

January 2020

## Vanishing Presences: Women and Violence in "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen"

Claire Bracken  
*Union College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/iys>

---

### Recommended Citation

Bracken, Claire (2020) "Vanishing Presences: Women and Violence in "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen"," *International Yeats Studies*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 1 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/iys/vol4/iss1/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Yeats Studies by an authorized editor of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact [kokeefe@clemson.edu](mailto:kokeefe@clemson.edu).

## VANISHING PRESENCES: WOMEN AND VIOLENCE IN “NINETEEN HUNDRED AND NINETEEN”

*Claire Bracken*

The initial sense of the female subject in Yeats’s poem “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen” is marked by vanishing appearance—her presence is there, but barely. The fleeting quality is surprising given that many of the women to which the poem refers are drawn from real life or historical record; one of the things I aim to do in this essay is to restore their presence. In Elizabeth Butler Cullingford’s essay on “Yeats and Gender,” she notes Yeats’s contradictory representation of women, providing a comprehensive and detailed overview of the feminine in his work as celebrated yet demonized, idealized yet critiqued. She charts his shifting representations of women from early valorization to a more reactionary, anti-suffrage critique, to his later resistance to the Catholic Church and his “sexually bold female speakers.”<sup>1</sup> I argue here that “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen,” written in 1921, ultimately presents a conservative vision; its representations of the feminine move from fleeting and disappearing imaginings in the early sections of the poem to a more visible, but demonized, presence by its end. The shift underscores the poem’s subtext: Yeats attempts to shore up the privilege of a white masculinity that—for most of the early sections—he ostensibly critiques. I trace this dynamic via analysis of the gendered politics embedded in different configurations of disappearance in the poem, exploring how women’s disappearance becomes replaced at the poem’s end, as the Western male subject-artist vanishes in a protectionist gesture that maintains its future possibilities of selfhood. The poem’s final apocalyptic vision of modernist horror is borne by women and a racialized male figure, who are made to appear in the poem’s final section.

The first section of “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen” announces a great loss: of decency, civilization and culture, all “lovely things” that “are gone” (*l 1*)<sup>2</sup>. Helen Vendler notes how the “sequence begins in the voice of one who values such icons and images,” the loss of which, Michael Ragussis argues, is marked by Yeats as a complete illusion.<sup>3</sup> As Michael Wood sums it up: “In fact, the whole of the first part of ‘Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen’ invites us to a double reading, or tells two stories, the first about loss, the second about the folly of our believing we ever had what we think we have lost.”<sup>4</sup> In its temporal structure, the past becomes a repository of (illusionary) loss, and the present reveals the stuff of “nightmare.” This current time of “Now” is revealed in the fourth stanza of this six-stanza section, and at its center is the figure of a murdered

woman, Eileen Quinn, who was shot by the Black and Tans on November 1, 1920, as she sat with her baby in her arms.<sup>5</sup>

Eileen Quinn begins to vanish even before Yeats's nameless reference to her. There has been some confusion over her name in written sources, with some critics and commentators calling her Ellen and others Eileen. Yeats heard the story from Augusta Gregory, as the murdered woman was the wife of Malachi Quinn, a well-known neighbor of Gregory's. In her journal, Gregory recounts, "it was Malachi Quinn's young wife who had been shot dead – with her child in her arms [...] I was so angry at the official report of Eileen Quinn's shooting."<sup>6</sup> Here, Gregory calls her Eileen; however, in his biography of Yeats (which also uses Gregory as the source), Roy Foster calls her Ellen. Analyzing the confusion, Michael Wood states:

Fergus Campbell, as we have seen, calls the dead woman Ellen Quinn, as do Roy Foster and many other scholars. Lady Gregory calls her Eileen, and so do more recent commentators, including Helen Vendler. Lucy McDiarmid thinks the first appellation is an error, a confusion of identities springing from the fact that Lady Gregory's maid and informant is called Ellen. This makes sense, but then the *Galway Observer* for 6 November 1920 opens up the whole question again, since it calls the murdered woman both Ellen and Eileen.<sup>8</sup>

The *Galway Observer's* article opened by naming her as Ellen but later in the article refers to her as Eileen:

Mrs. *Ellen* Quinn (24), who was shot on Monday evening, while sitting on the lawn in front of her farmhouse in Kiltartan, near Gort, bled to death the same night [...] The court has considered the evidence and the medical evidence [sic] are of the opinion that Mrs *Eileen* Quinn, of Corker, Gort in the county of Galway, met her death due to shock and hemorrhage [sic] by a bullet wound in the groin fired by some occupant of a police car proceeding along to Gort-Ardrahan road on the 1st of November, 1920. They are of the opinion that the shot was one of the shots fired as a precautionary measure, and in view of the facts record a verdict of death by misadventure.<sup>9</sup>

A review of newspaper reports clears up the question of Eileen Quinn's name; Eileen emerges as the much more likely option, as the majority of sources name her. The first report of the attack, on November 2 in the *Irish Independent*, lists her as Eileen, as do subsequent reports in the *Freeman's Journal*, *Connacht Tribune*, *Evening Echo*, *Skibbereen Eagle*, *Freeman's Journal*, *Sligo Champion*, and the *Connacht Telegraph*. There is one newspaper report from the *Freeman's Journal* on November 3 that names her as Ellen—this same text is reproduced in the aforementioned *Galway Observer*, *The Leitrim Observer* and *Sligo Champion*—as well as mentions of her as Ellen in two other reports in *The Irish*

*Examiner* and the *Skibbereen Eagle* respectively.<sup>11</sup> Thus, it would seem that the initial *Freeman's Journal* report produced the confusion with their incorrect naming. Moreover, given that Lady Gregory was on personal terms with the family, it is unlikely she would have gotten the name wrong. As McDiarmid has pointed out, Foster's naming of her as Ellen is likely a confusion with a woman who worked with Gregory, given that the journal is Foster's primary source for the incident and is in fact mentioned as giving the initial news of Eileen's shooting to Gregory. Moreover, *The Skibbereen Journal* report on her death gives the details of her father's name, Gilligan, and townland, Raheen. The 1911 census lists an Eileen Gilligan, age fifteen, living in Raheen. This would concur with her age of death in 1920, which was widely reported as twenty-four.<sup>12</sup>

Eileen Quinn's name is important, especially given her namelessness in the poem (unlike the two other named historical female figures, Loie Fuller and Lady Kyteler). Her murder is, as Vendler notes, an "atrocity that lies at the heart of Yeats' sequence," and it motivates the meditations and reflections of the poem itself.<sup>13</sup>

Now days are dragon-ridden, the nightmare  
Rides upon sleep: a drunken soldiery  
Can leave the mother, murdered at her door,  
To crawl in her own blood, and go scot-free;  
The night can sweat with terror as before  
We pieced our thoughts into philosophy,  
And planned to bring the world under a rule,  
Who are but weasels fighting in a hole. (*ll* 25–32)

Violence is at stake here for Yeats: the violence of the modern world, both in terms of the post-World War era and the current time of war in Ireland; as Wood notes, "the drunken soldiery were his emblem."<sup>14</sup> More specifically, it is violence against women that is constructed as a horrific effect of the contemporary moment. Gendered violence is inferred in the Athena reference, where her "ancient image made of olive wood"—one of those "lovely things"—could easily be destroyed ("To burn that stump on the Acropolis"): this aggression towards the feminine is at its most saturated in the image of Eileen Quinn's murder (*ll* 6, 1, 46).

However, the intensity of the imagery does not necessarily render subjectivity to "the mother." She is nameless, her specificity trapped within the collective inference of "the," representing all mothers of a dying nation, a dying culture. Her description as "mother" is linked to the fact that she was holding a baby in her arms when she was shot. Additionally, some newspaper reports stated that Quinn was seven months pregnant at her death.<sup>15</sup> In Yeats's poem, she is simply a symbol of the approaching apocalypse. While Wood argues that

the use of the word “her” twice in these lines (“her door;” “her blood”) provides the woman with specificity, going on to say that “it isn’t possible to lose her;” I suggest the opposite. Quinn is very much lost, both in Yeats’s poem and—as we have seen—the subsequent reporting of her own proper name.

The structure of Yeats’s lines about Quinn highlight this, opening with “the nightmare” of “a drunken soldiery” and ending with them going “scot-free” (*ll* 25–28). In between these, in a relative clause that contains and minimizes her, we have “the mother” who is acted upon (“can leave,” “murdered”). Her only activity is the horrifying image “to crawl in her own blood;” and it is this abject excretion of blood—the double symbol of her life and death—into which she merges, becoming the matter and stuff of “nightmare” itself. The image of “sweat” in the subsequent line connects with “blood” as excreted bodily fluid, and this “sweat” is the very stuff of the night that sweats with terror. There is a repetition of “the” as “the mother” is retranslated from human subject to space itself: “The night” of line 29. Eileen Quinn disappears into matter, as her death for Yeats becomes not just a symbol of contemporary horror, but the affective environment of that horror too.

A disappearance is also effected on Loie Fuller in the second section of “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen.” One of the most arresting images of the poem is that of Fuller and her dancers, who also reform as matter, “A shining web, a floating ribbon of cloth” (*l* 50). Loie Fuller was an American dancer, described by Sally Sommer as “An overnight sensation in Paris in 1892 [...] Her ideas about modernism in dance, stagecraft, music, and scenic design influenced her contemporaries and shaped visions of the future.”<sup>16</sup> Fuller is most renowned for her Serpentine Dance, recorded in an 1896 film by the Lumière Brothers. Fuller’s costume of multiple and extended pieces of cloth was integral to the dance, as was a complex lighting scheme which brought an intense array of color: “Surrounded by a funnel of swirling fabric spiraling upward in the space around her and bathed in colored lights of her own invention, Fuller’s body seems to evaporate in the midst of her spectacle.”<sup>17</sup> Foster notes that “WB may have seen her in a private performance [...] he remembers ‘a dance I once saw in a great house, where beautifully dressed children wound long ribbons of cloth in and out as they danced.’”<sup>18</sup>

Fuller’s figure appears in the first line of the poem’s second section which, coming after the first section’s despair over the disintegration of culture, stability, and order, attempts to capture some of the chaotic spirit that swirls in and out of this changeable time:

When Loie Fuller’s Chinese dancers enwound  
A shining web, a floating ribbon of cloth,  
It seemed that a dragon of air

Had fallen among dancers, had whirled them round  
Or hurried them off on its own furious path; (*ll* 49–58)

The stanza asserts Fuller's primacy, leading with her name and establishing the dancers as objects of her possession. Critics regularly make the point that Fuller's dancers were in fact Japanese, not Chinese, referring to her engagement of two separate troupes of Japanese dancers during the period 1900 and 1908.<sup>19</sup> In a brief account of this collaboration in her memoir *Fifteen Years of a Dancer's Life*, Fuller frequently refers to these dancers as "my Japanese,"<sup>20</sup> at one point remembering her championing of one female dancer in proprietary terms:

When the rehearsal was over I gathered the actors together and said to them: "If you are going to remain with me, you will have to obey me. And if you don't take this little woman as your star, you will have no success."  
And as she had a name that could not be translated, and which was longer than the moral law, I christened her on the spot Hanoko.<sup>21</sup>

Yeats's establishment of Fuller as a poetic subject echoes these assumptions of white, Western privilege, as the putative owner of the "Chinese dancers," the orchestrator of chaotic principles that modernism invariably marks in racially othered terms.

The swirling movement of the "Chinese dancers" also refers to the material cloth—Chinese silk—used in Fuller's performance, which intensifies the racial commodification (signaled also in the Orientalized image of the "dragon"), encompassing one of the effects of the stanza, the dissipation of the subject more generally in the whirlings of the Yeatsian gyre.<sup>22</sup> Wood notes that "What we are shown are the great billowing sheets of silk Loie Fuller spun wildly around herself at great speed, as if she were simultaneously engineering a great storm and dangerously caught up in it."<sup>23</sup> As the cloth swirls, Fuller's own prominence—so powerfully announced—dissipates into the stanza; the opening word suggests this, as the "When" pushes us away from the immediacy of Fuller's being and towards the temporality of the dance. According to the aesthetics of the dance, Fuller disappears, merging with the "Chinese dancers" that create a winding, billowing, circling "ribbon of cloth." In the poem, she dissipates into the dancers, who are then dissipated into the dance, "whirled around" "by a dragon of air."

Reading the structure of the stanza closely, we can see that the "dragon of air" is generative of aggressive practices of masculinity and—following on from the poem's first section—contains an effect of violence towards women. Ragussis notes "a furious movement that resists the order the artist attempts to impose on it."<sup>25</sup> Fuller's "dragon of air" clearly echoes the "dragon-ridden" days that bring in "a drunken soldiery" of aggressive masculinity in the poem's

representation of Quinn's death. As the speaker of section two states, "All men are dancers and their tread / Goes to the barbarous tread of a gong" (ll 57–58). Thus, barbarous masculinity is encouraged by the swirling wind of change, with "tread" especially taking on an ominous quality of threat. The poem's horror towards this violence oscillates between representations of women as victims, with Quinn's murder functioning in the poem as a symbol of the current state of Ireland, and complicit, as Loie Fuller and her dancers bring on the very wind of destruction that is a symbolic marker for the contemporary moment. Possession matters again here, as the use of the possessive apostrophe in line one of the second section makes Fuller somewhat responsible for the ensuing chaos.

In the poem's third section, violence has an undertone of sexual threat. Women disappear entirely here, in a section entirely focused on male action, moving from the collective image of "all men" to the "solitary soul," perhaps the artist facing the chaotic winds. This "soul" is compared to a swan:

The wings half spread for flight,  
The breast thrust out in pride  
Whether to play or to ride  
Those winds that clamour of approaching night. (ll 65–67)

Ragussis persuasively reads "to play or to ride" as differing alternatives that are then explored in stanzas two and three respectively, arguing that stanza two is "the poem's most explicit criticism of the artist and the politician" constructing an elaborate (and futile) "labyrinth" to navigate the winds.<sup>26</sup> He sees the third stanza, where the swan leaps "into the desolate heaven" (l 79), as "the active acceptance of the destructive winds, and the solitude that necessarily follows upon that acceptance."<sup>27</sup> The swan's domineering and phallic assertion in stanza one, with "The wings half spread for flight, / The breast thrust out in pride" is channeled into a "wildness," "a rage" "to end all things" in the third stanza, which connects to representations of violent masculinity in the first two sections of the poem. Moreover, considered alongside "Leda and the Swan" (1923), also published in *The Tower* and composed two years after "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen," the swan carries tentative suggestions that its violence is sexual. The later poem—with its inclusion of Leda as a subject—could be said to write in a femininity that is absented and invisible in this section of "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen."

This intimation of sexual violence reaches its peak in the final section of the poem. Having blown through the winds of mockery and despair in section five, the opening of section six opens in these ominous terms: "Violence upon the roads: violence of horses" (l 113). The final section replaces the

earlier disappearances of the female subjects with a much more visible feminine charged force in the form of “Herodias’ daughters:”

Herodias’ daughters have returned again,  
A sudden blast of dusty wind and after  
Thunder of feet, tumult of images,  
Their purpose in the labyrinth of the wind  
And should some crazy hand dare touch a daughter  
All turn with amorous cries, or angry cries,  
According to the wind, for all are blind. (*ll* 118–24)

These daughters are associated (and indeed merge) with the air and wind, but they are not lost in it; they retain their presence. They have voice (“cries”) and “purpose.” They do not dissipate into the stanza, as both Fuller and Quinn do, but rather stay visible amidst and within the wind. Here Yeats makes clearest the gendered context of the destructive winds of the poem: a wild feminine force, something that has been prefigured in the representations of both Quinn and Fuller as their bodies are shown to merge with the apocalyptic night and wind. Foster notes that Yeats’s source for this image is “Arthur Symons’s ‘Dance of the Daughters of Herodias,’ harbingers of vengeance and anarchy,” representing the destructive dance of the daughters, Salome’s especially, which reaps death and beheading.<sup>28</sup>

In Yeats’s poem, that sexual violence is a potential outcome of the wind is conditionally implied in the lines: “And should some crazy hand dare touch a daughter / All turn with amorous cries, or angry cries” (*ll* 122–23). The “handsome riders” “vanish” with their horses, becoming instead the impersonal “hand” of assault (*l* 17, *l* 123). As Vendler points out, “Behind these screen images of supernatural incursions into the natural world, Yeats at last reveals the origin of human violence: the sexual satisfaction attending on it, a powerful satisfaction that is always irrational.”<sup>29</sup> The dance of Herodias’s daughters connects them to Fuller, who is figured as orchestrating the chaos of section two.<sup>30</sup> Here too, the “daughters” are figured as generating the very wind that inflicts sexual violence on them. Thus, Yeats uses an undercurrent of sexual violence to symbolize the destructive chaos of contemporary modern life, configuring a deeply disturbing subtext of victim-blaming, as the fault is laid at the dancing feet of the destructive daughters.

The poem’s gendered unconscious is made evident in a tracing of the sexual politics of vanishing. The “drunken soldiery” of section one, the “barbarous” “tread” of section two, the “swan” of section three, and the “handsome riders” of section six all “vanish” (*l* 17) and that vanishing is a protectionist gesture that ultimately shores up the subject of the poem: the white, Western male subject/

artist. Until the final section, it is this subject, alternating between the pronouns “he,” “we,” and “I” who sits at the center of the poem. This is a “he” “who can read the signs nor sink unmanned / Into the half-deceit of some intoxicant [...] who knows no work can stand [...] Has but one comfort left: all triumph would / But break upon his ghostly solitude” (*ll* 33–40). Phallic manhood and knowledge are connected here, the knowledge of the futility of art in a redemptive and redeeming sense. This theme is reactivated in section three, with its “man in his own secret meditation:”

Some Platonist affirms that in the station  
Where we should cast off body and trade  
The ancient habit sticks,  
And that if our works could  
but vanish with our breath  
that were a lucky death,  
for triumph can but mar our solitude. (*ll* 69–78)

The word “vanish” here connects with the “lovely things” that have been lost (“Man is in love and loves what vanishes”) (*ll* 1, 42); what is being suggested is that these objects of the artist’s creation—art, culture, beauty—are illusory parts of a “labyrinth” “made in art or politics” to shield the self from the inevitable crumbling of all stability, order, and decency.<sup>31</sup> A “lucky death” would be to vanish, along with the “work,” into the oblivion of “solitude,” which the speaker imagines as a form of escape. This is a very different type of disappearance and vanishing to Eileen Quinn, Loie Fuller, and the “Chinese dancers” who lack access to escape; rather they are the very stuff, the matter, of “nightmare” itself, as their subjectivities dissipate into blood and wind, sweat and tears. Gender and race intersect here. Despite her figuration as proprietary Western modernist artist (presented in control of racialized others), as a woman in the poem Fuller’s disappearance is not fully allowed and she returns in the dancing daughters of the final section. Thus, Fuller’s representation operates on two deeply problematic levels: on the one hand she functions as an example of the assumed superiorities of the white, Western modernist artist and, on the other, she is part of the poem’s feminine stratum of disappearing appearance used to prop up and support the vanishings of a white, Western artist that is invariably male.

In section six, the riders “vanish” and fade out, while the witchy images of women fade in. The women’s visible presence allows for the disappearance of the poem’s white male subject, as they instead embody apocalyptic representation and the burden of modernist fear, anxiety, and terror. The poem’s final historical reference is to a woman: Lady Kyteler, a Kilkenny Anglo-Norman accused of witchcraft in the fourteenth century. Vendler notes that Yeats

“borrows his final symbol for that demonic sexual undoing of culture from the chronicles of witchcraft, invoking the tale of the empty-eyed ‘insolent fiend Robert Artisson,’ unsusceptible in his insolence to all the conventions of romance, who has exercised his sexual power over ‘the love-lorn Lady Kyteler,’” while Ragussis interprets “the fiend and his sexual victim” within the poem’s more general theme of “the rape of innocence.”<sup>32</sup> We see in this haunting final section, when the “wind drops” and a figure comes into view (the “fiend” who “lurches”), an othering that is racialized. The modernist “nightmare” that the entire poem addresses becomes embodied in the demon figure of Artisson, to whom Lady Alice Kyteler was supposedly in thrall.

Maevae Brigid Callan identifies Kyteler’s case as “Ireland’s only medieval witchcraft trial.”<sup>33</sup> The trial proceedings were recorded by its delusional prosecutor, who claimed that “Alice herself had admitted that, in exchange for her submission and sexual services, she received the entirety of her considerable estate from her incubus, Robert or Robin son of Art, who might come to her as a cat, a hairy black dog, or a black man with two big friends holding an iron rod.”<sup>34</sup> Yeats’s source was St. John Seymour’s *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology*, which describes Artisson’s apparent shifting of shapes in racial and animalistic terms.<sup>35</sup> This is also implied in the description of “insolent” Artisson as he “lurches past” “great eyes without thought,” recalling the racialized “rough beast”—“somewhere in the sands of the desert”—“with a gaze blank and pitiless” in “The Second Coming.”<sup>36</sup> Such representations betray a problematic modernist tendency, the projection of the chaotic forces seen to be indicative to modernity onto racialized bodies.<sup>37</sup>

Anxiety about whiteness is built into this process, as suggested in the configuration of Artisson’s “stupid straw-pale locks,” an example of Nietzsche’s blonde anti-Christ, which Anthony Bradley argues is a symbolic source for “The Second Coming” and “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen.”<sup>38</sup> Racial liminality is thus used as an example of what Ragussis categorizes as “A Vision of Evil” in the poem, an anti-artist and a figure of sexual aggression that serves as a warning to the white, male *thinking* subject-artist.<sup>39</sup> It is this subject-artist who is allowed to vanish off the page, via a “lucky death” that brings about an escape from the “nightmare,” as well as protecting that subject-self from annihilation in what, as Ragussis argues, is the “impersonal” final section. In this way the vanishing male self is (problematically) preserved.

Women and a racialized, dehumanized male figure in “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen” are made to carry the horrifying burden of modernist apocalyptic disintegration. Artisson is the poem’s final figure of sexual assault, activating deeply troubling stereotypes of black men and sexual aggression. Herodias’s daughters’ “amorous cries” indicate a worrying subtext of rape as somewhat desirable and enjoyable for women.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, by drawing from the annals of

witchcraft, Yeats implies that Lady Kyteler summons the aggressor (like Fuller with her dancers), the final image of sacrificial offering compounding her subservience to demonic power. In the context of sexual violence towards women, this series engenders a disturbing connotation of victim blaming. In gendering the winds in feminine terms—as orchestrators of the wind that generates the violence—the poem makes this deeply troubling implication that it is women’s own fault. The riders that “vanish” in the poem’s last section—the male subjects of the poem’s “we”—are protected by disappearances that safeguard their potential future. What remains, the “coupling”<sup>42</sup> of “fiend” and woman, is an “apocalyptic” present with no future, an abject vision where the poem’s final image—of male dismemberment at the hands of woman, “those red combs of her cocks”—compounds the poem’s demonization of the feminine, and signals an all-pervasive fear of women’s power.

### NOTES

I would like to thank a number of people for their insights on this piece: Lucy McDiarmid for excellent scholarly recommendations, and Susan Cahill, Kara Doyle, and Mary McGlynn for their reading of drafts and sharp critical insights. I would also like to thank Lauren Arrington for her careful editing and excellent recommendations and Geraldine Curtin at NUI Galway Special Collections for providing me with a scan of an article from *The Galway Observer*.

1. Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, “Yeats and Gender,” in *The Cambridge Companion to W. B. Yeats*, ed. Marjorie Howes (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 167–84.
2. Unless otherwise noted, citations from “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen” refer to Variorum edition.
3. Helen Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline: Yeats and Lyric Form* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 65; Michael Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art: Language and the Romantic Tradition* (Baltimore, Md. & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).
4. Michael Wood, *Yeats and Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 36.
5. There are some inconsistencies in dating Quinn’s death in both Augusta Gregory’s journals and Roy Foster’s biography of W. B. Yeats. In a journal entry of Nov 5, 1920, Gregory initially hears of the murder as taking place the day before. Isabella Augusta Gregory, *Lady Gregory’s Journals, Vol. 1, Books One to Twenty-Nine, 10 October 1916–24 February 1925*, ed. Daniel J. Murphy (Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe, 1978), 197. So by that account, Eileen Quinn’s murder is listed as Nov. 4. Likewise, Foster, for whom Gregory’s journal is a source, states that: “On 26th of October the news of MacSwiney’s death came to Gort. Ten days later Ellen Quinn was shot outside her front door in Kiltartan.” Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life. The Arch-Poet, 1915–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 181. However, the military inquiry into the circumstances of her death took place on Thursday, Nov. 5, with her death officially recorded as Nov. 1. For example, see “The Chief Secretary’s Explanation: Anticipating Ambush,” *Irish Independent* (Dublin), Nov. 5, 1920, 5.
6. Gregory, *Lady Gregory’s Journals*, Vol. 1, 197, 200.
7. Foster, *The Arch-Poet*, 181.
8. Wood, *Yeats and Violence*, 28. Lucy McDiarmid also made the same observation to me in a private conversation; I appreciate the insight.

9. "Horrible Outrage near Gort: A Woman Killed with Child in Her Arms," *The Galway Observer*, Nov. 6, 1920; emphases added.
10. "Shots from a Lorry: Young Woman Seriously Wounded," *Irish Independent*, Nov. 2, 1920, 5; "Her Dying Words: Father Considine Tells What Mrs Quinn Said," *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin), Nov. 5, 1920, 5; "Death of Mrs Quinn: Verdict in the Court of Military Inquiry," *Freeman's Journal*, Nov. 6, 1920, 5; "Touching Funeral Scenes," *Connacht Tribune*, Nov. 13, 1920, 2; "Military Inquiry Held: Story of the Tragedy," *Evening Echo* (Cork), Nov. 5, 1920, 2; "Woman Shot Dead," *Skibereen Eagle*, Nov. 6, 1920, 3; "Gort Lady's Death: Castle Report of 'Most Regrettable Case,'" *Sligo Champion*, Nov. 20, 1920, 5; "Deaths and Reprisals," *Connaught Telegraph*, Nov. 6, 1920, 3.
11. "Houses Burned in Co Clare," *Freeman's Journal*, Nov. 3, 1920, 5; "A Young Woman Shot in Galway," *Leitrim Observer*, Nov. 6, 1920, 3; "Gort Lady's Death: Castle Report of 'Most Regrettable Case,'" "Shooting of Mrs Quinn: Statement by Rev. John Considine," *Irish Examiner*, Nov. 15, 1920, 6; "Shooting of Mrs Quinn: Court Finds a Verdict of Misadventure," *Irish Examiner* (Cork), Nov. 6, 1920, 5; "Young Mother Shot Dead," *Skibereen Eagle*, Nov. 6, 1920, 1.
12. See "Census of Ireland," The National Archives of Ireland, accessed Aug. 16, 2019, [www.census.nationalarchives.ie/](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/). Eileen Quinn's name is further confirmed by the release of a radio documentary released after the writing of this essay. This documentary, produced by Eileen Quinn's grand-niece Orla Higgins, about the murder of Eileen Quinn. See "Reprisals," Documentary on One, RTE, <https://www.rte.ie/culture/2019/0823/1070497-documentary-on-one-shining-a-light-on-irelands-troubled-past/>. The documentary's name "Reprisals" references another Yeats' poem "Reprisals" that refers to Quinn's murder.
13. Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline*, 64.
14. Wood, *Yeats and Violence*, 46.
15. See for example, "Young Mother Shot Dead."
16. Sally R. Sommer, "Loie Fuller's Art of Music and Light," *Dance Chronicle* 4, no. 4 (1981): 389.
17. Ann Cooper Albright, *Traces of Light: Absence and Presence in the Work of Loie Fuller* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2007), 5.
18. Foster, *The Arch-Poet*, 704.
19. Stanca Scholz-Cionca, "Japanesque Shows for Western Markets: Loie Fuller and Japanese Theatre Tours Through Europe (1900–08)," *Journal of Global Theatre History* 1, no. 1 (2016): 46–61. Also, see Wood, *Yeats and Violence*, 50 on this point about critics and the characterization of the Japanese dancers as "Chinese."
20. Loie Fuller, *Fifteen Years of a Dancer's Life, With Some Account of Her Distinguished Friends* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1913), 208; 213; see [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b40785](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b40785).
21. Fuller, *Fifteen Years of a Dancer's Life*, 208–09, 213.
22. Thus, I suggest a further reading of the "Chinese dancers." Chinese silk is the type of cloth that Fuller dressed in for the performance, thus this material meaning needs to be read in a concurrent and simultaneous reference to the Japanese troupes. In the essay, "Loie Fuller's Art of Music and Light," Sally Sommer describes her as such: "Wearing costumes made from hundreds of yards of China silk, she danced beneath a dazzling array of multi-hued electric lights, which set the material aflame" Sommer, "Loie Fuller's Art of Music and Light," 392.
23. Wood, *Yeats and Violence*, 49.
24. Discussing her presentation in the Lumière Brothers's film *The Serpentine Dance*, he remarks on "how often she disappears from view into the material of her own practice. It's as if she keeps getting eaten by a dragon of air, or at least of millinery." Wood, *Yeats and Violence*, 51.

25. Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art*, 95.
26. Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art*, 96.
27. Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art*, 97.
28. Foster, The Arch-Poet, 197. See Arthur Symons, *Poems by Arthur Symons: Volume II* (New York: John Lane, 1902), 105.
29. Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline*, 75.
30. Yeats also connects the daughters of Herodias with the Irish Sidhe: "Sidhe is [...] Gaelic for wind, and certainly the Sidhe [the pagan gods of ancient Ireland] have much to do with the wind. They journey in whirling winds, the winds that were called the dance of the daughters of Herodias in the Middle Ages. When the country people see the leaves whirling on the road they bless themselves, because they believe the Sidhe to be passing by." Quoted in W. B. Yeats, *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, ed. Daniel Albright (London: Everyman, 1992), 657–58.
31. See Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art*, 96 for a powerful reading of this section.
32. Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline*, 75.
33. Maeve Brigid Callan, *Templars, The Witch, and the Wild Irish: Vengeance and Heresy in Medieval Ireland*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 81.
34. Callan, *Templars, The Witch, and the Wild Irish*, 86.
35. St John D. Seymour, *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology*, (Baltimore, Md.: Norman, Remington 1913), 29.
36. See Yeats, W. B. Yeats, 235. I would like to thank Mary McGlynn for this insight on the beast's blank gaze and Artisson's eyes. Vendler is one of many critics that connects the beast of "The Second Coming" and Artisson; Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline*, 76. Fleissner argues that the beast of "The Second Coming" "very likely stood for something characteristically African, indeed even the 'dark continent' itself." Robert F. Fleissner, "On Straightening out Yeats's 'Rough Beast,'" *CLA Journal* 32, no. 2 (1988): 205.
37. I think this is one of the (critical) implications of Achebe's intertextual use of the poem for *Things Fall Apart*.
38. Anthony Bradley, *Imagining Ireland in the Poems and Plays of W. B. Yeats: Nation, Class, and State* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2011), 82, 116.
39. Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art*, 99. However Ragussis interprets Artisson differently (105): "while Artisson is an embodiment of evil. His thoughtlessness becomes for Yeats a refreshing escape from a maze of complicated and contrived thoughts [...] even his name's curious suggestion of the artist."
40. Ragussis, *The Subterfuge of Art*, 99.
41. See Cullingford, "Yeats and Gender" for an excellent analysis of this same dynamic in "Leda and the Swan."
42. Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline*, 76.