[?] life. For I labour[?]
 humans carry to[?] the globe of ^{ideal} realistic[?]
 art until[?] the day when all
 Behind all life burns[?] the archetypal
 life & to the archetypes do all
 things return, knocking again & again (DC 38–39).

Here, Yeats calls for *The Shadowy Waters* to be read in terms of symbols and archetypes, to be seen as reflecting on the quest for a transformative and unchanging truth in the symbolic world. Looking long enough at the “mirror” of the “realistic” world, in which all things are “reflected,” the audience is asked to continue their meditation until a visionary state is achieved. The physical world of “realistic art” is revealed to be archetypal, repeating, a reflection only of the eternal symbolic world. Here, Yeats’s prologue reads as a particularly Blakean instruction, though it is of course influenced also by the sephirotic system of correspondences at the heart of the rituals of the Order of the Golden Dawn.⁴³ Requesting the audience or reader to attain a visionary state, Yeats presents his early version of *The Shadowy Waters* as the product of looking past physical nature into the world of archetypes. Later, in one of these early manuscript

versions, Forgael himself curses the hazel and the oak trees: "A bitter dream lay hid in an oak tree / And changed the images to but one image / And now I meet my image, as on water, / When I would meet a music & a light" (*DC* 94). The enchanted world, here, is an agent which actively alters Forgael's quest to escape it. The frustration registered here by Forgael, who tries and fails to escape his selfhood, his connection to physical nature, complicates the request of the prologue. For Forgael as a magician, every animal, element, and natural phenomenon is an emanation of his own selfhood: "All things, all hours, days all destinies / Are burning mirrors & my heart the flame / That mirror casts to mirror" (*DC* 166). Here, Forgael (as with Yeats himself) is constantly seeking to avoid solipsistic anthropocentrism in order to attain a visionary state, though it is the animistic influence of the natural objects, and the porosity of his imagination to their "dreams," that he rails against.

In the more well-known prefatory poem to *The Shadowy Waters*, dated September 1900, Yeats shifts the tone of the piece to one that is more questioning, moving past the Blakean paradigm of his earlier prologue to suggest the power of an animated natural world at the heart of the text. In this poem, which begins "I walked among the seven woods of Coole," Yeats charts the changing sensory details of each different woodland, repeatedly invoking the magical number seven: "Seven odours, seven murmurs, seven woods" (*VP* 218). In fact, the poem itself acts as "a mantra, an invocation, 'sympathetic magic': the world of the woods, being verbally enumerated, is enchanted, and *The Shadowy Waters* is thus framed as the product of a re-enchanted, re-animated nature.⁴⁴ The poem is replete with natural detail ("wild bees fling / Their sudden fragrances on the green air" (*VP* 217)), and returns again to Yeats's self-documented affinity with a spiritualized nature, his receptivity to those "apparitions" which appeared as a result of his shift from a post-Enlightenment to an enchanted worldview. The woods of the prefatory poem (much like the "Enchanted Woods" of *The Celtic Twilight*) are immanent with folklore and magical potential and, as he would later suggest in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, are closely influenced by the "Great Memory," the "dream-martens" as "master masons" of the "living martens" (*Myth* 359).

In "Dim Pairc-na-tarav," "enchanted eyes" have seen "immortal [...] shadows walk" (*VP* 217). Although Yeats never explicitly states who these eyes belong to (perhaps to the peasantry, or perhaps to the various animals who move amongst the trees), he claims the woods of Coole as a source of enchantment, a place of visionary potential where the immanence of the spiritual world can be felt as an influence on the receptive mind. Rather than looking solely beyond the physical woodland, seeing it as valuable only for its symbolism, or regarding it as antagonistic to imagination, this poem foregrounds (as in the

essay “Magic” and *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*) the natural world as a point of communion or harmony with the unseen “Great Memory” of nature itself:

I had not eyes like those enchanted eyes,
 Yet dreamed that beings happier than men
 Moved round me in the shadows, and at night
 My dreams were cloven by voices and by fires; [...]

 How shall I name you, immortal, mild, proud shadows?
 I only know that all we know comes from you,
 And that you come from Eden on flying feet.
 Is Eden far away, or do you hide
 From human thought, as hares and mice and coney
 That run before the reaping-hook and lie
 In the last ridge of the barley? Do our woods
 And winds and ponds cover more quiet woods,
 More shining winds, more star-glimmering ponds? (VP 218)

In a similar way to the mode in which Forgael’s imagination is adversely effected by the “dream” held in the oak tree, so Yeats’s prefatory poem here positions the poet as being sensitive and susceptible to those “imaginary people” who resulted from his radical re-understanding of the natural world: the spiritual “beings” of the wood infiltrate the poet’s dreams, and *The Shadowy Waters* is positioned as a form of emanation from the natural world, represented in “I walked among the seven woods” by the liminality of the phenomenal and non-phenomenal domains. As we have seen, this is conceived by Yeats as peculiarly Irish, primitive, and original. The fluid, Celtic view of nature, what Yeats would term “flux,” is recreated in the sacred space of both the poem and the woods.⁴⁵

The trope of Yeats receiving truths “Out of the forest loam” (VP 439), as he describes in his later poem “Fragments,” or meeting imaginary or visionary images in the woods, as in “Her Vision in the Wood” (VP 536–37), is thus embedded early in the poet’s oeuvre, and is specifically linked to a re-enchantment of the natural world, a revised understanding of the poet’s place within (and relationship to) nature. Just as the symbolism of *The Shadowy Waters* could function as a matrix for Yeats’s quarrel with both naturalistic theatre and mechanized nature, so his project of re-enchantment, his generation’s quest to know the world differently, meant that a reconfigured nature underpinned much of his anti-Enlightenment aesthetics. Moving beyond his Blakean model, though never rejecting it, Yeats emphasizes the poet’s ability to know the world differently, to re-enchant it. This is at first an explicit and then an implicit quarrel with nineteenth-century positivism and a post-Enlightenment view of nature as “mechanized.” By rooting value in the physical world, and by acknowledging the animistic potential of the natural world, Yeats renders nature as an

enchanted subject, a source of influence acting on the mind from without.⁴⁶ A re-enchanted natural world is thus fundamental to his poetical, philosophical and aesthetic project.

Notes

1. For more on the place of Newton and Descartes in relation to literary re-enchancements, see Alan Liu, *Wordsworth: The Sense of History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 104.
2. See, in particular, Pericles Lewis, *Religious Experience and the Modernist Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and Erik Tønning, *Modernism and Christianity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
3. Timothy Materer, *Modernist Alchemy: Poetry and the Occult* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995). See also Kathleen Raine, *Yeats the Initiate: Essays on Certain Themes in the Work of W. B. Yeats* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986); George Mills Harper, *Yeats's Golden Dawn* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1987). For Yeats's place within modernist re-enchancements, see Leon Surette, *The Birth of Modernism: Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats and the Occult* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), or more recently John Bramble, *Modernism and the Occult* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
4. Leigh Wilson, *Modernism and Magic: Experiments with Spiritualism, Theosophy and the Occult* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 30.
5. Rupert Sheldrake, *The Rebirth of Nature: The Greening of Science and God* (London: Century, 1990), 61.
6. The most famous expression of this maxim comes from Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, who asserted in 1944 that "The project of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world." See *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), xv.
7. Jane Bennett, *Unthinking Faith and Enlightenment: Nature and the State in a Post-Hegelian Era* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1987), 7.
8. William M. Murphy, "Psychic Daughter, Mystic Son, Sceptic Father," in *YO*, 11–26: 13.
9. Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats* (London: Faber, 1964), xii.
10. George Bornstein, "Yeats and Romanticism," in Marjorie Howes and John Kelly, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to W. B. Yeats* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19–35: 25. In a letter to George Cumberland, written April 12, 1827, Blake wrote that "Flaxman is Gone & we must All soon follow every one to his Own Eternal House Leaving the Delusive Goddess Nature & her Laws to get into Freedom from all Law." David V. Erdman, ed., *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, with a commentary by Harold Bloom (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 784. This letter is quoted by Yeats in *E&I*, 138.
11. Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), 309.
12. See John Wilson Foster, "The Culture of Nature," in Foster, ed., *Nature in Ireland: A Scientific and Cultural History* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1997), 597–635: 606, and *Life 1*, 32.
13. J.M. Synge, "Autobiography," in *Collected Works, Vol. II: Prose*, ed. Alan Price (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 3–15: 11.
14. Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 38.
15. Sinéad Garrigan Mattar, "Yeats, Fairies, and the New Animism," *New Literary History* 43, no. 1 (2012), 137–57: 144.

16. Rachel V. Billigheimer, *Wheels of Eternity: A Comparative Study of William Blake and William Butler Yeats* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990), 2.
17. Erdman, *Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, 555.
18. Quoted in Hazard Adams, *Blake and Yeats: The Contrary Vision* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955), 25–26.
19. For more on the afterlives of Blake’s “vegetable glass” in the Irish Revival, particularly with regards to Synge and Yeats, see Seán Hewitt, “Dialectics, Irony, and J.M. Synge’s *The Well of the Saints*,” *The Review of English Studies* 68, no. 286 (2017), 773–90: 779–81.
20. W. B. Yeats and Edwin John Ellis, eds., *The Works of William Blake: Poetic, Symbolic, and Critical, edited with lithographs of the illustrated “Prophetic Books” and a Memoir and Interpretation*, vol. I (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1893), xxi.
21. See, in particular, “William Blake and the Imagination,” in *E&I*, 111–15.
22. Mary Catherine Flannery, *Yeats and Magic: The Earlier Works* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1977), 43–44.
23. Helen Vendler has even suggested that Yeats’s concept of latent powers in non-human objects extends to his view of language itself, reading his early poems in terms of “magical” techniques and patterning. See Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline: Yeats and Lyric Form* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 90–110.
24. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 30.
25. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 33.
26. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 300.
27. See, in particular, the passage from “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell,” beginning “The ancient Poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses,” in Erdman, *Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, 70.
28. Marjorie Howes notes that this sense of difference is common in Yeats’s early poems. In “The Sad Shepherd,” for example, the shepherd’s attempts to comfort himself through pathetic fallacy in the manner of the Romantic poets are rebutted: “nature remains alien and indifferent to him; the shell to whom he tells his story ‘Changed all he sang to inarticulate moan / Among her wildering whirls, forgetting him’” (*VP* 69). Howes, “Introduction,” in Howes and Kelly, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to W. B. Yeats*, 1–18: 2.
29. Nicholas Grene, *Yeats’s Poetic Codes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 60–61.
30. Mattar, “Yeats, Fairies, and the New Animism,” 153.
31. Edward Hirsch, “Coming out into the Light: W. B. Yeats’s *The Celtic Twilight* (1893, 1902),” *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 18, no. 1 (1981), 1–22: 11–12.
32. John Frayne suggests that, though this review was published in 1899, it was written long before that date. *UPI*, 153.
33. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1993), 10.
34. “In Ireland this world and the world we go to after death are not far apart. [...] Indeed there are times when the worlds are so near together that it seems as if our earthly chattels were no more than the shadows of things beyond” *Myth*, 98.
35. Sinéad Garrigan Mattar, “Folklore,” in David Holdeman and Ben Levitas, eds., *W. B. Yeats in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 247–55: 247.
36. Since *The Shadowy Waters* underwent numerous revisions over at least a decade, this article follows the lead of Sidnell, Mayhew, and Clark in referring to the work as a “play” throughout the whole course of its evolution, for clarity. See W. B. Yeats, *Druid Craft: The Writing of The Shadowy Waters* (hereafter referenced in-text as *DC*), ed. and with a commentary by Michael J. Sidnell, George P. Mayhew, and David R. Clark (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1972), 3.
37. Arianna Antonielli, “William Butler Yeats’s ‘The Symbolic System’ of William Blake,” in *Estudios Irlandeses* 3 (2008), 10–28: 13.

38. A. J. Bate, "Yeats and the Symbolist Aesthetic," *MLN* 98, no. 5, *Comparative Literature* (1983), 1214–33: 1225.
39. See, for example, James W. Flannery, *W. B. Yeats and the Idea of a Theatre: The Early Abbey Theatre in Theory and Practice* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), 34–35; Katherine Worth, *The Irish Drama of Europe from Yeats to Beckett* (London: The Athlone Press, 1986), 16.
40. William H. O'Donnell, "Yeats as Adept and Artist: The Speckled Bird, The Secret Rose, and The Wind Among the Reeds," in *YO*, 55–79, especially 68–69.
41. For more on occultist relationships to nature at the fin de siècle, see Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, 14.
42. For more on Yeats's birds, particularly his use of them as political markers and as ways of reimagining the nation, see Lucy McDiarmid, "The Avian Rising: Yeats, Muldoon, and Others," *International Yeats Studies* 1, no. 1 (2016), 74–85.
43. For more on the relationship between *The Shadowy Waters* and the rituals of the Order of the Golden Dawn, see *DC*, 29–30.
44. Grene, *Yeats's Poetic Codes*, 91.
45. For more on the Celtic view of nature, see John Wilson Foster, "Encountering Traditions," in Foster, ed., *Nature in Ireland*, 23–70, especially 31–32.
46. Onno Oerlemans sees this re-assignment of "value" as central to all forms of environmentalism. See *Romanticism and the Materiality of Nature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 9.

INDIA IN YEATS'S EARLY IMAGINATION: MOHINI CHATTERJEE AND KĀLIDĀSA

Ashim Dutta

This essay examines Yeats's initiatory interest in Indian lore and literature, and their importance to his creative imagination. Rather than functioning as an amateurish poetic experimentation leading to a fuller understanding of India in his late years, or to his "real" pursuits of Irish and modernist subjects, Yeats's early preoccupation with India remains fundamental to the syncretic spirituality of his thought, blending into the larger literary, cultural, and philosophical enterprises of his life. India, for Yeats, was brought to life for the first time by the Dublin visit of the Bengali Theosophist and Vedāntist Mohini Chatterjee in the mid-1880s. While Chatterjee was a key philosophical influence on Indian matters early in his career, Yeats at that time seems to have also been an enthusiastic reader of the works of the fifth-century Indian poet-playwright Kālidāsa. Although Harbans Rai Bachchan and Naresh Guha published substantial works on these topics in the 1960s, Yeats's creative interaction with Indian subjects has been generally neglected in western scholarship until quite recently.¹ There is, however, still need for an in-depth study of Yeats's early Indophilia that explores the connection between the disparate Indian materials he came across in the 1880s and their imaginative transformation in his poetry. With that gap in mind, this essay shows how the Theosophical-Vedāntist India of Chatterjee was conflated with Kālidāsa's mytho-poetic India in the creative imagination of Yeats's early youth. This collation notwithstanding, in Yeats's works these two Indias still retain their distinctive temperaments, namely that of an ascetic purity and an aesthetic in which spirituality and sensuality seamlessly fuse into one another.

I

The 1880s were a foundational period in terms of Yeats's mystic-occultist orientation in general and his first serious interest in Indian thoughts in particular. It was during this decade that Yeats was exposed to a variety of inter-cultural currents which stimulated his mystical temperaments. Yeats first became interested in India through the activities of the Dublin Hermetic Society (of which he was elected President at the first meeting) and the Dublin Theosophical Society.² In an 1898 newspaper article entitled "The Poetry of AE," Yeats describes a typical meeting of the Hermetic Society. Gathered in a rented room of York Street, Dublin, a small group of young enthusiasts

“began to read papers to one another on the Vedas, and the Upanishads, and the Neoplatonists, and on modern mystics and spiritualists” (*UP2* 121). Such a conflation of eastern and western schools of thought as well as of ancient and “modern” mysticisms suggests a multi-layered syncretism, characteristic not only of the Hermetic Society but of Yeats’s mysticism in general. Yeats’s fascination with eastern spirituality was shared by his friends such as Charles Johnston, John Eglinton, Charles Weekes, and, most significantly, George Russell (AE), a visionary artist and poet (*YAE*³ 1–20).⁴ A century after the first flowering of European fascination with Sanskrit texts,⁵ a host of eastern texts were being translated (or retranslated) into English during the early 1880s, as part of the fifty-volume *The Sacred Books of the East* edited by Max Müller. This series included such texts as *The Bhagavad Gita* and *The Upanishads* (*IA*⁶ 30–31). Apart from these, R. F. Foster particularly mentions A. P. Sinnett’s *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883) as “a founding text of the fashionable New Age religion, Theosophy, blending East and West in a spiritual synthesis readily absorbed by its devotees” (*Life* 1 45). Despite Yeats’s uncertainty about Theosophy, the orientation it provided and the connections it helped forge had abiding impacts on him.⁷

All these cultural crosscurrents set the stage for Yeats’s first significant encounter with an Indian personality in the figure of Chatterjee, a disciple of the Theosophical Society’s co-founder, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Chatterjee came to Dublin as a representative of the Society in April 1886 (*Life* 1 48).⁸ Coming from a sophisticated Bengali Brahmin family, descending from Raja Ram Mohun Roy,⁹ Chatterjee was a graduate from the University of Calcutta and a lawyer by profession. Attracted by Theosophy’s interest in Hinduism, he became a member of the Theosophical Society in 1882. However, on his European tour accompanying Henry Steele Olcott and Blavatsky, starting in 1884, he was expected to cater to “Western expectations about the mysterious East.”¹⁰ Yeats’s retrospective records are also rife with orientaling gestures. At one moment Chatterjee was “[a] handsome young man with the typical face of Christ” (*CW3* 98),¹¹ and at another he is idealistically “Eastern”: “He sat there beautiful, as only an Eastern is beautiful, making little gestures with his delicate hands” (“*WW*”¹² 40). Yeats, it seems, was equally attracted by the “Eastern” charm of the man and the wisdom he taught.

Chatterjee became an authority in the west so far as Indian philosophical matters were concerned. In the grand reception given to Blavatsky and Olcott in London, Chatterjee was one of the key speakers (alongside Olcott and Sinnett) and he spoke on “the relationship India bears to the Theosophical movement and why Europe should take an interest in it.” In the account of Francesca Arundale, Blavatsky’s London hostess, “[v]ery often Mohini Chatterji [sic] would answer questions on Indian philosophy. I have rarely met with

anyone who could give such clear and forcible explanations clothed in such beautiful language.” His talks were indeed so popular that Arundale remembers having “rarely closed our doors till one or two o’clock in the morning.”¹³ The pitch of Arundale’s recollection matches that of Yeats, who recalls that during Chatterjee’s momentous stay in Dublin he used to come to Chatterjee early in the morning with some question and stayed “till ten or eleven at night” to ask it, due to frequent interruptions by other visitors (CW3 98).

As Yeats recollects in a 1900 newspaper article “The Way of Wisdom,” in his very first talk, Chatterjee “overthrew or awed into silence whatever metaphysics the town had” (“WW” 40). So far as Yeats and his other “initiated” fellow mystics were concerned, though, the effect was not subversive but reassuring: “It was my first meeting with a philosophy that confirmed my vague speculations and seemed at once logical and boundless” (CW3 98). The core of Chatterjee’s teaching of Indian philosophy seems to have been based on Śaṅkarācārya’s sect of Advaita (non-dualist) Vedānta, a major philosophical school of classical Hinduism. Peter Kuch tells us that, despite being asked to dwell on *Esoteric Buddhism*, Chatterjee “went beyond it to discuss his own study of the Indian philosophy of Sankara” (YAE 17). However, the relationship between Buddhism and Śaṅkara’s Advaita Vedānta is not an oppositional but a complementary one. As S. Radhakrishnan has observed, the similarities between the two “is not surprising in view of the fact that both these systems had for their background the Upaniṣads.” For all their differences in concepts and/or approaches to the same concepts, the Buddhist views of phenomenalism and *nirvāṇa* are similar to the Advaita Vedāntic concepts of *māyā* and *mokṣa* respectively.¹⁴ Despite holding “the Tibetan Brotherhood” to be higher in grade than any of the other “occult fraternities” in the world, Sinnett admits at the start of *Esoteric Buddhism* that “Brahminical philosophy, in ages before Buddha, embodied the identical doctrine which may now be described as Esoteric Buddhism.”¹⁵ As for Chatterjee, Neil Mann has observed that despite being “a trusted spokesman for Theosophy when he visited Dublin in 1886, [...] his Theosophy was closely linked with Vedantic philosophy, and the two strands are evident in his written work,” such as *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History* (1884), co-written with Laura Holloway, and the *Dublin University Review* article “The Common Sense of Theosophy” (1886).¹⁶ Chatterjee’s other publications include a pamphlet for the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, entitled “A Paper on Krishna” (1886), and edited volumes of *The Bhagwad Gita* (Boston, 1887) and *Viveka-Chudamani of Sri Sankaracharya* (Adyar, 1932) (WBYO¹⁷ 20, 275, 280). Familiarity with some basic premises of relevant Hindu philosophical doctrines, therefore, helps us better appreciate Yeats’s initial response to and later revision of Chatterjee’s teaching.

Śaṅkara is said to have summed up the quintessential wisdom of his Advaita Vedānta in the following epigram: “*brahma satyam, jagan mithya, jivo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*” (“the *brahman* is the truth, the world is false, and the finite individual [or living being] is none other than the *brahman*”).¹⁸ Radhakrishnan summarizes some key points of Śaṅkara’s conceptualization of *brahman* as follows:

Brahman has no *genus*, possesses no qualities, does not act, and is related to nothing else. [...] As it is opposed to all empirical existence, it is given to us as the negative of everything that is positively known. [...] It is non-being, since it is not the being which we attribute to the world of experience.¹⁹

Maintaining that the external, physical, or phenomenal world has but a deceptive reality, this particular school of Vedānta often uses the rope-snake metaphor to indicate the relation between *brahman* and the world of experience: “Brahman appears as the world, even as the rope appears as the snake.”²⁰ Such false appearance happens because of *adhyāsa* (or the attribution of one object’s properties to a different object). *Adhyāsa* thus leads to *avidyā* (“non-knowledge,” or false knowledge).²¹ Another concept that is often associated with this imposition of false reality on what is truly real is *māyā*, which is the power that sustains the world of empirical experience or phenomena.²² At the dawning of supreme wisdom, the individual self and the phenomenal world disappear, revealing nothing but *brahman*, the supreme reality. Hence the ultimate superfluity of all worldly activities.

Chatterjee, recalls Yeats, found “even prayer” to be “too full of hope, of desire, of life, to have any part in that acquiescence that was his beginning of wisdom,” contending that “even our desire of immortality was no better than our other desires” (“WW” 40). It is, however, worth noting that in this view of life and reality, there are two perspectives working simultaneously. As Matthew R. Dasti and Edwin F. Bryant observe, “[t]he meta-narrative of Advaita, that all that exists is the Brahman alone and there is no action or agency” works only “at the absolute level.” But, “at the phenomenal level,” the self has got quite a powerful agency over its life and destiny, which are determined by “the karma generated by its own acts.”²³ The latter view is particularly pertinent given that the attainment of wisdom is not accomplished in a single birth. In Chatterjee’s translation, a verse in Śaṅkarācārya’s *Crest-Jewel of Wisdom* maintains that “the spiritual knowledge which discriminates between spirit and non-spirit, the practical realisation of the merging of oneself in Brahmātmā and final emancipation from the bonds of matter are unattainable except by the good karma of hundreds of crores of incarnations.”²⁴ This brings us to the notion of reincarnation, which is crucial to Yeats’s creative transformation of Chatterjee’s teaching.

Seemingly owing its origin to the pre-Aryan aboriginal faiths, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is shared by all schools of Indian philosophy with the sole exception of the Materialist school of Cārvāka.²⁵ In the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, Śaṅkara stresses the unreality of “transmigration,” since neither the “changeless” Supreme Self nor the unreal phenomenal self can be said to “transmigrate.”²⁶ In *The Bhagavadgītā*, a text which was recognized as one of the key authorities by the proponents of Vedānta (including Śaṅkara whose commentary on it is the oldest of those extant), Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna with a view to ridding him of his delusion: “Never was there a time when I was not, nor thou, nor these lords of men, nor will there ever be a time hereafter when we shall cease to be” (2:12).²⁷ However, from a less absolute perspective, each self, although essentially eternal, is doomed to take multiple bodies, as emphasized by the verse that follows the one quoted above: “As the soul passes in this body through childhood, youth and age, even so is its taking on of another body. The sage is not perplexed by this” (2:13).²⁸ Despite upholding such realization of self as not-body, *The Bhagavadgītā* does not promote inaction; delivered at the battlefield, the ostensible purpose of Kṛṣṇa’s advice is to propel the warrior Arjuna to action, albeit with detachment.²⁹ The gist of the third chapter of *The Bhagavadgītā*, entitled “Karma Yoga or the Method of Work,” is that a self-conscious renunciation of action is as delusory as performing action with desire. What is to be shunned is not action in itself—which is impossible for the finite beings—but the sense of self or ego in its performance (3: 6–9, 19).³⁰ By performing selfless action, the wise let their “*karma*” be “dissolved” (4: 23),³¹ and thus progress towards the ultimate goal of wisdom, namely freedom from the cycle of reincarnation.

Although Blavatsky maintained that the theory of reincarnation was “taught by all major thinkers and scriptures, particularly Jesus in the New Testament,”³² much of her argument in *The Key to Theosophy* deeply resembles Indian thought, such as her distinction between the “*false* (because so finite and evanescent) *personality*” and the “*true individuality*” that “plays, like an actor, many parts on the stage of life.”³³ Another leading Theosophist Annie Besant argues that, while from the “mortal” perspective of man reincarnation means “a succession of lives,” viewed from the perspective of “the Eternal Man,” it is non-existent “unless we say that a tree reincarnates with each spring when it puts out a new crop of leaves, or a man reincarnates when he puts on a new coat.”³⁴ This distinction between temporal and eternal perspectives resonates with the Indian scriptures discussed above. In at least a couple of the 1884 meetings of the Theosophical Society’s London Lodge, as Shalini Sikka has noted, Chatterjee spoke on the concepts of karma and rebirth as well as the role of desire in the latter (*WBYU*³⁵ 78, 82, 94). From Yeats’s autobiographical and poetic accounts, it appears that Chatterjee dwelt upon these concepts in his Dublin talks, too.

Yeats translated Chatterjee's philosophical wisdom into "Kanva on Himself," an undated poem that he must have written after the Theosophist-Vedāntist's visit in Dublin. Published in *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems* (1889), the poem was later excluded from the "definitive edition of his poetry" (VP 641–42; CCP³⁶ 7). Yeats does not offer any specific reason for the poem's exclusion in his 1894 correspondences with T. Fisher Unwin as to the content of the edition, except for saying that he would keep only "the best lyrics from the 'Oisín' volume," among other works (CL1 402, 411–12). Thus the poem simply suffered the same fate of abandonment from *Poems* (1895) as did fifteen other lyrics from the 1889 volume (EP2³⁷ 16). Taking its speaker from Kālidāsa's play *Śakuntalā* (both the play and the character Kanva will be discussed in the second section, below), the poem "Kanva on Himself" deals with the idea of reincarnation in a fairly straightforward manner:

Hast thou not sat of yore upon the knees
Of myriads of beloveds, and on thine
Have not a myriad swayed below strange trees
In other lives? (VP 724)

Much before the poem's creative transformation into "Mohini Chatterjee" (which will be discussed further on) in "The Way of Wisdom" (1900), Yeats remembers Chatterjee suggesting that one should say to oneself every night at bed: "I have lived many lives. It may be that I have been a slave and a prince. Many a beloved has sat upon my knees, and I have sat upon the knees of many a beloved. Everything that has been shall be again" ("WW" 40). In its concluding quatrain, "Kanva on Himself" strikes a note of passivity, changelessness, and resignation:

Then wherefore fear the usury of Time,
Or Death that cometh with the next life-key?
Nay, rise and flatter her with golden rhyme,
For as things were so shall things ever be. (VP 724)

The poem is written from the point of view of the eternal self of man which is unaffected by the power of death and hence indifferent to the "myriad" births it has undergone. Yeats recalls in "The Way of Wisdom" how, pressed by others to name his "own religion," Chatterjee "would look embarrassed and say 'this body is a Brahmin'" ("WW" 40), thus dissociating his real self, which is eternal, from his mortal body which is identifiable as belonging to the Brahmin caste.³⁸

At the end of the article, Yeats seems to confuse Chatterjee's wisdom of detachment with some kind of philosophical passivity:

Alcibiades fled from Socrates lest he might do nothing but listen to him all his life, and certainly there were few among us who did not think that to listen to this man who threw the enchantment of power about silent and gentle things, and at last to think as he did, was the one thing worth doing; and that all action and all words that lead to action were a little vulgar, a little trivial; nor am I quite certain that any among us has quite awoken out of the dreams he brought among us. (“WW” 41)

If the idea of waking up from a “dream” is uncertain at the end of this article, this is not so in its 1908 version which was included, in a slightly revised form, in the collected edition of his writings under the new title “The Pathway.” There the ending of the essay was significantly altered by turning the uncertain final clause of the previous version into a more unequivocal statement: “Ah, how many years it has taken me to awake out of that dream!” (CW4 291). This subtle change, one might argue, points the direction that the 1929 poem “Mohini Chatterjee” would take. Let us, however, stay a little longer with the 1900 article.

Underscoring the importance of enlightened silence and inaction, “The Way of Wisdom” captures Yeats’s fin de siècle impression of Chatterjee’s teaching. As the above allusion to Alcibiades and Socrates suggests, for all his awed fascination for Chatterjee and his wisdom, Yeats in 1900 may have felt the urge to cast off the spell of what appeared to him to be a thoughtful, meditative calm. He was by that time tilting more and more towards cultural-nationalist activism, as attested by such journalistic writing as “The De-Anglicising of Ireland” (1892) and the founding of the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899 (UPI 255–56; *Life* 1 205–10). His mystic-spiritual interest had also undergone significant reorientation. Having joined the Blavatsky Lodge in 1887, Yeats was compelled to resign from the Theosophical Society in 1890 due to his involvement in some “empirical experiment” to verify the truth of some of the Society’s teachings. He was then drawn to the “Western ceremonial magic” and joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in the same year, remaining with it until 1923 (*Life* 1 62, 103; MM³⁹ 62).⁴⁰ It is not therefore surprising that he would get over his initial fascination for Advaita Vedāntic philosophy as he understood it from Chatterjee’s interpretation. This sense of overcoming his youthful infatuation with his Indian master is further extended in the 1929 poem “Mohini Chatterjee,” from *The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1933).

While in the 1900 article Yeats presents himself as a silent listener, in “Mohini Chatterjee” he takes up the more active role of a commentator. Divided into two stanzas, the poem has a dialogic structure. The first stanza reports what “the Brahmin said” having been asked whether he would recommend praying to the poet-speaker. The Brahmin bade his disciple to “[p]ray for nothing,” but to daily remind himself of his “myriad” previous incarnations:

I have been a king,
 I have been a slave,
 Nor is there anything,
 Fool, rascal, knave,
 That I have not been,
 And yet upon my breast
 A myriad heads have lain. (VP 495–96)

In the second stanza, Yeats dissociates himself from the “boy” that he was while receiving the above advice (given to “set at rest | A boy’s turbulent days”) and assumes some agency by “add[ing]” his own “commentary” to the above wisdom:

Old lovers yet may have
 All that time denied –
 Grave is heaped on grave
 That they be satisfied – (VP 496)

Unlike the resignation implied in the last line of “Kanva on Himself”—“as things were so shall things ever be”—here the speaker-Yeats’s “commentary” provides a subtle twist on the doctrine of reincarnation. Rather than preaching the value of renunciation of desire, the modification in the “commentary” emphasizes the desire itself and its satisfaction. Instead of calmly accepting the workings of time and death, this poem presumes to “thunder [them] away”:

Birth is heaped on birth
 That such cannonade
 May thunder time away,
 Birth-hour and death-hour meet,
 Or, as great sages say,
 Men dance on deathless feet. (VP 496)

While the note of energy in words such as “cannonade” and “thunder” is unmissable, the above lines are ambiguous. That is to say, they do not essentially contradict the theory of reincarnation: that the cycle of birth-death-rebirth will be repeated until desire (born of misconception of the true nature of self and reality) is completely extinguished. The exhaustion of desire means liberation from a time-bound existence, and hence the possibility of “thunder[ing] time away” after multiple births. Read in this way, the meeting of the “birth-hour” and the “death-hour” may mean the arrest of the cycle of reincarnation, and hence an uninterrupted spiritual existence: “Men dance on deathless feet.”

On another reading, however, “dance on deathless feet” might imply the dynamic continuity of the cycle of reincarnation where “death-hour” is followed

by another “birth-hour.” The dynamism of this poem must have been owing in part to the dialectical energy of Yeats’s own mystic-philosophic system *A Vision*; the 1925 version of the book had already been published and Yeats had started to work on the revised version of the same, which would arrive in print in 1937. In fact, the poem that we know as “Mohini Chatterjee” was first included in the Cuala Press edition of *A Packet for Ezra Pound* (1929), where it appears as one of the two lyrics under the umbrella title “Meditations upon Death” (PEP⁴¹ 9–11). Although none of these poems is included in *A Packet for Ezra Pound* that crowns the 1937 version of *A Vision*, “Mohini Chatterjee” might be read as Yeats’s creative appropriation of the Indian thoughts imparted by Chatterjee for his own system. *A Vision* views human life and history to be cyclical and dialectical in nature, involving multiple incarnations. As Yeats writes in *AVB*, “all the symbolism of this book applies to begetting and birth, for all things are a single form which has divided and multiplied in time and space” (CW14 156). Yeats prefers division and multiplicity to “a single form,” whether Platonic, Neo-Platonic/Plotinian, Vedāntic, or any other of the plethora of sources that he distills into his system. He recounts in the introduction to *AVA* how, while contemplating nature the day before, he “murmured, as I have countless times, ‘I have been part of it always and there is maybe no escape, forgetting and returning life after life like an insect in the roots of the grass.’ But murmured it without terror, in exultation almost” (CW13 lvi).

It is possible to hear in the above quotation an echo of what Chatterjee asked his disciples to mutter at bedtime as an alternative to prayer. Yet, this is a very different kind of reincarnation from what Chatterjee may have taught Yeats; the ideal purpose of reincarnation in Hinduism and Theosophy would be perfection and escape, whereas Yeats here seems to subscribe to the Nietzschean idea of “eternal recurrence”: “Everything becomes and recurs eternally—escape is impossible!”⁴² Yeats was reading Friedrich Nietzsche from as early as 1896 (CB⁴³ 150–51). Writing to Lady Gregory in 1902, he calls Nietzsche “that strong enchanter” and claims to have found in him a “curious astringent joy” (December 26, 1902, *CL InteLex*). In *Vision*-ary terms, strength and astringency would be considered “*antithetical*” qualities (CW14 192) and hence more attuned to Yeats’s own personality. As Mann writes, “[i]t is possible that the end of time and life is the beginning of fuller being but that is not where Yeats’s interests lie. He [Yeats] is happy to be an *antithetical* man, acknowledging his partiality and incompleteness, without any desire to rid himself of it.”⁴⁴ However, for all his subjective preference, Mann notes elsewhere, “Yeats certainly sees release from the wheel of rebirth as not only possible but inevitable, though only after a full series of incarnations, paradigmatically twelve rounds of twenty-eight lives,” with some possible modifications.⁴⁵ Therefore, Nietzschean “eternal

recurrence" and Hindu liberatory reincarnation might be seen as emblematic of the dialectics of the phenomenal and the transcendental in Yeats's system.

Yeats's attitude towards eastern spirituality is eloquently expressed in a much earlier letter to Florence Farr. Informing her of his undertaking of "eastern meditations," Yeats adds that his objective is "to lay hands upon some dynamic and substantialising force as distinguished from the eastern quiescent and supersensualizing [*sic*] state of the soul—a movement downwards upon life not upwards out of life" (February 6, 1906, *CL IntelLex* 343). Similarly, in "Mohini Chatterjee" Yeats seems to be more interested in the process of reincarnation than in its end-purpose in orthodox Indian theory: liberation. The self-surrendering quiescent of the earlier "Kanva on Himself" is replaced by the later poem's exultant passion. Yet, the relation between these two Chatterjee poems—or rather the two versions of the same poem—is not one of subversion, but one of *revision* in all senses of the term. The latter poem reads as a retrospective reconstruction of the former.

The form of "Mohini Chatterjee" reflects its revisionary aspect and hence merits close analysis. In contrast to the neatly rhymed quatrains of "Kanva on Himself," this poem has two uneven stanzas of eleven and seventeen lines respectively. The regularly, albeit abortively, rhymed (abab cdcd efe) first stanza narrates the dialogue between the poet and the Brahmin in the past: "I asked" and "the Brahmin said" (*VP* 495). This part of the narrative is fairly unchanged from the earlier prose and verse manifestations of the material. However, the second and longer stanza names the Bengali Theosophist and makes clear the shifting of time from the past—"Mohini Chatterjee | Spoke these"—to the present: "I add in commentary" (*VP* 496). Beginning with a five-line interval of a prosaic reporting speech, this stanza resumes and completes the regular rhyming pattern in the twelve-line reported speech (the poet's "commentary") that follows, rhyming abab cdcd efef. Given that the rhyme scheme of the commentary section invites association with the quatrains of English sonnet, one might be tempted to read the poem with its twenty-eight lines (two sonnets put together?) as a reworking of the English sonnet form. The first stanza's incomplete pattern of abab cdcd efe could be seen as a deliberate rupture, suggesting a discontinuity between the stanzas and what they contain, namely Chatterjee's teaching and Yeats's "commentary" respectively. The first line of the second stanza ends with "rest," which could very well have rhymed with "breast" of the tenth line of the first stanza, thereby completing its efef pattern. Thus, the formal structure of the poem represents the process of revision, recreating the past experience in the first stanza, and revising and improvising upon it in the second. The incompletely rhymed wisdom of the first stanza (abab cdcd efe) needed to be completed, as it were, by the "commentary" of the poet: abab cdcd efef. And if such patterning evokes a desire for resolution that the missing

concluding couplet (gg) of the English sonnet form might well have provided, the lack of such a closure is befitting for a poem that is interested in the dynamic power of reincarnation—the abab scheme of the quatrains simulating the birth-death-birth-death pattern of the reincarnative cycle—rather than any transcendental resolution.

The fact that Yeats in the late 1920s creatively reengaged with a previously discarded Indian poem attests to the continued importance of his early engagement with Indian material. It is true that Yeats himself downplays the worthiness of his early Indian poems in a 1925 note: “Many of the poems in *Crossways*, certainly those upon Indian subjects or upon shepherds and fauns, must have been written before I was twenty, for from the moment when I began *The Wanderings of Oisín*, which I did at that age, I believe, my subject-matter became Irish” (CCP 3). Written between 1886 and 1887, the early Indian poems were, in fact, contemporaneous with that of *The Wanderings of Oisín* (CCP 6–8, 521). Although the “subject-matter” had indeed become more distinctively “Irish” since then, Yeats did not abandon the Indian thoughts or motifs, instead incorporating or fusing them into his other interests—magical, aesthetic-symbolist, or cultural-nationalist. Read as part of his intellectual and creative explorations of India, the Indian poems of *Crossways* gather more nuances than they do by their otherwise-isolated presence in a volume dominated by Irish-themed poems.

II

In *Reveries Over Childhood and Youth*, Yeats remembers asking his friends in the Hermetic Society to consider the proposition “that whatever the great poets had affirmed in their finest moments was the nearest we could come to an authoritative religion, and that their mythology, their spirits of water and wind, were but literal truth” (CW3 97). In the 1880s, he seems to have taken a serious interest in a fifth-century north Indian poet-playwright, whose texts were marked by elemental simplicity and mythological sophistication: Kālidāsa. Scholars vary in their accounts of how and when Yeats came across Kālidāsa’s works. Both Bachchan and Sushil Kumar Jain think that it was Chatterjee who recommended Kālidāsa to Yeats, while Lennon maintains that Yeats had read and written in imitation of Kālidāsa before he met Chatterjee.⁴⁶ Whichever is the case, the three Indian poems in *Crossways* (1889), originally published in *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems* (1889) along with “Kanva on Himself,” certainly carry the mark of Kālidāsa’s influence, particularly that of his renowned play *Śakuntalā*. As two of these poems were written in 1886 (the year of Chatterjee’s visit) and the third in 1887, it seems that Yeats was exposed to the twin influences of Kālidāsa and Chatterjee roughly around

the same time. "The Indian upon God" (1886) had "Kaṇva, the Indian, on God" as one of its previous titles (*P*⁴⁷ 418). Kaṇva, as already mentioned, is an important character of *Śakuntalā*. "Anashuya and Vijaya" (1887) takes one of its titular characters from the Sanskrit play: Anasūyā is one of *Śakuntalā*'s two closest friends. The connection between "The Indian to His Love" (1886) and *Kālidāsa* is revealed in a letter by Yeats. Writing to John O'Leary, he vents his irritation caused by a critical review referring to the poem: "The Freeman reviewer is wrong about peahens[;] they dance throughout the whole of Indian poetry. If I had *Kālidāsa* by me I could find many such dancings. As to the poultry yards, with them I have no concern—The wild peahen dances or all Indian poets lie" (February 3, [1889], *CL Intellex*). Here one finds an instance of Yeats's taking the words of the "great poets" as "literal truth." Whether the wild peahen dances or not, the confidence betrayed in this letter suggests Yeats's careful reading of *Kālidāsa*.

By the 1880s, *Kālidāsa*'s *Śakuntalā* had already been acclaimed by many European writers and scholars for a century. William Jones's 1789 English translation of the play was an epoch-making Orientalist phenomenon, which led to the play being translated into twelve other languages within a century.⁴⁸ Georg Forster's 1791 German translation made it available for enthusiasts like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schlegel. Goethe was profoundly moved by the play and found in it a model for the on-stage prologue of his *Faust* (1797).⁴⁹ Michael Franklin in his chapter "Europe Falls in Love with *Śakuntalā*" refers to "the *Śakuntalā* fever that gripped Europe in the early 1790s." He adds that *Kālidāsa*'s play, along with Jones's other translations of Indian materials, stimulated Romantic Orientalism in Britain in the last decade of the eighteenth century.⁵⁰ Yeats's early interest in Indian literature, then, was consonant with a long-standing European enthusiasm for Indian literature and culture.

Yeats apparently synthesized *Kālidāsa* and Chatterjee in his poetic imagination. Kaṇva, we have seen, became the poetic persona for Chatterjee in "Kaṇva on Himself." The foster-father of *Śakuntalā*, Kaṇva is an ascetic, sage character of *Kālidāsa*'s play. Before she leaves the forest-hermitage, *Śakuntalā* bemoans the fact that "[m]y father's body is already tortured by ascetic practices" (Act 4). But after a few pages, in response to King Duṣyanta's inquiry after "Father Kaṇva's health," we come to know that: "Saints control their own health" (Act 5).⁵¹ In the final scene of the play, sage Mārīca says that Kaṇva knows all about the positive turn of his daughter's fate without being told "through the power of his austerity" (Act 7).⁵² Kaṇva is thus a man of superhuman qualities of mind, achieved through the power of rigorous asceticism and "austerity." As Yeats recalls, Chatterjee dwelled upon a similarly penetrating power of mind or consciousness: "Consciousness, he taught, does not merely spread out its surface but has, in vision and in contemplation, another motion and can change in

height and in depth” (CW3 98). However, despite being a powerful ascetic, Kālidāsa’s Kaṇva is not immune to filial affection and worry. Scrutinizing his emotional suffering prior to Śakuntalā’s departure for her husband’s palace, he himself observes:

if a disciplined ascetic
suffers so deeply from love,
how do fathers bear the pain
of each daughter’s parting? (Act 4)⁵³

This compassionate side of his character makes Kaṇva a less ideal poetic persona for the stoical wisdom of “Kanva on Himself” than for the organic spirituality of “The Indian upon God,” which, too, had previously adopted Kaṇva as its speaker.

“The Indian upon God” upholds the notion of absolute harmony of spirit and form, in which each form represents God in its own self. Peacefully adopting the harmonized perspectives of the moorfowl, the lotus, the roebuck, and the peacock, the poem is true to the spirit of Kālidāsa’s play where Śakuntalā “feel[s] a sister’s love” for the trees in the forest hermitage (Act 1) and father Kaṇva does not distinguish between Śakuntalā and her jasmine vine (Act 4).⁵⁴ In Yeats’s poem the lotus, in a similar tone to that of Blake’s Child,⁵⁵ says: “*Who made the world and ruleth it, He hangeth on a stalk, | For I am in His image made.*” In the same way, the moorfowl conceives of God as “*an undying moorfowl,*” the roebuck, as “*a gentle roebuck,*” and the peacock, as “*a monstrous peacock*” (VP 76–77; italics in the original). Given that every existent being imposes its own self-image on God, it is possible to read the poem in terms of the Advaita Vedāntic distinction between the personal, subjective, and distorted perspective(s) of worldly existence, and the impersonal, objective condition of the transcendental reality. However, rather than upholding any objective metaphysical wisdom, the poem celebrates the play of perspectives on the phenomenal level and the subjective experiences of individual creatures. In this sense, the poem foreshadows Yeats’s later revision of Chatterjee’s Vedāntic wisdom as well as the predilection of his Visionary system for duality and multiplicity.

The atmosphere of idealized quietism that we have noticed in the previous poem also prevails in “The Indian to his Love.” Echoing the title of Christopher Marlowe’s “The Passionate Shepherd to his Love,”⁵⁶ this poem might underscore the similarity between Yeats’s Indian source material and the English pastoral tradition. The opening description of the “Indian” landscape is highly romanticized, verging on the exotic:

The island dreams under the dawn
 And great boughs drop tranquility;
 The peahens dance on a smooth lawn,
 A parrot sways upon a tree,
 Raging at his own image in the enamelled sea. (VP 77)

Fairly consistent use of iambic tetrameter in the first four lines of each stanza again inspires analogy with Marlowe's poem.⁵⁷ But, unlike the latter's quatrain form, this poem is written in four five-line stanzas with a regular ababb rhyme scheme. The longer fifth line of each stanza adds to the mood of dragging drowsiness that persists throughout the poem. Even the variations, such as the two stressed feet in "smooth lawn" in the third line above, emphasize the idyllic peacefulness of the situation. While the fifth lines of the first three stanzas start with an accented syllable ("Raging," "Murmuring," and "One"), in the fourth and final stanza, the fifth line starts with an unstressed "With," which intensifies the atmosphere of "hushed" silence: "With vapoury footsole by the water's drowsy blaze." The lovers' thoughts and actions are also in tune with the setting. As the speaker says in the second stanza, mooring their "lonely ship" in this island, they will "wander" with "woven hands" and murmur "softly lip to lip." The poem, furthermore, echoes "Kanva on Himself" when the speaker says to his beloved that "when we die our shades will rove" (VP 77-78).

The mood of shadowy serenity is continued into the 1887 poem "Anashuya and Vijaya." Set in a "little Indian temple in the Golden Age," this dramatic poem begins with the following prayer uttered by Anashuya "the young priestess":

Send peace on all the lands and flickering corn. –
 O may tranquillity walk by his elbow
 When wandering in the forest, if he love
 No other. – Hear, and may the indolent flocks
 Be plentiful. – And if he love another,
 May panthers end him. – Hear, and load our king
 With wisdom hour by hour. – May we two stand,
 When we are dead, beyond the setting suns,
 A little from the other shades apart,
 With mingling hair, and play upon one lute. (VP 70-71)

Despite similarities of imagery and diction ("tranquillity," "shades"), this is a very different poem from "The Indian to His Love." The peaceful atmosphere is undercut by the conflicted desire betrayed by Anashuya's conditional prayer for her lover Vijaya, depending on whether he "love[s] another" or not (lines 3-6, above). This is also far from the desireless prayer recommended by Chatterjee. Originally entitled "Jealousy" (P 417), the poem is built around the sexual

jealousy of Anashuya for Vijaya's other beloved, who is absent from the poem. Vijaya, of course, blurts out the name of another female character, Amrita. This slip on Vijaya's part introduces a tension into the poem, which is tentatively resolved by Vijaya's promise that he will not love the other girl.

Yeats later reveals that this poem "was meant to be the first scene of a play about a man loved by two women, who had the one soul between them, the one woman waking when the other slept, and knowing but daylight as the other only night" (*CCP* 6). As Albright points out in his note to the poem, this is an early version of "Yeats's doctrine of the anti-self" (*P* 417). A significant aspect of Yeatsian dialectics is thus rooted in Kālidāsa's play where, as Bachchan has noted, Śakuntalā is wooed by the married king Duṣyanta, who implores her not to indulge in the thought that he could love someone else.⁵⁸ Moreover, the idea of two diametrically opposite women with "the one soul between them" might be seen as symptomatic of the tension in Yeats's early understanding of India between the spiritual and the sensual, the ascetic and the aesthetic. If Chatterjee stands for a Vedāntic indifference to life for Yeats, Kālidāsa offers him a more balanced picture of life where one gets, in the words of Goethe, both "the spring's blossoms and the fruits of the maturer year."⁵⁹ In that spirit, "Anashuya and Vijaya" juxtaposes Brahma, the old god of creation, with Kama, the young god of love, and does not discriminate between the "sacred Himalay" and "the sacred [...] flamingoes." In her final prayer, Anashuya not only includes man and animal, but also does not distinguish between "The merry lambs and the complacent kine, | The flies below the leaves, and the young mice" (*VP* 72, 74, 75). This harmonious coexistence of men, animals, and gods is true to Yeats's source text.

Yeats's interest in the fusion or confusion of god and man, heaven and earth, the spiritual and the corporeal, which would be a key feature of his later mystic-spiritual formulations, finds fine expression in the poem's anthropomorphic description of "the parents of gods":

who dwell on sacred Himalay,
 On the far Golden Peak; enormous shapes,
 Who still were old when the great sea was young;
 On their vast faces mystery and dreams;
 Their hair along the mountains rolled and filled
 From year to year by the unnumbered nests
 Of aweless birds, and round their stirless feet
 The joyous flocks of deer and antelope,
 Who never hear the unforgiving hound. (*VP* 74–75)

Although Richard Ellmann thinks that these Himalayan gods are inspired by "the poorly drawn pictures of [Blavatsky's] masters, Koot-Hoomi and Morya"

on her door (*MM* 68–69), they seem more likely to have been modelled, as Bachchan has noted, on the description of the abode of the demigods in *Śakuntalā*.⁶⁰ On his way back to earth from heaven, where he went to fight a battle on behalf of god Indra, King Duṣyanta becomes curious about the gold-streaked mountain that he sees stretching below. Mātali, Indra's charioteer and the King's escort, responds thus: "Your Majesty, it is called the 'Golden Peak,' the mountain of the demigods, a place where austerities are practiced to perfection"; and a few lines down, pointing towards sage Mārīca's hermitage, says:

Where the sage stands staring at the sun,
as immobile as the trunk of a tree,
his body half-buried in an ant hill,
with a snake skin on his chest,
his throat pricked by a necklace
of withered thorny vines,
wearing a coil of long matted hair
filled with nests of śakunta birds. (Act 7)⁶¹

The similarity of these descriptions with Yeats's account of "the parents of gods" is too striking to be accidental. Thus, the theme, mood, and atmosphere of this poem are inflected by its poet's reading of Kālidāsa.

The three *Crossways* poems on India, true, betray a youthful fantasy about an exotic landscape, and such exoticism is all too common in Yeats's other early poems written about the west of Ireland. For one, "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (written in 1888), a poem about an island in County Sligo, entertains the notion of "go[ing]" to a land of "peace," comparable to the sense in "The Indian to his Love" of having come "far away" from "the unquiet lands" (*VP* 117, 78). Yet, there is a more complicated cross-cultural identification going on in Yeats's "Indian" poems of the 1880s than in his poems about idyllic Ireland. With reference to "The Indian upon God," Elleke Boehmer views Yeats's "adoption of an Indian persona" in that poem as indicative of "a genuine openness [...] a desire not only to embrace but to internalize the other,"⁶² while Jahan Ramazani suggests a latent "connection" between the poem's "understanding of religion as projection of oneself onto the divine other and its own attribution of this perspectivist concept to the cultural other," essentially problematizing any "authentic" knowledge of that other.⁶³ (This might remind one of the Advaita Vedāntic concept of *adhyāsa*, discussed above.) Rather than being limited to only one poem, both of these readings are applicable to Yeats's early connection with literary and philosophical India. We have traced Chatterjee's periodical "reincarnations" in Yeats's oeuvre, seeing how in each of these cases Yeats seems to have projected a part of his own self on the Bengali Brahmin and his

wisdom. Kālidāsa's organic aestheticism, on the other hand, appears to have been largely internalized by the poetic sensibility of Yeats.

Internalized or self-projected, India played a powerful role in Yeats's artistic as well as ideological self-construction at that formative phase of his career. The India he envisioned via these diverse materials was an India of poets, philosophers, and rishis, which chimes in with the Ireland of faeries, mystics, and bards that he imaginatively adored and desperately wanted to revive. Not only that, the high-cultural, intellectual elitism implied in Brahmanite asceticism would soon find its parallels in Yeats's pursuance of a cult of poetic Brahmanism after such figures as Blake, Walter Pater, and Arthur Symons. It is not in the least surprising, therefore, that the maxim he used as the epitaph for his 1900 article on Chatterjee was taken from Villiers de l'Isle Adam's play *Axël*: "As for living, our servants will do that for us" ("WW" 40). This "proud rejection of ordinary life," notes James Pethica, writing about Yeats's heightened aestheticism of the 1890s, was his "favourite maxim."⁶⁴ The fact that it finds its way into the retrospective essay on Chatterjee testifies to a collation of asceticism and aestheticism which in a sense characterizes Yeats's entire career. In "A Symbolic Artist and the Coming of Symbolic Art" (1898), he observes with reference to the predominance of "religious philosophy" in a group of mystically oriented Irish writers: "[t]his philosophy has changed its symbolism from time to time, being now a little Christian, now very Indian, now altogether Celtic and mythological; but it has never ceased to take a great part of its colour and character from one lofty imagination" (UP2 133). This "one lofty imagination" was the guiding principle of all the diverse poetic and cultural projects that Yeats undertook, and Indian philosophy and literature provided him with his first serious initiation into it.

Notes

1. Harbans Rai Bachchan, *W. B. Yeats and Occultism: A Study of his Works in Relation to Indian Lore, the Cabbala, Swedenborg, Boehme and Theosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965); Naresh Guha, *W. B. Yeats: An Indian Approach* (Calcutta: Jadavpur University Press, 1968). Of more recent works, P. S. Sri's essay "Yeats and Mohini Chatterjee," in *YA11* (1994), 61–76, offers some valuable insights into the Yeats-Chatterjee connection, while the monograph by Shalini Sikka, *W. B. Yeats and the Upanishads* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2002), deals quite extensively with the role played by the *Upanishads* in Yeats's life and works. Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004) sets the paradigm for explorations of Celtic-Oriental connections and commonalities; despite the wide range of his concerns, his Yeats chapter follows in the footsteps of Bachchan and Guha in discussing the role of Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, and Shri Purohit Swāmī, as well as Kālidāsa's work on Yeats's creative imagination. W. David Soud's chapter on Yeats in his *Divine Cartographies: God, History, and Poesis in W. B. Yeats, David Jones, and T. S. Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) focuses on the poet's 1930s cooperation with Shri Purohit Swāmī and its repercussions. The 1930s also remains the focus

- of Charles I. Armstrong's chapter, "'Born Anew': W. B. Yeats's 'Eastern' Turn in the 1930s," in *Yeats, Philosophy, and the Occult*, eds. Matthew Gibson and Neil Mann (Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University Press, 2016), 83–106.
2. The Dublin Hermetic Society was launched on June 16, 1885, becoming the Dublin Theosophical Society in April 1886; see *Life 1*, 46–47; Ernest Boyd, *Ireland's Literary Renaissance* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968), 214; and Susan Johnston Graf, "Heterodox Religion in Ireland: Theosophy, the Hermetic Society and the Castle of Heroes," *Irish Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (2003): 51.
 3. Peter Kuch, *Yeats and AE: 'the antagonism that unites dear friends'* (Buckinghamshire: Collyn, 1986).
 4. Boyd, *Literary Renaissance*, 213.
 5. European exploratory interest in Indian religious/philosophic and literary texts commenced in the late eighteenth century, leading to what is known as an "Oriental Renaissance" and feeding into German Romanticism. See Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680–1880*, trans. Gene Patterson-Black and Victor Reinking (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 15–17, 24, 51–53.
 6. Guha, *Indian Approach*.
 7. Given the scope of this essay, it does not provide any extensive overview of the historical accounts of Yeats's complicated relationship with the Theosophical Society, but only draws upon Theosophy in so far as it illuminates Yeats's early relationship with Indian subject matter. For a more detailed narrative and analysis of Yeats's connection with the Theosophical Society, see Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: Man and the Masks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 56–69; and Ken Monteith, *Yeats and Theosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
 8. Scholars are divided as to the date of Chatterjee's trip to Dublin. Bachchan thinks that Chatterjee "came to Dublin towards the end of 1885" and quotes the evidence of *The Dublin University Review* (August 1885) that at the second meeting of the Dublin Hermetic Society announcement was made of the "possibility of the celebrated Mr Mohini visiting Dublin some time towards the end of the year" (Bachchan, *W. B. Yeats and Occultism* 17, 19). Guha also dates the trip to 1885 (*IA* 33). Sri echoes Bachchan, although he does not cite him, in stating that Chatterjee "came to Dublin towards the end of 1885" (*YA* 11 62). For Sushil Kumar Jain, "Yeats invited Chatterjee to come to Dublin in 1885 or 1886"; see Jain, "Indian Elements in the Poetry of Yeats: On Chatterjee and Tagore," *Comparative Literature Studies* 7, no.1 (1970): 82. Foster, on the other hand, gives the date as April 1886 and quotes Charles Hubert Oldham's postcard, "undated [...] but postmarked Apr. 1886," to Sarah Purser inviting her to "come and join" others in meeting "Mr Mohini the Theosophist in my rooms on Wednesday afternoon 4 o'clock" (*Life 1* 47–48, 552 n81). Lennon and Graf, too, hold that Yeats met Chatterjee in Dublin in 1886 (Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 256; Graf, "Heterodox Religion in Ireland," 51). It is likely that, despite the possibility of an earlier trip, Chatterjee eventually visited Dublin in April 1886.
 9. Sam McCready, *A William Butler Yeats Encyclopedia* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), 75.
 10. Sarah Diane Sasson, *Yearning for the New Age: Laura Holloway-Langford and Late Victorian Spirituality (Religion in North America)* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2012), 78–79, 81.
 11. For a discussion of Yeats's interest in the representation of Christ in Byzantine art, see Russell Elliott Murphy, "'Old Rocky Face, look forth': W. B. Yeats, the Christ Pantokrator, and the Soul's History (The Photographic Record)" in *Yeats: An Annual of Critical and Textual Studies*, vol. 14 (1996), ed. Richard J. Finneran (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 69–117.
 12. Yeats, "The Way of Wisdom," *The Speaker: The Liberal Review* 2 (1900), 40–41.

13. Sylvia Cranston, *HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1993), 261, 256.
14. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. 2 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1927), 472–73. Yeats Library possesses the two volumes of this book: YL 1663; NLI 40,568/188; vols. 1–2, 21 and 3 sheets; envelope 1028A.
15. A. P. Sinnett, *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883), rev. ed. (London: The Theosophical Publishing House Ltd., 1972), 2, 6–7.
16. Neil Mann, “Indian Philosophy and Vedanta,” www.yeatsvision.com, accessed October 26, 2017, <http://www.yeatsvision.com/Vedanta.html>.
17. Bachchan, *W. B. Yeats and Occultism*, 20, 275, 280.
18. Bina Gupta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy: Perspectives on Reality, Knowledge, and Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 225.
19. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 535–36.
20. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 569, 571.
21. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 505–06.
22. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 565–66.
23. Matthew R. Dasti and Edwin F. Bryant, eds. *Free Will, Agency, and Selfhood in Indian Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 195–97.
24. Śaṅkarācārya, *Crest-Jewel of Wisdom and Charapatapanjari*, trans. Mohini M. Chatterji and J. N. Parmanand (Bombay: T.V. Press, 1904), 1.
25. Arthur A. Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (New York: Appleton, 1929), 386–87.
26. Karl H. Potter, ed., *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Advaita Vedānta up to Śaṅkara and His Pupils* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), 82.
27. S. Radhakrishnan, ed., *The Bhagavadgītā*, trans. Radhakrishnan (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1948), 16, 103.
28. Radhakrishnan, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 104.
29. For the context and setting of *The Bhagavadgītā*, see Gupta, *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, Chapter 14.
30. Radhakrishnan, *Bhagavadgītā*, 134–35, 138.
31. Radhakrishnan, *Bhagavadgītā*, 165.
32. Ronald W. Neufeldt, “In Search of Utopia: Karma and Rebirth in the Theosophical Movement,” in *Karma and Rebirth: Post Classical Developments*, ed. Neufeldt (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 241.
33. H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy: Being a Clear Exposition in the Form of Question and Answer of the Ethics, Science, and Philosophy for the Study of which the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society Has Been Founded* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1889), 34.
34. Annie Besant, *Theosophy* (London: T. C. and E. C. Jack, 1912), 61–62.
35. Shalini Sikka, *W. B. Yeats and the Upanishads* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2002).
36. A. Norman Jeffares, *A Commentary on the Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968).
37. George Bornstein, ed. *The Early Poetry*, vol. 2 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).
38. Here I disagree with P. S. Sri's reading of Chatterjee's “this body is a Brahmin” as a distortion of Śaṅkara's “*Aham Brahmasmi*—I, the *Atman* is *Brahman*—[...] partly due to Yeats's misunderstanding of the words *Brahman*—the Supreme Being—and *Brahmin*—Mohini Chatterjee's caste” (YA 11 65). Rather than seeing any distortion or misunderstanding involved in the statement concerned, I find it compatible with Śaṅkara's idea of “*Aham Brahmasmi*.” Claiming his “body” to be “a Brahmin” by caste, Chatterjee conceptually identifies his true self (the *Atman*) with *brahman*.
39. Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: Man and the Masks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

40. Graf, "Heterodox Religion in Ireland," 52–53.
41. W. B. Yeats, *A Packet for Ezra Pound* (Dublin: Cuala Press, 1929).
42. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 545.
43. Terence Brown, *The Life of W. B. Yeats: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).
44. Neil Mann, "Everywhere that Antinomy of the One and the Many: The Foundations of *A Vision*," in *W. B. Yeats's A Vision: Explications and Contexts*, eds. Neil Mann, Matthew Gibson, and Claire V. Nally (Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University Digital Press, 2012), 10.
45. Neil Mann, "*The Thirteenth Cone*," in *W. B. Yeats's A Vision*, 168–69.
46. Bachchan, *W. B. Yeats and Occultism*, 64; Jain, "Indian Elements in the Poetry of Yeats," 86; Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 256. The divergence of scholarly opinion in this regard seems to have been partly due to the uncertainty about the date of Chatterjee's Dublin visit; see n8 above. And, as to the question of Chatterjee introducing Kālidāsa to Yeats, or Yeats having already incorporated Kālidāsa into his poetry by the time he met the Theosophist, it is hard to be certain given the fact that the poems concerned were written in 1886 and 1887.
47. W. B. Yeats, *The Poems*, ed. Daniel Albright (London: Everyman's Library, 1992).
48. Michael J. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones: Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746–1794* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 252.
49. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones*, 260; Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, 416.
50. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones*, 251, 284.
51. Kālidāsa, *Śakuntalā and the Ring of Recollection*, trans. Barbara Stoler Miller, in *Theater of Memory: The Plays of Kālidāsa*, ed. Barbara Stoler Miller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 132, 137–38.
52. Kālidāsa, *Śakuntalā*, 176.
53. Kālidāsa, *Śakuntalā*, 126.
54. Kālidāsa, *Śakuntalā*, 94, 128.
55. William Blake, "The Lamb," in *The Complete Poems*, ed. Alicia Ostriker (London: Penguin Books, 1977), 106.
56. Christopher Marlowe, *The Collected Poems of Christopher Marlowe*, eds. Patrick Cheney and Brian J. Striar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 157–58.
57. See, for example, the second stanza of Marlowe's poem: "And we will sit upon the rocks, | Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks | By shallow rivers, to whose falls | Melodious birds sing madrigals." Marlowe, *The Collected Poems*, 157.
58. Bachchan, *W. B. Yeats and Occultism*, 66.
59. Here is Goethe in Franklin's translation: "If you want the spring's blossoms and the fruits of the maturer year, | What is seductive and creates joy, or what is satisfying and nourishing, | If you want to encompass Heaven and Earth in one single name, | Then I name you, Sacontala, and everything is said." Franklin, *Orientalist Jones*, 251.
60. Bachchan, *W. B. Yeats and Occultism*, 66–67.
61. Kālidāsa, *Śakuntalā*, 164–65.
62. Elleke Boehmer, *Indian Arrivals 1870–1915: Networks of British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 116.
63. Jahan Ramazani, *The Hybrid Muse: Postcolonial Poetry in English* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 36.
64. James Pethica, "Aesthetics," in *W. B. Yeats: In Context*, eds. David Holdeman and Ben Levittas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 205–06.

YEATS'S WHITE VELLUM NOTEBOOK, 1930–1933

Wayne K. Chapman

In 1985, Michael Yeats made a significant deposit of manuscript materials in the National Library of Ireland, neither the first nor last act of generosity on behalf of the W. B. Yeats Estate. Prior to that act, those materials had been examined and inventoried for him by a cadre of Yeats scholars, who collectively produced a typescript entitled “A Partial List of Manuscripts in the Collection of Senator Michael B. Yeats,” an aid to sustain the editorial work that has dominated Yeats studies for more than two generations already. Better known as the “MBY List,” this device consisted of 1,105 core items, many auxiliary ones, and an index, the whole of which essentially mirrored the Estate’s 1985 gift to the NLI and which accompanied the manuscripts—that is, all but 130 items that were crossed off the list.¹ Half of these were batches of letters that Yeats and Lady Gregory had written to each other between 1897 and 1932. That correspondence and some other crossed-out items were sold in the “Major Manuscript Sale” highlighted by *The Irish Times* of July 12, 1985, including as a feature “One of the major literary manuscripts of our time, the great vellum notebook in which William Butler Yeats created, corrected and perfected some of his greatest poetry and other writings, between 1930 and 1933.” Thus, MBY item 545, or “White vellum MS book, begun 23 November 1930[,] together with index of same,” changed hands for the first time at Sotheby’s (London) in the auction of “English Literature & History’ (Books & Manuscripts)” held on July 22–23, 1985. For various reasons—but mainly to expedite the cataloguing of nearly a thousand manuscripts transferred at that time to the National Library—a decision was made by administrators to generate NLI manuscript numbers by adapting those from the entire MBY List, simply by adding 30,000 to the number assigned to each item on the list. Thus, MBY 545 became NLI 30,545 although the notebook had never been a part of library collections. A false impression was compounded, too, in the way roughly ten percent of the MBY listings were similarly adapted to the NLI system.² Moreover, the notice in the MBY List about the White Vellum Notebook (WVN) and an accompanying “index” to it makes poignant the disappearance of both of them from view, scarcely acknowledging the actual gap in collections that their absence has constituted for many years. This essay is an effort to fill part of that gap in the record.

The Irish Times, understandably economical, cited only a handful of poems substantially written in the WVN. These were reportedly: “Vacillation’; ‘Coole Park and Ballylee’ (written after the death of Lady Gregory, his fellow-campaigner for a native Irish theatre); ‘The Mother of God’; ‘Crazy Jane on God’;

‘Stream and Sun at Glendalough’; [and] ‘Parnell’s Funeral.’” When the notebook came up for sale again, in 1990, Sotheby’s kept the attention on the poetry while providing more general context, both biographical and bibliographical, foregrounding the tragic significance of Lady Gregory’s death:

The period during which this notebook was kept was marked by the final illness and death of Lady Gregory and by Yeats’s move to his last home, Riverdale. In it will be found many of the poems printed in *The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1933) which inco[r]porates the earlier volume *Words for Music Perhaps* (1932). Not long after beginning this notebook, Yeats wrote to Olivia Shakespeare [sic]: “I have a great sense of abundance—more than I have had for years.”³

The 1990 *Sotheby’s Catalogue* draws on a description of Yeats’s composing methods as generalized in the preface of Curtis Bradford’s *Yeats at Work* (1965) and briefly quotes Bradford’s comment from his fifth chapter, “Poems Written in the 1930’s,” to suggest the complexity of those methods as deduced from the WVN in the poem “Vacillation,” where “the entire process of Yeats’s creation can be followed in the sheets of the manuscript book, but this was so complex that to do so would require a long monograph.”⁴ From here a reference to Richard Ellmann’s “pioneering work,” *The Identity of Yeats* (1954), is recommended for its “similar analysis” of “Vacillation,” section VII, as well as his presentation of “‘Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop’ from the present manuscript.”⁵ Variant forms, prose subjects, and selected notes by Yeats are also noticed in the *Catalogue* insofar as they relate to “Three Movements,” “Séance” [“Let images of basalt, black immoveable”], and “Coole Park and Ballylee.” The latter receives attention because it still has embedded within it the stanza eventually removed and published as “The Choice,” and because it appears near “Yeats’s essay on the death of Lady Gregory.”⁶ (See Part III, “Yeats’s White Vellum Notebook [MBY 545]: An Inventory,” below, items 37, 44, and 75–77.) Our attention is directed to the celebrated wording achieved in individual lines of the poem and to a note of February 13, 1932 about possibly making a single poem by combining “Coole Park and Ballylee,” as it stood at that date, and “Coole Park.” (Lady Gregory died on May 22, 1932 after a long illness.) Surmounting a moment of deep distress and self-doubt is hard labor for a poet to undertake in a lyric; so “All that is written in what poets name” is in its way a triumph in 1932, in light of a “high horse riderless” and matters “at such a pass” that even self-effacing Yeats may “ride to market on a tinker[']s ass.” But it is not exactly the complete victory of theme that is realized in “Traditional sanctity and loveliness; / Whatever’s written in what poets name / The book of the people” in another year, in *The Winding Stair* (VP 493, ll. 42–44).

The *Catalogue* quotes Warwick Gould on the impression that the WVN makes, “beyond the needs of textual scholars,” in its “transcendent visual impact” as a physical property:

...[T]his palimpsest is even more arresting than accounts such as Bradford’s have suggested. Redraftings expand in balloons out of cross-hatched, vigorously rejected passages, as Yeats moves backwards and forwards through the book, out and away from his early draft in quest of his poem. The hand, frequently unreadable—even to himself and his wife—seems to have moved at great speed, its script intended less for anyone’s elucidation than to “beat time” as the poet’s ear listened “for the right combination”—as Jon Stallworthy has said, he was “in fact *thinking* on paper. Only eventual facsimile reproduction and transcription (as Erdman and Moore accomplished with Blake’s *Notebook*) will do justice to this “exploded view” of Yeats’s mind in the act of creation.⁸

The *Catalogue* cites autograph drafts of poems in an alphabetical list of titles, thus:

A Certain Poet in Outlandish Clothes
 Coole Park and Ballylee 1931
 Crazy Jane and Jack the Journeyman
 Crazy Jane on God
 Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop
 The Dancer at Cruachin [*sic*] and Cro-Patrick
 The Delphic Oracle upon Plotinus
 Gratitude to the Unknown Instructors
 Huddon, Duddon, and Daniel O’Leary
 The Mother of God
 Move upon Newton’s Town
 Old Tom Again
 Parnell’s Funeral
 Remorse for Intemperate Speech
 The Results of Thought
 Séance
 The Seven Sages
 Statistics
 Stream and Sun at Glendalough
 Three Movements
 Tom the Lunatic
 Vacillation
 Youthful Innocence *or* The Garden of Eden⁹

Five untitled poems are acknowledged in a list of alphabetized first lines or phrasings. These are “Decline of day,” “Jonathan Swift’s at rest,” “Locke sank

down in a swoon,” “O marble lips,” and “Where got I that truth.”¹⁰ Also acknowledged are draft materials for the conversion of *The Resurrection* from prose into its verse version of 1931, as well as drafts of the introductions to *The Resurrection*, *Fighting the Waves* (*The Only Jealousy of Emer* rewritten), and *The Cat and the Moon* for *Wheels and Butterflies* (1934); the essay on Lady Gregory¹¹; corrections for *Deirdre*; an American lecture on “Modern Ireland”¹²; notes on fascism and on Irish censorship; numerous notes and additions for *A Vision*; and the introduction to *The Words upon the Window Pane*. For potential buyers, the description of Lot 210 concludes with a detailed discussion of “illegitimate heraldry” in connection with the bookplate that T. Sturge Moore designed for Yeats, followed by a list of sources and the suggested price, a hefty “£180,000–200,000.”¹³

In reality, of course, the WVN *is* special but without being the only such “palimpsest,” or manuscript notebook into which Yeats jotted notes and prose subjects for poems; drafts of poems and plays; amendments; introductions; essays; and memoranda for the revised edition of *A Vision* (1937) and other writings. To be fair to Bradford’s “exploded view” of genius glimpsed in the act of creation, full appreciation accords with the fact that the WVN is not the only manuscript book that Yeats used in this way during the early 1930s. So it hardly embodies, between November 23, 1930 and July 13, 1933,¹⁴ “all that was written” in his name. For the Cornell Yeats edition of the manuscripts of *Words for Music Perhaps* (see n. 7), for example, David Clark had to construct an appendix (consisting of four lists) entitled “The Contents of the Notebooks” (WMP 605–12) just to sort through the numerous threads that connect “The Large Notebook Bound in Vellum (MBY 545)” with Rapallo Notebooks C (NLI 13,580), D (NLI 13,581), and E (NLI 13,582); and does not even count sources employed in Clark’s 2003 study of *Parnell’s Funeral and Other Poems*, or several on the making of certain plays and a work of prose fiction—sources integrated below in support of an itemized inventory of the (Great) White Vellum Notebook (present location unknown).¹⁵

In 2003, Richard Finneran published the final volume of *Yeats: An Annual of Critical and Textual Studies* (1999) after several years delay, featuring in point-position Clark’s short series of transcriptions entitled “Yeats: Cast-offs, Non-starters and Gnostic Illegibilities.”¹⁶ The series was framed by a single paragraph and three notes to acknowledge that the seven transcriptions of the piece were of “unfinished poems” that he had come across while working on his Cornell *Words for Music Perhaps*. His business was therefore tying up loose ends, as his title suggests. All but one of the poems, “The Garden of Eden,” was located in Rapallo Notebooks C and D. The last, initially called “Youthful Innocence,” originated from “MBY 545, p. 172,” or the White Vellum Notebook. A full page of work had been reduced by Yeats to a new title and four lines:

The garden of Eden

The phantom impropriety
 Seemed our best condiment, but we
 Defeated in our wanton hopes
 Saw mustard turn to butter cups

But rather more extraordinary than this Swiftian exercise of indignation and self-laceration is the comparatively long note that Clark hung on the remarkably brief introductory frame of his piece, the purpose being to credit a finding aid and to reason why another lyric in the WVN should not be included with the other transcriptions. In addition to the seven “cast-offs,” he wrote,

[t]here is also “[Only the Dead Have Wisdom].” Curtis Bradford, in his extremely useful “Index to contents of large white MS Book, begun Nov. 23, 1930,” unpublished (Stony Brook reel 21, volume 5, pp. 11–14), describes a poem on pages 208 and 210 [of WVN] as “Working versions of a lyric unknown to me, with the refrain line ‘Only the dead have wisdom.’” This lyric occurs among drafts of *The Resurrection*, and after considerable work on a transcription, I have concluded that it is a song later superceded [*sic*] by a different song, “[Astrea’s Holy Child],” found in lines 199–222 of the play (*VPI* 917). The unpublished lyric is therefore a manuscript of part of the play, and though interesting it is not included here. The “large white MS book [*sic*]” was formerly in Michael Yeats’s collection and is referred to here as MBY 545. It is now in other private hands....(1)

As much as one might wish to see an “eventual facsimile reproduction and transcription” of the entire WVN in the manner of Blake’s *Notebook*, as Warwick Gould put it (implying that the then-ongoing Cornell project might partially satisfy that wish), we must be content with what we have and prepare to build on and around it. We have, according to a recent census, two microfilm sources, an unknown number of small caches of photocopied and digital images derived from same, and related troves in the working libraries of individual scholar-editors, their institutions, publishers, and estates. To cite one instance, we now have Collection Number 6836: Cornell Wordsworth and Cornell Yeats Editorial Records, a repository of materials in computer media and microfilm deposited in the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, as the Press wound down its Yeats series a few years ago.¹⁷ The Editorial Records primarily house texts and facsimile images related to the material published in the series; they are seldom complete manuscripts. However, everything that I have seen from WVN has originated from one of only two sources on microfilm: either from Reel 5 (Houghton Library, Harvard University) or from Reel

21, Vol. 5 (Melville Library, State University of New York at Stony Brook). Although the older of the two, Harvard Reel 5 (deposited at Harvard in January 1948 after filming at the NLI from originals loaned by Mrs. Yeats for this purpose) is by far the better copy overall than the Stony Brook film, which suffers from lighting and exposure issues that block out text on some folios; in addition, the latter is also damaged to a greater degree by abusive use and institutional neglect of machine readers to the point where all images are scored with striations on the film itself.¹⁸ The situation makes unlikely a comparable technical achievement in publishing to that of David V. Erdman and Donald K. Moore in their 1973 Clarendon Press edition of *The Notebook of William Blake: A Photographic and Typographic Facsimile*. The dream of such a tome based on WVN will have to wait for an unexpected opportunity to photograph the whole of it in optimal conditions. Someday or not at all.

Meanwhile, to fill a gap temporarily, it seems constructive to take stock of where we are. Though less-than-ideal reproductions are available, the WVN has been mapped. The first outline of the whole was sketched by the cartographer who also, literally, put his mark on every page of the notebook. This was Curtis Bradford, and the map was called “Index to contents of large white MS Book, begun Nov. 23, 1930.” According to David Clark, in a cover letter of February 26, 2000 attached to the revised list that he sent to Stephen Parrish and that Parrish copied and redirected to Cornell volume editors, “Bradford probably made his listing when he was teaching at Trinity and visiting Mrs. Yeats [in] 1954–1955.” Bradford’s listing is the same as the one accompanying item 545 on the MBY List and noted to be “incomplete” in the 1990 *Sotheby’s Catalogue*. Clark’s version is a transcription of his “xerox of Bradford’s list,” amended and simplified in his own words as he retyped the partial list. His copy of Bradford’s index was obtained from “Stony Brook 21.5.–11–14,” or Reel 21, Volume 5, frames 0011–14 from the microfilm at Stony Brook. “The xerox is hard to read,” Clark noted, “but I think I have got it right.”¹⁹ All copies of Bradford’s list that I have seen or possess derive from the Stony Brook copy or from photocopies derived from same, some more legible than others. Bradford’s headnote is worth quoting here because it makes an admission that is as extraordinary as it is necessary concerning the paginated text of the WVN in its present condition: “Note: I number the page on which WBY began to write as page 1, and continue through the volume to the final page, number 387. The right-hand page therefore will always have an odd number, the left-hand page an even number.” There are ninety-two items on both Bradford’s list and Clark’s version and several handwritten changes in items 80, 84, and 85 on the former, which might suggest that Bradford hadn’t finished it. My own inspection of the Stony Brook microfilm in 1986 recovered five more items for the list (numbered 93–97 in the Inventory, below), accounting for Bradford’s pages 380–87. Presumably, Mrs. Yeats sanctioned his

unorthodox procedure with a marking pencil, in physically numbering the pages of the notebook, because this defacement of the original was conducted in her home and under her supervision. But it is curious that his numbering of the WVN, given the poor quality of the Stony Brook tapes, has become the default referencing system in the Cornell series, even for volumes that feature images reproduced from the unnumbered Harvard microfilm.²⁰ Clark seems to have preferred the use of Stony Brook materials for personal convenience although he admitted that he could never have transcribed the *Words for Music Perhaps* poems from those tapes.²¹ Still, he had hoped that Cornell's later editors might gain direct access to the WVN from its owner.

Parts II and III, below, are presented to identify those scholarly works, to date, that have published facsimiles and/or transcriptions from manuscript materials in the notebook (or declined to do so when they might have) and to collate them into a system of correspondent citations built on the scaffolding erected by Bradford and Clark. Updating and correcting the record on contents have sometimes involved puzzling out inconsistencies by consulting the selected reproductions in the Cornell Yeats series or else by checking the Harvard and Stony Brook copies. The format of Part III follows the example of Bradford and Clark, but with layers of detail added, usually in parentheses or square brackets. Coordination between the "Key to Abbreviations" (Part II) and the WVN "Inventory" (Part III) should be obvious and is integrated accordingly within the body of the ninety-seven items, many of which are compound in nature because Yeats had made multiple entries on those particular pages in the notebook. In two places item numbers were mistakenly assigned by Bradford, noted and followed by Clark, and so are retained for consistency and to assure that specialists who might be following along with photocopies of these older guides, once standard issue to Cornell editors, will have the convenience of a direct correspondence through the first ninety-two items on the new list. Furthermore, as a feature intended to be instructive to everyone, not only to newcomers to the genetic study of Yeats's texts, location coordinates on the Harvard microfilm are also cited (by folio, recto and verso) within parentheses immediately after an item's Bradford pages are referenced, since those numbers appear throughout the default Stony Brook copy of the notebook. One hopes that new scholars, in particular, will recognize that discovery has been facilitated in the journey that this research tool portends in the field.

From the Inventory of Part III, one can take comfort from seeing that so much of this veritable field has been settled by Cornell Yeats editors since the four original divisions of the series were reduced to two, Poetry and Plays. Yet opportunities were missed in items 1-3, 5-6, 8, 19, 22, 64, and 94-95. (The latter two are understandable since they were not on Bradford's list to begin with.) Although regrettable, perhaps none of the omissions are dire if their reasons

were known.²² For, even so, opportunity abounds elsewhere because the attenuated series left open almost everything in line with the abandoned divisions of Prose and Family Papers. Opportunity may be defined here as involving items 4, 10–11, 14, 21, 23, 38–39, 41, 45–46, 48, 52, 62–63, 65, 73, 81, 83, 88, 90–91, and 96–97. To be sure, the most promising of these are Yeats's notes and inserts for essays, unpublished drafts of introductions and prefaces, notes on fascism and on censorship, personal observations, reminiscences, and sundry material for *A Vision*. I believe there is more than a modicum of Yeats left to recover from this notebook, notwithstanding the obstacles. Thus, may the following guide serve as an incentive to that end.

II. KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- AHW/CM “*At the Hawk’s Well*” and “*The Cat and the Moon*”: *Manuscript Materials*, ed. Andrew Parkin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).
- D *Deirdre: Manuscript Materials*, ed. Virginia Bartolome Rohan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- DB/C “*The Dreaming of the Bones*” and “*Calvary*”: *Manuscript Materials*, ed. Wayne K. Chapman (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).
- fac. facsimile(s)
- OJE/FW “*The Only Jealousy of Emer*” and “*Fighting the Waves*”: *Manuscript Materials*, ed. Steven Winnett (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- PF/FMM “*Parnell’s Funeral and Other Poems*” from “*A Full Moon in March*”: *Manuscript Materials*, ed. David R. Clark (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).
- R *The Resurrection: Manuscript Materials*, ed. Jared Curtis and Selina Guinness (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).
- T *The Tower (1928): Manuscript Materials*, ed. Richard J. Finneran, with Jared Curtis and Ann Saddlemyer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).
- tr. transcription(s)
- Wade Allan Wade, *A Bibliography of the Writings of W. B. Yeats*, 3rd edn., rev. Russell K. Alspach (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1968), followed by item number or page number.
- WBGYL Wayne K. Chapman, *The W. B. and George Yeats Library: A Short-Title Catalog, Undertaken in Dalkey and Dublin, Ireland, 1986–2006* (Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University Press, 2006). <https://blogs.clemson.edu/press/2006/04/15/the-w-b-and-george-yeats-library-a-short-title-catalog-by-wayne-chapman/>

- WMP *Words for Music Perhaps: Manuscript Materials*, ed. David R. Clark (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).
- WVN White Vellum Notebook
- WWP *Words upon the Window Pane: Manuscript Materials*, ed. Mary Fitzgerald (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).
- YL Edward O’Shea, *A Descriptive Catalog of W. B. Yeats’s Library* (New York and London: Garland, 1985).
- YRAW Wayne K. Chapman, *W. B. Yeats’s Robartes-Aherne Writings: Featuring the Making of His “Stories of Michael Robartes and His Friends”* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).

III. YEATS’S WHITE VELLUM NOTEBOOK (“MBY 545”): AN INVENTORY

1. Pages 1–29 (ff. 1^r–15^r). Section I of “Introduction” to *The Words upon the Window Pane*. [Cited in *WWP* in the Census (xiii) but omitted in the Appendix (226). See items 5, 19, and 22, below.]
2. Page 4 (f. 2^v). Rough draft of the poem “Move upon Newton’s town” used in “Introduction” to *Fighting the Waves*. See item 6, page 47, below, for the finished version; see also item 94, page 384, below. Lines of revision for the *Words upon the Window Pane* “Introduction” are partly superimposed. [This draft of the poem as well as the “Introduction” are omitted in *OJE/FW*, Appendix III, 375–86.]
3. Page 16 (f. 8^v). A note on the “matter” of the opening stanzas of “A Dialogue of Self and Soul.” [The note is cancelled but, says Bradford, “Written across [actually, diagonally across] the page.” It is omitted by Clark in his Cornell edition of the 1929 *Winding Stair*, presumably because of its later dating.]
4. Pages 30–31 (ff. 15^v–16^r). Two drafts of section I of “Bishop Berkeley” for *Essays, 1931–1936* (1937; *Wade* 194).
5. Pages 32–36 (ff. 16^v–18^v). Part I of the “Introduction” to *The Words upon the Window Pane* continued. [Cited in *WWP* in the Census (xiii) but omitted in the Appendix (226). See item 1, above, and items 19 and 22, below.]
6. Pages 37–50 (ff. 19^r–25^v; f. 25^v is a blank page). The “Introduction” to *Fighting the Waves*. [Omitted in *OJE/FW*, Appendix III, 375–86.]
7. Pages 51–58 (ff. 26^r–29^r; 26^v is blank and 29^v bears a correction for item 8, f. 30^r). The “Introduction” to *The Resurrection*. [See *R* (fac. & tr.) 478–91 for *WVN* pages 51–57; see also item 15, below.]

8. Pages 59-67 (ff. 30^r-34^r, plus a correction on f. 29^v; ff. 31^v and 32^v are blank). The "Introduction" to *The Cat and the Moon*. [Though cited in the Census of *AHW/CM* (xx-xxi), the draft is otherwise omitted.]
9. Lacking. [Clark comments in his revised WVN index: "Bradford seems to have skipped from 8 to 10. There is no 9." Bradford might have considered a possible relationship between the brief note on page 66 (f. 33^v) and the Berkeley essay, rather than the *Cat and the Moon* "Introduction," leaving item 9 to fill in later.]
10. Page 68 (f. 34^v). Notes and corrections for "the Berkeley essay." See item 4, pages 30-31, above.
11. Pages 69-70 (ff. 35^r-35^v). Additions for *A Vision* (1937). Bradford surmises that they were "not used in this form, I believe."
12. Page 70 (f. 35^v at the foot of the page). "Subject for poem," possibly to be entitled "Wisdom," which, Bradford notes, "was at one time the title of 'Vacillation'"; see item 29, pages 143-49, and items 68 and 72, below. "However," he corrects himself, "I believe this prose version is for the poem that was eventually called 'The Results of Thought.'" [Clark provides a transcription of this prose subject, as a footnote, in *WMP* 296. See items 32, 40, 56, and 58, below.]
13. Page 71 (f. 36^r). Corrections for *Deirdre*, indicating pages in the 1922 edition of *Plays in Prose and Verse* affected for the 1934 edition of *The Collected Plays*. [See *D* xxviii-xxix, where Rohan cites the corrections in her Census of the Manuscripts.]
14. Pages 72-79 (ff. 36^v-40^r). A new version of the conclusion of the "Dove or Swan" section for *A Vision* (1937), cued in to the words "possibility of science" in *A Vision* (1925), p. 210. This is one of several rejected conclusions. [See *YRAW* 314 and 320 n. 4.]
15. Pages 81-93 (ff. 41^r-47^r). A new draft of sections II and III of "Introduction" to *The Resurrection*. [See *R* (fac. & tr.) 502-27 for WVN pages 81-93. See also item 7, above.]
16. Page 84 (f. 42^v). A working version of "Crazy Jane on God." [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 366-67; see also items 32, 33, and 54, below.]
17. Page 94 (f. 47^v). A page of corrections and additions for "Introductions" in *Wheels and Butterflies* (1934; *Wade* 175). [Omitted in *WMP*, *AHW/CM*, *OJE/FW*, and *R*.]
18. Lacking. [Clark notes in his revised index: "Bradford seems to have left out number 18, but I don't think he has omitted contents."]

19. Pages 95–97 (ff. 48^r–49^r). An insert to follow the phrase “Salamis of the Irish intellect,” at the bottom of WVN page 11 in the “Introduction” of *Words upon the Window Pane*. [See items 1 and 5, above, and item 22, below.]
20. Pages 98–101 (ff. 49^v–51^r). Working versions of “Crazy Jane and Jack the Journeyman.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 340–47; see also item 27.]
21. Pages 103–16 (ff. 52^r–58^v). Notes mainly taken from Pierre Duhem, *Le Système du monde: Histoire des doctrines cosmologiques de Platon à Copernic* (Paris: Librairie Scientifique A. Hermann et Fils, 1913–14). Most of the notes are on the Great Year and the Procession of the Equinoxes.
22. Pages 117–29 (ff. 59^r–65^r). Draft of Section II, “Introduction” to *Words upon the Window Pane*. Dated November 1, 1931. [Cited in the Census of *WMP* (xiii) but nowhere in the Appendix (226–27). See items 1, 5, and 19, above.]
23. Pages 129–31 (ff. 65^r–66^r). Notes on Attis and Dionysus, taken almost verbatim from Hasting’s *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 1 (under “Attis”) and vol. 6 (under “Greek Religion”) (*WBGYL* 864 [*YL* 855]). A note on WVN page 131 involves an image of Attis fastened to a pine tree, as in Section II of “Vacillation.” Another source, explicitly mentioned—“Golden Bough Adonis, Attis, Osiris page 257”—is James George Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*, vol. 6: *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* (*WBGYL* 713 [*YL* 700]).
24. Page 132 (66^v). A program note for an Abbey Theatre revival of *The Dreaming of the Bones*. [See *DB/C* 244 (tr.).]
25. Pages 133–35 (ff. 67^r–68^r). Working versions of “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 566–71; see also item 26, below.]
26. Page 137 (f. 69^r). Fair-hand copy of “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop,” dated November 1931. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 572–73; see also item 25, above.]
27. Page 139 (f. 70^r). Fair-hand copy of “Crazy Jane and Jack the Journeyman.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 348–49; see also item 20, above.]
28. Page 141 (f. 71^r). Fair-hand copies of “The Delphic Oracle upon Plotinus” [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 562–63; see also items 57 and 59, below], “The Dancer at Cruachan” (called here “The One & the Dancer”) [see *WMP* 539 (variants collated in apparatus; see also item 55)], and “Statistics” [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 270–71; see also item 55, below].
29. Pages 143–49 (ff. 72^r–75^v). A nearly final version of “Vacillation,” with titles given for each of sections I–VII and with the poem’s title given as “Wisdom” and “Vacillation,” both cancelled. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 74–81; see also item 12, above, and 68 and 72, below.]

30. Page 151 (f. 76^r). Nearly final versions of "Old Tom Again," "Gratitude to the Unknown Instructors" (here called "The System") and "Quarrel in Old Age." [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 292-93; see also items 66, 67, 70, and 71, below.]
31. Page 153 (f. 77^r). Fair-hand copies of "Remorse for Intemperate Speech" and "The Mother of God" (here "~~The Annunciation~~" and "Mary Virgin"). [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 316-17; see also items 61, 66, and 96, below.]
32. Page 155 (f. 78^r). Fair-hand copies of "The Results of Thought" (dated "August 15" and entitled "At Last" and "~~After Long Years~~"), and the first two stanzas of "Crazy Jane on God." [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 370-71.]
33. Page 157 (f. 79^r). Fair-hand copy of stanzas 3 and 4 of "Crazy Jane on God" (continued from item 32 and dated "July 8, 1931") [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 372-73]. In addition, a revised version of the second stanza of the final lyric from *The Resurrection* [see *R* (fac. & tr.) 376-77; also *T* (fac. & tr.) 298-99]. Also includes the final version of "Tom at Cruachan," dated July 29 [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 552-53], and the final version of "Three Ages Movements," dated "Jan 26" [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 272-73].
34. Page 159 (f. 80^r). Final version of "Tom the Lunatic," dated July 27. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 546-47; see also items 30, above, and 42, below.]
35. Page 161 (f. 81^r). Final version of "Huddon, Duddon and Daniel O'Leary" used in the Cuala Press *Stories of Michael Robartes and His Friends* (1931). [See *YRAW* (tr.) 276; see also item 49, below.]
36. Pages 161 and 163 (ff. 81^r and 82^r). A late version of "The Seven Sages," dated January 30. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 256-61; see also item 74, below.]
37. Pages 165 and 167 (ff. 83^r and 84^r). A late version of "Coole Park and Ballylee," dated February 13, 1932. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 190-95; see also item 44, 75, and 76, below.] At the bottom of p. 167 is a note [transcribed by Clark in *WMP* 194] on how this poem might be combined with "Coole Park." [Noted in *Sotheby's Catalogue* 137.]
38. Pages 168-69 (ff. 84^v-85^r). Notes for an interview on the suppression of "The Puritan" (the 1931 novel by Liam O'Flaherty) and on Irish censorship generally. Cf. NLI 30,706, Clipping from the *Manchester Guardian*, February 24, 1932, "Irish Ban on 'The Puritan.'"
39. Page 168 (f. 84^v). Late version of eight lines ("A certain poet in outlandish clothes" etc.) that were inserted in italics at the beginning of "The Old Age of Queen Maeve" in *The Collected Poems* (1933).

40. Pages 170–71 (ff. 85^v–86^r). Working versions of “The Results of Thought.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 296–99; see also items 12 and 32, above, and 56 and 58, below.]
41. Page 172 (f. 86^v). Versions of a quatrain first called “Youthful Innocence,” then “The Garden of Eden.” Bradford notes: “So far as I know, it was not published. The final draft goes: ‘The phantom impropriety / Seemed our best condiment, but we / Defeated in our wanton hopes / Saw mustard turn to buttercups.’”
42. Pages 173, 175, and 176 (ff. 87^r, 88^r, and 88^v). Working versions of “Old Tom the Lunatic.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 544–45, 542–43, and 540–41, respectively; see also items 30 and 34, above.]
43. Page 173 (f. 87^r). A working version of “Tom at Cruachan,” dated Coole, July 29. [See *WMP* (tr. only) on 545.]
44. Page 174 (f. 87^v). A working version of part of stanza II, “Coole Park and Ballylee.” [See *WMP* (tr. only) on 190; see also items 37, above, and 75 and 76, below.]
45. Page 177 (f. 89^r). Two notes for *A Vision* (1937), designated as (1) “Foot note to go somewhere in Vision, Part I” and (2) “Foot note for Part III (symbol completed).”
46. Page 178 (f. 89^v). The dedication of *A Vision* (1937) quoted by Ellmann: “Dedication for ‘A Vision’ | To my wife | who created this system which bores her, who made possible | these pages which she will never read & who | has accepted this dedication on the condition | that I write nothing but verse for a year” (*Yeats, the Man and the Masks* [New York: Macmillan, 1948] 262). [See *YRAW* (tr.) 272.]
47. Page 178 (f. 89^v). Introductory note for the Cuala Press “Stories of Michael Robartes and His Friends” (1931). [See *YRAW* (tr.) 272.]
48. Page 179 (f. 90^r). A diary entry entitled “Memo for Vision” (dated “Nov Dec”), followed by a cancelled note for *A Vision* (1937).
49. Pages 180–83 (ff. 90^v–92^r). Working versions of the poem “Huddon, Duddon and Daniel O’Leary.” WBY says here that it is “to go before ‘The Resurrection.’” [See *YRAW* (tr.) 273–75; see also item 35, above.]
50. Page 183 (f. 92^r). “Correction of certain lines in ‘The Tower’” (an error in fact as the corrections are for the first stanza of the closing lyric in *The Resurrection*.) [See *YRAW* (tr.) 275].

51. Pages 185–230 (ff. 93^r–115^v). A draft of *The Resurrection* for the revised, 1931 version of the play, including its accompanying lyrics. [See *R* (fac. & tr.) 271–375.]
52. Pages 208 and 210 (ff. 104^v and 105^v). Whereas Bradford identifies work on these pages as involving “Working versions of an unknown lyric, with the refrain line ‘Only the dead have wisdom,’” Clark thinks these versions might be precursor elements of a song eventually superseded by “[Astrea’s Holy Child],” lines 199–222 in *The Resurrection*. See n16 and the corresponding discussion in this essay (above).
53. Page 222 (f. 111^v). Two prose “Themes for Poems” [transcribed only in *WMP* 90 and 312] for “The Mother of God” and “Remorse for Intemperate Speech.” Also bears notes on Cowley’s rhymes and stanzas employed in his “poem...in essay on Oliver Cromwell” and “poem in essay on Solitude.” [Found on p. 135 of Stony Brook microfilm Reel 21, Volume 5.]
54. Page 231 (f. 116^r). A version of “Crazy Jane on God,” dated July 8, 1931. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 368–69; see also items 16, 32, and 33, above.]
55. Page 233 (f. 117^r). Working versions of “Statistics” [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 270–71 and 536; see also item 28, above] and “The Dancer at Cruachan” [see *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 536–37; see also item 28].
56. Pages 234–35 (ff. 117^v–118^r). Working versions of “The Results of Thought,” here entitled “At Last.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 300–03; see also items 12, 32, and 40, above, and 58, below.]
57. Page 236 (f. 118^v). A working version of “The Delphic Oracle upon Plotinus.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 558–59; see also items 28, below, and 59, below.]
58. Page 237 (f. 119^r). A late version of “The Results of Thought,” dated August 18, 1931. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 304–05; see also items 12, 32, 40, and 56, above.]
59. Page 239 (f. 120^r). A working version of “Delphic Oracle,” dated August 19. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 560–61; see also items 28 and 57.]
60. Page 239 (f. 120^r). A prose draft of “Three Movements” (dated “Jan 20, 1932”) as follows: “The Passion in Shakespeare was a great fish in | the sea, but from Goethe to the end of the Romantic | movement the ~~the~~ fish was in the net. It will soon | be dead upon the shore.” [Qtd. in *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 136. See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 272–73; see also item 33, above.]
61. Pages 240–41 (ff. 120^v–121^r). A working version of “Remorse for Intemperate Speech.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 312–15; see also item 31, above.]

62. Page 243 (f. 122^r). Notes on Persian ideas of the Creation.
63. Pages 244–45 (ff. 122^v–123^r). Notes under the heading “Principles,” for *A Vision* (1937).
64. Page 245 (f. 123^r). Suggestion that WBY discuss Peadar O’Donnell’s novels in the “Introduction” to *Fighting the Waves*, where he is to be suggested as a possible dictator to the Cellars and Garrets. [Omitted in *OJE/FW*, Appendix III, 375–86.]
65. Page 246 (f. 123^v). Notes on various possible leaders of the Irish fascist movement, partly based, it seems, on conversations with Iseult [Gonne] Stuart.
66. Page 245–49 (ff. 123^r–125^r). Working versions of “The Mother of God.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 90–97; see also item 31, above, and 96, below.]
67. Pages 250–53 (ff. 125^v–127^r). Working versions of “Quarrel in Old Age.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 284–91; see also 51, above.]
68. Pages 252, 254–56, and 259 (ff. 126^v, 127^v–128^v, and 130^r). Working versions of section II of “Vacillation.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 36–45; see also items 12 and 29, above, and 72, below.]
69. Pages 255 and 257 (ff. 128^r and 129^r). Working versions of “Old Tom Again.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 255–57; see also item 30, above.]
70. Page 257 (f. 129^r). Working version of “Gratitude to the Unknown Instructors.” [See *WMP* (tr.) 311; see also items 30, above, and 71, below.]
71. Page 258 (f. 129^v). Final version of “Gratitude to the Unknown Instructors.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 310–11; see also items 30 and 70, above.]
72. Pages 259–69 and 271 (ff. 130^r–135^r and 136^r). Working versions of “Vacillation” continued. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 44–61 and 66–73; see also items 12, 29, and 68, above.]
73. Page 270 (f. 135^v). Prose notes on Francis Stuart’s verse.
74. Pages 272–77 (ff. 136^v–139^r). Working versions of “The Seven Sages.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 242–55; see also item 36, above.]
75. Page 277 (f. 139^r). Notes for and early draft of “Coole Park and Ballylee.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 170–71; see also items 37, 44, above, and 76, below.]
76. Pages 278–84 (ff. 139^v–142^v). A working version of “Coole Park and Ballylee.” [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 174–89; see also items 37, 44, and 75, above.]
77. Pages 285–99 (ff. 143^r–150^r). An essay on “The Death of Lady Gregory,” dated “June 19, 1932. Royal Hotel, Glendalough.” Cf. NLI 30,257, TS of “The Death of Lady Gregory,” Bradford’s transcription from the MS, with his notes (ten pages). Unpublished until 1987, in Daniel Murphy’s

edition of *The Journals of Lady Gregory*, vol. 2: pp. 633-38. See n. 10 and corresponding discussion above.

78. Pages 300-03 (ff. 150^v-152^r). Working versions of "Stream and Sun at Glendalough." [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 318-23; see also item 79, below.]
79. Page 305 (f. 153^r). A fair-hand copy of "Stream and Sun at Glendalough," dated June 23, 1932. [See *WMP* (fac. & tr.) 324-25; see also item 78, above.]
80. Pages 304-17 and 319-35 (ff. 152^v-159^r and 160^r-168^r). An essay called "Modern Ireland" (unpublished). Bradford opines "that its thought leads directly to poem 'Parnell's Funeral,'" adding: "I feel certain [that] it is a lecture proposed for the American lecture tour of 1932-1933." [This thought is penned beneath the cancelled, typed sentence: "~~It may be 'Ireland, 1921-1931,' THE SPECTATOR, January 30, 1932. See Wade, p. 341.~~"]
81. Page 318 (f. 159^v). An insert for the essay "Louis Lambert," in *Essays, 1931-1936* (1937; *Wade* 194). See item 83, below.
82. Pages 334, 335, 336, 338, and 342 (ff. 167^v, 168^r, 168^v, 169^v, and 171^v). Working versions of "Parnell's Funeral." [See *PF/FMM* (fac. & tr.) 20-23, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19, and 8-9, respectively; see also items 84, 86, 87, 89, below.]
83. Pages 337-55 (ff. 169^r-178^r). "Notes on Louis Lambert." Signed and dated March 4. See item 81, above.
84. Pages 356-64 [amended to "356-67" in Bradford Index and Clark's list] (ff. 178^v-184^r). "Historical Notes" (that is, "notes to go with the poem 'Parnell's Funeral.'" [Bradford enters the query "Unpublished?" after striking the typed sentence "~~I have not compared texts as yet.~~" The notes are omitted in *PF/FMM* save for WVN page 366, which is reproduced on *PF/FMM* 10; see also items 82, above, and 86, 87, and 89, below.]
85. [In his amended version of the WVN index, Clark accepts Bradford's correction: "This is not a separate item, in spite of the new listing {i.e. number}, but a continuation of item 84." Formerly, Bradford had typed and then cancelled the following: "~~pp. 365-367. Three pages of notes, additions, I think, for A VISION, though I do not find them there.~~"]
86. Page 366 (f. 183^v). A working version of stanza II of "Parnell's Funeral." [See *PF/FMM* (fac. & tr.) 10-11; see also items 82 and 84, above, and 87 and 89, below.]
87. Pages 368-69 (ff. 184^v-185^r). Prose and working versions of "Parnell's Funeral." [See *PF/FMM* (fac. & tr.) 2-5 and 12-15; see also items 82, 84, and 86, above, and 89, below.]

88. Pages 370–71 (ff. 185^v–186^r). Notes under the heading “Four Positions” (numbered 1–4 on page 370, with “Note upon 2” on page 371), possibly for the revised edition of *A Vision* (1937). Refers to Kant, Hegel, Croce, and “New [Italian] philosophy.” See item 90, below.
89. Pages 374–75 (ff. 187^v–188^r). An early version (complete) of “Parnell’s Funeral” (entitled “Somebody at Parnell’s funeral”). Dated April 1933. [See *PF/FMM* (fac. & tr.) 24–31; see also items 82, 84, 86, and 87, above.]
90. Page 376 (f. 188^v). “Conclusions to be drawn from Four Positions,” for *A Vision* (1937). See item 88, above.
91. Pages 377–79 (ff. 189^r–190^r). Prose notes (cancelled), entitled “Political Organization.” [Begins again on page 378 with revised title “The Revolutionary Impulse.”]
92. Page 379 (f. 190^r). “Theme for a poem.” [Bradford notes: “Became, I think, XII of ‘Supernatural Songs.’” With this item, Bradford’s Index ends, as does Clark’s amended list. Both versions misread the clause “The ascetic frozen with the ice birds sits naked in contemplation” as “...frozen *into* the ice *berg*” in anticipation of “Meru,” lines 9–12. The prose theme is quoted in full in *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 137. But see “Meru” in *PF/FMM* (fac. & tr.) 242–43; see also item 93, below.]

[Hereafter, items 93–97, listed to complete the “Index,” were reported to the Melville Library staff following an examination of the WVN on Stony Brook microfilm, Reel 21, Volume 5 (Wayne K. Chapman, June 3, 1986). More recently, these descriptions were again examined and compared against the unnumbered folios of Harvard microfilm, Reel 5.]

93. Pages 380–83 (ff. 190^v–192^r). Including a rough, working draft of “Meru,” on the theme of item 92, above. See *PF/FMM* (fac. & tr.) 244–51; also item 92, above, and *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 137. N.B.: Clark’s *PF/FMM*’s presentation concludes with WVN, page 381.]
94. Page 384 (f. 192^v). Draft of “Move upon Newton’s town.” See item 2, page 4, above. See poem A99 in W. B. Yeats, *The Poems*, ed. Richard J. Finneran (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 568. Omitted in *OJE/FW* as cited in item 2, above.]
95. Page 385 (f. 193^r). “Let images of basalt, black, immovable”; here entitled “The Sceance [*sic*].” [Quoted in full in *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 137. See poem A102 in W. B. Yeats, *The Poems*, 571.] Also on this page: Notes for “Corrections in [‘The] Mother of God[?]” Dated July 13, 1933. [Omitted in *WMP*.]

96. Page [386] (f. 193^v). A short list of “Books leant” followed by the line “What does this portent shadow forth” (cancelled) and a draft of amended lines 1341–46 for the Chorus in *Sophocles’ Oedipus at Colonus*, first published in *The Collected Plays* (1934; Wade 177).
97. Page 387 [the last of Bradford’s numbered pages in the WVN] (f. 194^r). Notes entitled “A Vision”; bearing on *A Vision* (1937) but essentially a diary entry: “Dionertes or Thomas came last night” etc. Dated “March 19. 1933”; but followed by a postscript dated “April 15.”

Notes

1. The “MBY List” was compiled between June 1978 and July 1981. Each item on the list is correspondent with a descriptive caption (initialed by the identifying compiler) on a large brown envelope. The acknowledged compilers are given as Curtis Bradford (“from previous compilations”), Mary Fitzgerald Finneran, Richard J. Finneran, George Mills Harper, John S. Kelly, F. S. L. Lyons, and Thomas F. Parkinson. The index followed an addendum called “Additional Items: John Butler Yeats and Other Family Letters” (MBY 1,106–22).
2. Subsequently, the integration of the MBY List into the NLI system as Collection List No. A16, Yeats Papers (Mss 30,001–31,122) has clarified the status of absent items by citing them in a separate section, called “List of manuscripts not received,” and subdividing the remainder (items 1,106–22) into two sections, “Miscellaneous Correspondence to and from members of the Yeats family 1897–1952” and “Additional items.” This organization is further enhanced by the addition of a table of contents and a brief introduction and key to abbreviations. (See http://www.nli.ie/pdfs/mss.lists/A16_Yeats.pdf.) Though the “List of manuscripts not received” does not identify the current location of such material, it is a comfort to know that the Yeats/Lady Gregory letters are currently at the Berg Collection, New York Public Library and that several important manuscript notebooks other than the White Vellum Notebook are available today for study in the William Butler Yeats Collection at Boston College.
3. Sotheby’s London, *English Literature and History*, [auction date of] Thursday, July 19, 1990 (Sale Catalogue), Lot 210, page 135. Hereafter cited as *Sotheby’s Catalogue*.
4. Curtis B. Bradford, *Yeats at Work* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), xiii–xiv and 128; cf. *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 136.
5. Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 268–74 and 278–79; see *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 136.
6. *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 136.
7. To paraphrase David R. Clark’s transcription of MBY 545, 283, in *Words for Music Perhaps: Manuscript Materials*, 189; see WMP in the “Key to Abbreviations.”
8. *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 137; quoted from Warwick Gould, “Yeats’s great vellum notebook,” *The Times Literary Supplement* (London), July 26, 1985, 824. The Sotheby’s text stands corrected here with respect to the original.
9. *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 138–39.
10. *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 139.
11. *Sotheby’s Catalogue*, 139. Between the 1985 and 1990 sales of WVN, Daniel J. Murphy included Yeats’s reminiscence “The Death of Lady Gregory,” in vol. 2 of Murphy’s edition of *Lady Gregory’s Journals* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1987), 633–38. Until then, the piece

- had been unpublished. See item 77 in the WVN Inventory, regarding Yeats's fifteen-page draft and Curtis Bradford's subsequent ten-page typed transcription.
12. Although Yeats did not publish the lecture, Bradford did. "Transcribed from the MS., and edited by Curtis Bradford," it appeared as "Modern Ireland: An Address to American Audiences, 1932–1933" in Robin Skelton and David R. Clark, eds., *Irish Renaissance: A Gathering of Essays, Memoirs, and Letters from The Massachusetts Review* (Dublin: Dolmen Press 1965), 13–25. This was a reprinting from *The Massachusetts Review* 5, no. 2 (1964), 256–68. Bradford died on October 1, 1969.
 13. *Sotheby's Catalogue*, 139.
 14. Respectively, these dates are inscribed (1) on the first page, over the draft of section I of Yeats's "Introduction" to *The Words upon the Window Pane*, and (2) beside the dated correction for "The Mother of God" that he entered on page 385.
 15. The WVN and its typed index have, no doubt, been secured in the vaults of a succession of private investors, at first individuals though more recently corporate entities with an interest in the speculative value of commodities. It seems unlikely the originals will appear for us to study unless obtained, one day, by some wealthy library or well-endowed university.
 16. David R. Clark, "Yeats: Cast-offs, Non-starters and Gnostic Illegibilities," in *Yeats: An Annual of Critical and Textual Studies* 17 (1999), ed. Richard J. Finneran (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003) 1–18. The several transcriptions of the series carried titles either given by Yeats or by Clark in brackets, as follows: "Wisdom and Knowledge," "[Heavy the Bog]," "[Imagination's Bride]," "Mrs. Phillamore," "[Themes]," "Subject for a Poem," and "The Garden of Eden."
 17. The Cornell Yeats side of Collection 6836 is generally limited to production materials for volumes published since 1999, theoretically not affecting any of the titles that either do or should (but don't) include WVN facsimiles and transcription. Compact Discs bearing images from the notebook are located in Box 4 (CD 1972) and Box 8 (CDs 1983, 1984, and 1985). Images on microfilm are in Box 9: "White Vellum Notebook and other Yeats mss." See <http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/EAD/htmldocs/RMM06836.html>.
 18. Almost certainly, the Harvard microfilm was arranged by or for Richard Ellmann, after a stint of Naval and OSS duty in England and Ireland, where he first met George Yeats in 1945 and remained for the academic year 1946/47 to study Yeats's books and papers and to write the doctoral thesis that became his famous study *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (London: Macmillan, 1948). When he returned in 1947/48 to teach at Harvard, where he had previously been an instructor, he was soon promoted to assistant professor while at work on his next book, *The Identity of Yeats* (see n5, above) remaining at Harvard until the end of academic year 1950/51. His treatment of Yeats's unpublished evidence in both books, but especially the second one, compares with the same range of material one finds in the Harvard collection of Yeats on microfilm (including WVN) as well as noted in NLI 30,217, a "typed list of WBY microfilms in the Harvard Library." See Ellmann's late reminiscence "At the Yeatses," in his posthumously published anthology *along the riverrun: Selected Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 239, where he remembers encountering for the first time Yeats's "cabinets and file cases [where] all his manuscripts [had been] arranged with care by his widow," who later "proved equal to the problem of logistics [and] produced an old suitcase and filled it with the manuscripts that I wanted to examine."
 19. Clark says in the same letter that he was prepared to send his amended transcription of Bradford's "Index" to Richard Finneran for publication; however, Finneran's journal was already in a state of suspended animation. See n16, above.
 20. See W. B. Yeats, *The Resurrection: Manuscript Materials*, ed. Jared Curtis and Selina Guinness (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), to view the most dramatic contrast.

21. David Clark to Stephen Parrish, February 26, 2000. Clark noted that he'd transcribed what he needed "directly from the notebook long before Michael Yeats sold it." The conspectus to Collection 6836 in the Archives of the Cornell University Library confirms that Clark provided images that were "Photographed later than Harvard reels (WVNB is paginated here)." In other words, he used the Stony Brook microfilm.
22. Those of us who edited manuscripts for the plays know that there was no hard and fast rule about including Yeats's introductions—a matter more or less left to volume editors rather than policy. There was no such issue for poetry editors. Andrew Parkin seems uninterested in the introductions to *At the Hawk's Well* and *The Cat and the Moon*, though he acknowledges the latter in his Census. Mary Fitzgerald does almost the same thing in her edition of *Words upon the Window Pane*, which reprints the published introduction without an apparatus but cites MBY 545 in her Census. But Steven Winnett ignores the draft materials for Yeats's creative essay on *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, appended in 1921 to *Four Plays for Dancers*, even though Winnett's own Appendix III ("Yeats's Introductions to *Fighting the Waves* [1932–1934]") offers an amalgamation of several disparate fragments from NLI 8774(1) and NLI 13,567, irrespective of some fifteen pages of draft material in WVN not acknowledged in his Census. Such inconsistencies are baffling.

A REVIEW OF YEATS, *PHILOSOPHY, AND THE OCCULT*

Matthew Gibson and Neil Mann, eds. *Yeats, Philosophy, and the Occult* (Columbia: Clemson University Press, 2016), pp. xix+344, ISBN 9781942954255.

Reviewed by Gregory Castle

Amid the steady outpouring of scholarly titles on W. B. Yeats over the last quarter century or so, one discerns an equally steady advance in our understanding of the poet's occult and philosophical interests. George Mills Harper and Mary Jane Harper brought out four volumes of *Yeats's Vision Papers* and their daughter, Margaret Mills Harper, published new editions of *AVA* and *AVB* in collaboration with Catherine Paul. In 2012, Neil Mann, Matthew Gibson, and Clair Nally published an edited volume, *W. B. Yeats's "A Vision": Explications and Contexts*, which furthered this general trend toward making *A Vision* legible to a new generation of readers. Four years later, Gibson and Mann compiled another collection, *Yeats, Philosophy, and the Occult*, which aims to place Yeats's philosophical and occult writings in the context of other contemporary intellectual traditions. It is a comparative study with some fascinating points of entry: Yeats's unpublished drafts; his potential borrowing from Cesare Lombroso and Oswald Spengler; his extensive immersion in the history of dreams; his study of Indian sacred books as well as Pierre Duhem's theories of the Great Year; and his interest in philosophers like Bishop Berkeley and Alfred North Whitehead. After a brisk introduction by the volume's editors, which establishes the need for the volume, Wayne Chapman walks us through some of the major works on Yeats that are important for understanding his philosophical and occult writing. In keeping with Chapman's own archival interests, he spends some time exploring an unpublished dialogue, "Anglo-Ireland. | a conversation," which he calls a "dress rehearsal" for "The Phases of the Moon" (33). He shows, through meticulous analysis of textual emendations, that it is "a good start, but a false one" (43), whose chief value is to index Yeats's changing ideas about the system underlying the poem. Chapman also argues that the dialogue is an adaptation of Walter Savage Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*, which Yeats annotated (the editors reproduce these annotations, though not Landor's text, in Appendix I). Chapman's point about "conversation" playing a role in the development of the poem illustrates a practice evident throughout this volume: mining the archives to fill in the gaps in our knowledge about Yeats's occult system.

The remaining six chapters take us through some familiar and some not-so-familiar ground. Charles Armstrong considers Yeats's "Eastern introductions

of the 1930s”—prominently including one to Shri Purohit Swami’s *An Indian Monk*—which he argues are “so closely linked” to *A Vision* that “they might be read as mirroring texts” (90). Perhaps as important as any corollaries that may exist between Yeats’s system and Indian thought are the “reclusiveness of the ascetic ideal” and the dialectical “union of Self and Not-self” (96) that he found in the work of Swami and other Indian writers. This chapter flows easily into Mann’s discussion of dreams, which, for Yeats, provided “access to unseen aspects of reality” (109). Mann focuses on an important early notebook, called PIAL after Maud Gonno’s Golden Dawn motto, that Yeats kept from 1908–17 (155, n5). At the heart of his argument is Yeats’s enigmatic epigraph to *Responsibilities*: “In dreams begins responsibility.” Mann claims that “dreams placed responsibility on the dreamer to attempt to understand what they offered—advice, a warning, an explanation, or exploration of a theme. They were to be ‘questioned’...” (114). Mid-career works like *Per Amica Silentia Luna* (1917) and the first edition of *A Vision* (1925) engage in a form of Hermetic questioning guided by the Golden Dawn belief that “truth cannot be discovered but may be revealed” (127). Revelation comes through the agency of the *image*, which links vision and dream, for in both, “imagination has some way of lighting on the truth that the reason has not” (Yeats, *CW4* 51; quoted 128). These investigations, as well as the lectures on ghosts and the Automatic Script, blur the lines between dreamer and dream, the living and the dead. Indeed, the dead figure prominently, for “Yeats almost takes it for granted that the dead will use the minds of the living in sleep and waking to achieve the recapitulations and amends they need” (145–46). The dead remain, for poet and mystic alike, “a community of spirits” (154).

In Yeats’s schema, dreams are symptoms of a larger temporal system, one in which a “community of spirits” can interact across historical epochs. Graham Dampier’s chapter on the Four Faculties (Creative Mind, Will, Spirit, and Husk) across the historical cones deepens our understanding of Yeats’s Great Wheel and his historical vision generally by linking it to Spengler’s *The Decline of the West* (1918–23). Dampier argues that critics have missed a connection between the two: the close match between Spengler’s “morphology of history”—the idea that “every moment in history corresponds to a point in the development of a past civilization, society, or culture”—and Yeats’s theory of “‘four interacting periods’ of history” (231) that correspond to positions of the Four Faculties on the historical cones. This interaction produces cyclical movements of religious (*primary*) and secular (*antithetical*) civilizations that “always intersect and so come to signify the strife that conditions human development” (243). The “conceptually similar” approaches taken by both writers extends only to a point, however, for “[u]nlike Spengler, Yeats does not claim to have found the solutions to the problems of history” (233). Dampier raises the pertinent

question: “If the past has such a formative influence on the present, can there be any place left for novelty, progress, and change?” (247). The answer is yes, for *A Vision* “shows that every point of human progress is influenced by three past moments of time that inform the present, but without determining it” (249).

If Spengler offered Yeats confirmation of his system at the level of history, in Katherine Ebury’s account Cesar Lombroso offers something more localized: confirmation of Yeats’s understanding of the relation, in *A Vision*, between genius and certain “types” in the Phases of the Moon. There is little doubt that Yeats owned Lombroso’s *After Death—What?* (1909) and that he reveled in crime fiction. More important, there are suggestive parallels between the phases and Lombroso’s thought on the “moral implications” of “beauty and ugliness” (69), which leads to a provocative discussion of his “theorizations of the criminal body” and Yeats’s figure of the Hunchback (72–73). At times, the grounds for a connection appear rather thin, as when Lombroso’s thoughts on creative genius are said to “coincide” with Yeats’s on the basis of a short-list of geniuses from Balzac to Whitman that “both discuss in detail, or who are otherwise important to their system of thought”; or when Ebury notes that Lombroso’s “direct influence on Yeats’s typology seems clear” (73; my emphasis). However, she is on solid ground when she turns to *Purgatory* and the *On the Boiler*; the convergence of “criminality, eugenics, and spiritualism in Lombroso’s work” (75) seems especially germane to Yeats’s late Gothic play of crime and destiny and his dyspeptic tract on Ireland’s national health.

Gibson’s contribution on the concept of the Great Year and Duhem’s *Système du monde*, like Colin McDowell’s essay on Bishop Berkeley, revisit familiar themes in Yeats’s occult writings and philosophical research. Gibson exhaustively explains the workings of the Great Wheel and the historical cones before offering an equally comprehensive account of Yeats’s evolving understanding of the Great Year—that is, the cycle of equinoxes around the solar ecliptic that Yeats believed lasted for 36,000 ordinary solar years (today’s estimate is 25,800). His goal was “to integrate the cycle of the individual soul into the changes and fluctuations of a world soul informing history itself” (172). He dallied with concepts like the “Kalpa,” which is “1,000 Maha Yugas” (one Maha Yuga is “12,000 divine years”), which adds up to “4,320,000,000 human years” (190–91). Though he settled on a more scientific measurement of the Great Year, he never lost sight of the mystical power it held. Duhem’s importance lay primarily in “conditioning Yeats’s improved understanding of the concept” (208), particularly his adoption of a 36,000-year limit structured around the Platonic “perfect number” thirty-six (and its multiples) (211–12). According to Gibson, Yeats also found in Duhem’s theory of the Great Year an alternative to Nietzsche’s “eternal return.”

If Gibson drills down into the temporal concepts that govern *A Vision*, McDowell ranges widely across Yeats's works, considering his attitudes toward abstraction and particularity, focusing on Berkeley but making forays into other thinkers. As he and other contributors to this volume show, Yeats was zealous in his pursuit of ideas from any tradition that coincided with and helped clarify his own occult system. Philosophy was part of that system, rather than the other way around, as Yeats's reading of Berkeley (and, for that matter, Duhem) indicate. With Berkeley we return to the dream, and specifically to Yeats's notion that the philosopher had "proved all things a dream" ("Blood and the Moon," quoted 254). McDowell distinguishes between the "'old' view... that Berkeley is a 'subjective idealist'"—a view exemplified by Yeats's line—and a new one that sees the philosopher as a "common-sense realist" (256). Yeats's admiration for Berkeley is due in large measure to the latter's reconciliation of the abstract and particular, which he expresses laconically in the *Commonplace Book*: "all abstract ideas whatsoever are particular" (261). As McDowell points out at the end of his essay, Berkeley shared with Zen Buddhism a belief in the limit imposed by experience, a belief that Yeats described in a letter to Sturge Moore: "Nothing can exist that is not in the mind as 'an element of experience'" (273). Yeats seizes upon Berkeley because he sees in his work, especially in the *Commonplace Book*, the anti-mechanistic, anti-positivist, ideas that he favored (264). McDowell reminds us that Yeats's spiritualist and occult writings were informed by a close understanding of those philosophers whose thought overlapped with his own.

This volume offers no conclusion, but McDowell's reflections on the abstraction and the particular and on the value of experience in determining what exists resonate throughout *Yeats, Philosophy, and the Occult* and speak also to our own era, in which new forms of abstraction threaten our purchase on day-to-day life and our dreams for the future. The essays compiled by Gibson and Mann remind us that Yeats's solution to the questions of our existence, our time in this "foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart" (*VP* 629–30), is to take responsibility for dreams and to welcome all of time into a redemptive poetic vision.

A REVIEW OF *THE CRITICAL THOUGHT OF W. B. YEATS*

Wit Pietrzak, *The Critical Thought of W. B. Yeats* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), hardback and ebook, pp. x+258, ISBN 978-3-319-60089-5.

Reviewed by Matthew Gibson

Wit Pietrzak has chosen a novel way of addressing Yeats's critical ideas, which is simply to look at original critical collections like *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1903) and *The Cutting of an Agate* (1919; revised edition) with a view to determining what are the essential elements of Yeats's plan for good criticism, good literary practice, and above all for a new National Irish Literature in English. He observes Yeats's fights with political and religious dogmatism, his understanding of the role of symbol as opposed to allegory, his insistence on an elite group reinvigorating the nation through the re-moulding of local, mythological symbols, and the tensions between the masses and the elite individual poet; and he also considers Yeats's fight with the "impersonality" of Modernism in his later works. The book is well-researched and clearly written, although on occasions it does seem to veer from a central line due to the tasks Pietrzak has set himself.

The introductory chapter considers the role of Yeats's critical practice and the ideas behind his criticism in relation to his project for Ireland and a new national culture. The second chapter, "Popular Audiences and Poetical Culture," considers Yeats's earliest ideas and his rejection of dogmatic nationalism as a source for literature thanks to his battles with the politician Charles Gavan Duffy over the Irish Library Series. The chapter shows how Yeats came to accept "cosmopolitanism" in criticism while insisting that the actual roots of Irish literature should be based in its local mythology and folklore, but refashioned by skilful poets—a view painfully at odds with the ethically-minded Duffy, who believed that Irish literature should really be about promoting patriotism and ethics.

The third chapter boldly devotes itself to *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1903) and treats that work as though it is a unified whole, despite the fact that the works were written over an extended period of time. Turning his attention to works such as "What is Popular Poetry?," "The Moods," and "Speaking to the Psaltery," Pietrzak produces careful readings which prove that Yeats believed that the written word is corrupting and that the best symbols for art are expressed in the spoken tongue, some years prior to his essay of 1906, "Literature and the Living Voice." Pietrzak's readings here are very convincing, even if they somewhat conflict with the "sacred book" theory purported by Warwick Gould.¹ Pietrzak

describes the Doctrine of the Moods as a set of transcendent symbols that are always limited by their corporeal, sensual form and further argues, with support from Richard Rorty, that the meaning of symbols is impossible to exhaust over time; from this inexhaustibility proceeds the peculiar appropriateness of national myths for literature, which are constantly refashioned by elite writers, eventually becoming accepted by the masses. The chapter also deals with Yeats's real-life experiences at the time, including his unpleasant political alliance with Maud Gonne, his more "internationalist" stance at the time of the Eglinton controversy, weaving in elements from Yeats's activities at the time to explain his evolving ideas. It is fair to say that despite the detail which informs this chapter, Pietrzak might have done well to consult scholars like Peter Liebrechts and Jacques Aubert in his discussion of the Moods, as he refers to very little existing criticism of this topic—of which there is more than he seems to realize.

The fourth chapter turns to the essays in the second edition of *The Cutting of an Agate* (1919), and in particular to Yeats's continued bureaucratic arguments at the Abbey Theatre and political fights with Maud Gonne. Pietrzak details Yeats's changing views on Shakespeare and theatre generally after visiting Stratford-upon-Avon—which also made Yeats far more nuanced in his understanding of English culture. The author also examines Yeats's interest in Noh theatre as a means of creating an elite theatre for an "intellectual aristocracy" (97), with the aim of reshaping myth for the ultimate good of the national literature. As such, while admitting Yeats's initial need for a small audience, the chapter downplays Yeats's pessimism of the kind expressed in his open letter to Lady Gregory, "A People's Theatre" (1919), which expresses a belief that the Abbey has failed in capturing the public's attention. Pietrzak furthers his argument on Yeats's belief in the limitless nature of the true symbol's meaning, as opposed to allegory, arguing that allegory relies on "acquired meanings" and "extant cultural modes," while symbol "always adverts to some truth only partly glimpsed and never fully unveiled" (102). He notes that this distinction comes from Yeats's work on William Blake (although there is also the possibility that it was influenced by Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Lay Sermon "Blessed are Ye who Sow beside all Water"). Treating *The Cutting of an Agate* as a unified whole in this chapter is problematic, since Yeats re-edited the 1912 version to incorporate much earlier prose in the 1919 volume, thus making any analysis grounded on assumptions of unity very hard to conduct.

The fifth chapter tackles above all else *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* in seeking to expand Yeats's discussion of symbolism. It begins with an examination of Yeats's attitude to Emanuel Swedenborg and his understanding of the mystic's limitations in works like *Arcana Coelestia*—the limitation being Swedenborg's dryness and inability to present correspondences through concrete and sensory language. The chapter then goes on to consider the two parts of *Per Amica*

Silentia Lunae, “Anima Hominis” and “Anima Mundi,” and details the rise of the theory of Self, Mask and Anti-Self as a form of artistic practice governed by the struggle with the Daimon, and the comparisons to be drawn between T. S. Eliot’s theory of tradition and impersonality and Yeats’s own of the Great Memory in the Soul of the World. Pietrzak thus is one of the few critics to argue that *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* is presenting not simply an exposition of spiritualist ideas in “Anima Mundi,” but a theory of literary creation, and his interpretation invites comparison with Cairns Craig’s bold attempt several decades ago to argue that the latter part of *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* was really describing an associative theory of reading.² Pietrzak makes the point that the failure of the poet when forging his Mask points to the constant refashioning of the national symbol, a perpetual deferral, and also opines that in describing the symbols of the Soul of the World, Yeats fails to detail the part played by the individual poet in adding to the tradition—which would have made sense given his determination to see poets as subjective re-moulders of shared traditional symbols.

The sixth chapter deals entirely with *A Vision* (1925), a book whose basic system Pietrzak manages to outline very well (albeit with what appears to have been some careful guidance from Neil Mann). Returning again to Yeats’s antinomy of personality versus impersonality, and the power of the individual imagination over accepted dogma, Pietrzak considers this in relation to the distinctions between Fate and Destiny in Yeats’s system: the one enforced by the objective Primary Phases when the Will and Mask are weak; and the other a result of the struggle for Personality and Mask in the subjective, antithetical Phases, a feature which again relates to the individual poet’s relation to the masses and national culture. Noting from Neil Mann’s own work that tension and antinomy between opposites is one of the most important features of *A Vision*, Pietrzak finishes by centring on “Dove or Swan” and Yeats’s programme for how the individual poet achieves self-expression in different eras and against different societal pulls. He makes the erroneous point that this is the only part of the book to find its way into the 1937 edition unchanged (a fair few of the passages in it were in fact revised), but nevertheless makes strong points about the individual artist’s role in transforming an entire culture—a point not dissimilar, on a political level, to Hegel’s concept of the “world historical figure.”

The seventh chapter is devoted to an analysis of two works: The “Introduction” to *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1936) and *Essays* (1931–36). In particular Pietrzak gives attention to what he deems Yeats’s unfair critique of Eliot, noting that he only drew from Eliot’s earlier poems to make him appear merely a “satirist” (185), and notes that he had more in common with Eliot’s later theories of personality than he and later critics have argued. The critique is lengthy and full of good observations, but it suffers from Pietrzak’s “work-by-work” analysis, since much of what Yeats writes in his introduction

is illuminated by cross-reference to *Essays*, such as his introductions to Hone and Rossi's *Bishop Berkeley* and to "Fighting the Waves" from *Wheels and Butterflies*. Indeed, the discussion of Modernist "flux" and the pivotal antinomies of mirror and lamp—central to all these texts—in this reviewer's opinion are crucial to examining the fluctuations over the forty-year period that Yeats is describing, and his own place inside them. Pietrzak is right to assert that the introduction to *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse* is really an explication of Yeats's own poetical biography, and one might add that it could also act as a guide to the age-old controversy on the right order for his *Collected Works*, as it helps us understand his own career self-evaluation towards the end of his life. In his critique of *Essays*, Pietrzak looks more at the role of philosophy in honing Yeats's critical attitudes, and in particular the distinction between Bishop Berkeley and G. E. Moore.

The final chapter analyses Yeats's essays "On Modern Poetry" and "A General Introduction to my Work," in both of which Pietrzak notes Yeats's opinions on the slow encroachment of rationalist and Empirical philosophy on poetry in his own era.

The book is for the most part well written, provides some very good readings of the essays and gets close to many of the central tensions in Yeats's ideas. The structure of going from book to book partially obscures the actual chronology of Yeats's ideas; while Pietrzak discusses Yeats's fin-de-siècle criticism and then examines the criticism of the First World War era, he writes too little of Yeats's views during the earlier Edwardian era, after he had abandoned Symbolism and before he developed his theory of personality in art being a "secondary self," creating a distinction between character and personality, and ultimately a mask made from doing battle with the anti-self. This is a pity, as this short era, whose major work of ideas was "Discoveries" (1907; included in both the 1912 and 1919 editions of *The Cutting of an Agate*, but given little attention by Pietrzak due to his focus on the later edition), was a peculiar one in which Yeats flirted with the idea that poetry and drama depended upon developing "the habitual self" (*E&I* 269), and tried to find a balance in drama between the poetry of the cliques and realism. This means that Pietrzak's view that Yeats himself considered J. M. Synge to be the "ideal figure" of the Irish dramatist, "opposed to the everyday and yet situated in it" (Pietrzak, 112), is not quite correct. Synge was for Yeats a particular kind of brooding poet, who could create rare "moods" through the "passive act" of rejecting and selecting from what he has seen in life, rather than being antithetical to life and in search of personality (*E&I* 329): a poet who could make the needed compromise between realism and symbolism in this interstice period of Yeats's own aesthetic development. For this reason Yeats later placed Synge at the early Primary Phase 23 in *A Vision*, and some way from Yeats's own Antithetical Phase 17, in which the poet

seeks pure personality, and which more properly represents the anti-realist impulse of Yeats's later drama, beginning from 1907 onwards. Likewise, much of the criticism in *Samhain*, which was published year by year, is also ignored. A further caution might be that Pietrzak's interest in Yeats's criticism gives too little space to his reading of Occult writers like Eliphas Levi and S. L. Macgregor Mathers, whose translation of the various books of the Zohar gave Yeats access to a Cabbalistic use of symbols which definitely influences the techniques of criticism present in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*. Despite these misgivings, Pietrzak has produced a work which adds much to the discussion and which is deft in its use of historical context and critical interpretation.

Notes

1. See, for example, Warwick Gould's chapter, "Yeats Deregulated," in Deirdre Toomey, ed., "Yeats and Women," *YA9* (1992): 356–72.
2. See Cairns Craig, *Yeats, Eliot, Pound and the Politics of Poetry* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

A REVIEW OF *SILENCE IN MODERN IRISH LITERATURE*

Michael McAteer, ed., *Silence in Modern Irish Literature* (Leiden: Brill Rodopi, 2017), hardback, pp. 217, ISBN 978-90-04-34273-6

Reviewed by Lloyd (Meadhbh) Houston

At first glance, a collection addressing the place of silence in modern Irish culture might seem counterintuitive. Popular stereotype has long presented the Irish as a people singular in their loquacity. For Matthew Arnold, the Celt's feminine and infantilizing aversion to the "despotism of fact" was redeemed by a sentimental linguistic effusion which he hoped would revivify an austere Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition.¹ The "stage Irishman," popularized by Dion Boucicault and derided by Arthur Griffith and D. P. Moran, exemplified this "gift of the gab," courting success and disaster with a seemingly limitless supply of blarney and blather. In the political realm, the immense popular appeal of Daniel O'Connell was staked on the showmanship and verbal fireworks which made his monster meetings such a success.² The six revolutionary generations whom the signatories of the Proclamation of the Republic singled out for praise in "Easter, 1916" were better remembered for their rhetorical achievements than their (often dubious) military credentials. In the aftermath of the Rising, Yeats castigated himself for his willingness to exchange "polite meaningless words" with fireside companions in the motley-clad culture of Edwardian Ireland.³ Even a figure as infamously "lock mouthed" as Charles Stewart Parnell was lauded precisely for his capacity to hold in check the "loose lipped" tendencies of his followers and countrymen.⁴ As Yeats noted with approval, where an Englishman might be reserved "because of his want of sensibility," Parnell was reserved "in spite of it."⁵

Nevertheless, as this wide-ranging and often illuminating collection ably demonstrates, there is much to be said for attending to the role of silence in modern Irish literature (Irish Bull only partially intended). In a society as simultaneously resistant to and implicated in the operation of British imperialism as Ireland, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's infamous query—"can the subaltern speak?"—takes on a range of complex inflections.⁶ The political, intellectual, and cultural implications of the silences such a situation engendered are reflected in the structure of the collection, which groups its fourteen essays into clusters addressing the "Psychologies of Silence," the "Ethics of Silence," the "Places of Silence," and the "Spirits of Silence." Under this rubric, the works of figures canonical (W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett), neglected (George Moore, Kate O'Brien), and marginal (Dermot Healy) are examined from a

range of theoretical perspectives by a mix of better-established and early-career academics from across Europe. This diversity of perspective is one of the collection's strengths, resulting in readings that are often refreshing in their breadth of cultural reference and philosophical framing.

In its most successful essays, the collection manages not only to reflect on the role of silence in Irish writing, but also to remedy silences in Irish literary historiography. A recurrent and illuminating trend in many of the essays is an attention to the influence of the Symbolist movement on the development of Irish modernism in a manner which acknowledges the specificity of Irish cultural and political contexts, while refusing to abstract them from their broader European setting. Exemplary in this regard is Emilie Morin's essay on the artistic and intellectual influences which inform the "silent intervals" of Beckett's theatre. While the political, aesthetic, and philosophical implications of silence in Beckett's prose have attracted an abundance of commentary, Morin's essay offers a long overdue account of the role of silence in Beckett's drama, and the debt it owes both to Symbolist theatre and late nineteenth-century psychiatric medicine. Both a typology and a genealogy, Morin's essay traces the origins of the silences of figures such as *Waiting for Godot's* (1953) Lucky and the Mouth of *Not I* (1973) to the work of Maurice Maeterlinck and the public lectures of Jean-Martin Charcot. Morin effectively sketches the inter-implicated and mutually influential histories of Symbolist theatre and psychiatric research into hysteria to illustrate the ways in which the construction of silence as a psycho-pathological phenomenon both provided and was shaped by a theatrical vocabulary of gesture and pause which could be exploited by figures such as Beckett. As Morin acknowledges, the role of W. B. Yeats and J. M. Synge in facilitating the transmission of these fused traditions into Irish theatre constitutes a valuable area for future scholarship.

Of particular interest to those in this parish will be Michael McAteer's essay on the psychological and political implications of silence in Yeats's early poem "How Ferencz Renyi Kept Silent." Based on a series of (possibly apocryphal) reports of an atrocity committed during the Hungarian uprising of 1848–49, the poem recounts the experiences of a Hungarian revolutionary who was committed to a psychiatric asylum in Budapest after being forced to witness the execution of his mother, sister, and lover as a punishment for refusing to divulge the identities of his comrades. Excluded from the 1933 *Collected Poems*, it has received only passing critical attention. McAteer addresses this lacuna by reading the poem in light of a series of nervous "collapses" Yeats experienced in the course of preparing *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems* (the collection in which the poem appeared) for publication in 1889. Placing the poem in conversation with other poems about mental illness in the collection ("King Goll" and "The Ballad of Moll Magee"), and Yeats's critical reflections on Symbolism,

McAteer reads Renyi's refusal to speak as a manifestation of the paradoxical silence which Maurice Blanchot claimed followed the end of all writing: an unending murmur.⁷ In contrast to the soothing and contemplative silence the young Yeats discovered in certain natural spaces, McAteer argues that Renyi's disturbed and disturbing silence reflects the psychological and political upheavals of late nineteenth-century Ireland and Yeats's uncertain positioning within them. Perhaps most illuminating is McAteer's use of the poem to reconsider Yeats's deployment of idealized feminine archetypes to ratify masculine sacrifice in the name of national independence. In contrast to the supernatural and deathless Cathleen ni Houlihan exhorting the young Michael Gillane to sacrifice his life for mother Ireland, in the earlier poem it is Renyi's mother who sacrifices her life in order to impel him to maintain his silent commitment to the irredentist cause, even beyond the limits of psychological endurance.

The vexed relationship between national identity and silence which McAteer highlights in Yeats's poem has a particularly troubling history in Ireland. As the recent discovery of the remains of over 800 infants and neonates at a former Mother and Baby Home in Tuam makes clear, the silence that has surrounded the institutionalized abuse of women and children in Ireland has immense ethical and cultural ramifications. These are addressed in Alessandra Boller's essay on the interplay of silence and voice in the rendering of gendered and sexual violence in Roddy Doyle's *The Woman Who Walked into Doors* (1996). Situating Doyle's novel in a moment of "modernisation" in Irish society, Boller explores the narrative and stylistic strategies through which Doyle conveys the difficulty with which such individual and cultural traumas are articulated. In particular, Boller highlights the role of ecclesiastical institutions in maintaining a "culture of silence" around abuse, a trend which Willa Murphy's essay on the seal of the confessional in nineteenth-century Ireland seeks to historicize. As Murphy highlights, the silences cultivated by the Catholic Church have long been a focal point for speculation and anxiety. Through a close reading of the 1825 *Report from the Select Committee on the State of Ireland* and the works of Gerald Griffin and John and Michael Banim, Murphy examines how the inviolability of the seal of the Catholic confessional came to function as a hypostasis for the "Irish Question" and the anti-Enlightenment energies with which it was bound up. In Murphy's view, for both the British Government and early Irish novelists, the seal of the confessional suggested the possibility of integrating the Irish into the rationalism of socio-economic modernity, even as it simultaneously represented those features of the Irish psyche that would remain forever beyond colonial apprehension.

As Murphy's account of the "secret selves" such a silence facilitated suggests, rather than bearing witness to the wholesale representational dispossession to which Spivak's provocative question alludes, in an Irish cultural context silence

could be deployed as a weapon of anti-Imperial resistance. A well-worn example in this regard is the commitment to “silence, exile, and cunning” which underpins Stephen Dedalus’s *non serviam* in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), through which Joyce transposes the paramilitary strategies of the Fenian Brotherhood into the aesthetic realm as the basis for an insurgent art.⁸ Mark McGahon takes up the multivalent inflections of such a silence in the “Nestor,” “Hades,” and “Cyclops” episodes of *Ulysses* (1922) in his discussion of justice and the *différend* in Joyce’s work. Defined by Jean-François Lyotard as “the unstable state and instant of language” wherein one searches for a phrase to express a feeling of injustice arising from one’s sense that reality is unrepresentable under one’s present circumstances, for McGahon the concept offers a valuable insight into a range of key silences in Joyce’s work.⁹ Chief among these is the “brief gesture” sketched by Stephen Dedalus in response to Mr. Deasy’s denunciation of Fenianism and endorsement of the Orange Order in “Nestor.”¹⁰ Trapped between a desire to distance himself from physical force nationalism and an unwillingness to assent to Deasy’s selective and sectarian account of Orange ambivalence concerning the Act of Union, Stephen performs a *différend* which, in McGahon’s view, critiques not only Deasy’s remarks, but the social and cultural circumstances which deprived Stephen of a means of articulating his reservations.

A crucial focal point for any consideration of silence and silencing in Irish culture must be the linked domains of gender and sexuality. If canonization may be understood as an adjudication over whose voices will continue to be heard and whose will lapse into silence, then it is vital that scholars reflect critically on such a process, and put pressure on the boundaries within which modern Irish literature has been located. While not explicitly concerned with issues of canonization, the essays of Heather Ingman and Anne Fogarty are encouraging in their engagement with the work of two authors often considered peripheral to Irish modernism: Elizabeth Bowen and Kate O’Brien. Drawing extensively on the work of Julie Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, Ingman traces the ambivalent silences which surround mother-daughter relationships in Bowen’s writing. In Ingman’s persuasive reading, Bowen emerges as singularly alive to the linguistic dispossession which young women experience upon entry into the phallogocentric symbolic order. However, as Ingman highlights, such a dispossession is not total, and the pre-Oedipal traces of the semiotic maintained in the relationship between mothers and daughters in novels such as *The Last September* (1929), *The Death of the Heart* (1938), and *Eva Trout* (1968) consistently threaten to rupture the hegemony of the Law of the Father in both empowering and disempowering ways. These dynamics are in turn read in the light of Bowen’s own sense of cultural dispossession as a member of a politically and culturally eclipsed Anglo-Irish gentry. Equally enlightening is Fogarty’s reading of the fraught interplay of concealment and

revelation in O'Brien's *The Land of Spices* (1941). Banned upon publication by the Irish Censorship of Publications Board for a single sentence in which direct reference is made to male homosexuality ("[s]he saw Etienne and her father in the embrace of love"), O'Brien's novel of female *Bildung* explores the ways in which the cloistered environment of a nunnery may allow for the flourishing of feminine identity and sexuality, even as it literalizes the constraints of a patriarchal society. Tracing the debates that have surrounded the question of same-sex desire in the novel since its publication and censorship, Fogarty argues that, more than simply a thematic concern, queerness epitomizes the "texture of consciousness" in O'Brien's text. As in the best essays in the collection, Fogarty productively attends to the ways in which the strategic silences of O'Brien's text participate in what Derrida terms "facility of denial," addressing precisely those topics which it is apparently most concerned to negate.¹¹

At the conclusion of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921), Ludwig Wittgenstein bathetically asserts that "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."¹² As *Silence in Modern Irish Literature* demonstrates, it is precisely from a consistent and often voluble engagement with that "whereof one cannot speak" that so much Irish writing continues to derive its power.

Notes

1. Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1867), 102.
2. Joseph Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880–1922* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 32.
3. W. B. Yeats, "Easter 1916," *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, ed. Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 391–94, l.6.
4. R. Barry O'Brien, *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846–1891*, vol. 1 (London: Smith, Elder, 1898), 145.
5. Isabella Augusta Persse Gregory, *Lady Gregory's Diaries: 1892–1902*, ed. James Pethica (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1996), 169.
6. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313.
7. Maurice Blanchot, *The Book to Come*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Redwood City, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 218.
8. James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 208.
9. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Différend: Phrases in Dispute*, trans. Georges Van Den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 13.
10. James Joyce, *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford University Press, 2008), 31.
11. Jacques Derrida, "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, ed. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989), 5–70.
12. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922), 189.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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