



**THE GYROSCOPIC TRANSFORMATION OF SELF: AN ANALYSIS
OF THE QUEST IN WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS'S POETRY**

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**Mayıs 2017
DENİZLİ**

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**Pamukkale University
Social Sciences Institution
Master of Art Thesis
Western Language and Literatures Department
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To My Daddy and Mother

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ABSTRACT

THE GYROSCOPIC TRANSFORMATION OF SELF: AN ANALYSIS OF THE QUEST IN WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS'S POETRY

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This study aims to identify the relationship between self quest and poetry in the selected poems of William Butler Yeats, and to explore the gyroscopic—returning to the initial phase to unite end with beginning—transformation of self and quest in those poems influenced by the late-Romantic and the early-Modernist verse. Apart from the lyrical change at the dawn of the twentieth century, self—with desire for knowledge—goes through a gyroscopic quest of *The Great Wheel's* four phases respectively *Pulchritudo* (inner beauty), *Violentia* (ferocity), *Temptatio* (temptation) and *Sapientia* (wisdom) from light to darkness and subjectivity to objectivity. During the gyroscopic quest, self discovers anti-self, and by harmonically uniting the antithetical edges, in Yeatsian terms gyres, of life such as death and birth; past and future; dark and light; tragedy and gaiety; time and eternity; immanent and transcendent—one is waxing and the other one is waning—makes quest eternal. With regard to the late-Romantic period, first, it is demonstrated that the mythological past and cultural heritage of Ireland are used to revive the transcendental Celtic Ireland. Secondly, it is revealed that the earlier dreamy tone, the elaborated language, and the subjective themes, especially after the political and scientific developments all around the world, are replaced with more complicated themes and a plain language. Thirdly, it is analyzed that the early-Modernist period brings along a questioning tone, a direct word selection, real event and place depictions, and a symbolist language. Finally, the focus is directed to the transition from symbolism to imagism and self quest's gyroscopic turn. The ultimate aim of this thesis is to shed light on self quest and the harmonically united antithetical structures in Yeats's selected poems.

Keywords: Gyre, Gyroscopic, Poetry, Self, Quest, *The Great Wheel*, Transformation, Unity, Yeats.

ÖZ

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS' İN ŞİİRLERİNDE ÖZBENLİK ARAYIŞININ JİROSKOPİK BAŞKALAŞIMI

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Bu çalışma, William Butler Yeats' in bütün şiirlerinden seçilmiş eserlerinde özbenlik arayışı ve şiir arasındaki etkileşimi tespit etmek ve aynı zamanda geç-Romantik ve erken-Modernist şiirden etkilenen bu şiirlerdeki özbenlik ile arayışın jiroskopik—son ve başı birleştirmek için başa dönmek—başkalaşımını ortaya çıkartmayı hedeflemektedir. Yirminci yüzyılın başlarında şiirdeki yapısal farklılaşmanın yanı sıra, bilgiye duyduğu arzuyla özbenlik, *Yaşam Çarkı*¹ nın aydınlıktan karanlığa ve öznellikten nesnellığe geçen *Güzellik, Hiddet, Eğilim* ve *Bilgelik* evrelerini sırasıyla takip ettiği dört safhalı jiroskopik bir arayıştan geçer. Bu jiroskopik arayışta, özbenlik karşıt-özbenliği keşfeder ve yaşamın, birisi daralırken diğeri genişleyen ölüm ve doğum, geçmiş ve gelecek, karanlık ve aydınlık, trajedi ve neşe, zaman ve sonsuzluk, mevcut ve aşkın gibi karşıt uçlarını, Yeats' in deyiimiyle anaforlarını, uyumlu bir şekilde birleştirerek arayışı ebedi kılar. Öncelikle, geç-Romantik dönem ile ilintili olarak, aşkın Kelt İrlandası' nı diriltmek için İrlanda' nın mitolojik geçmişinden ve kültürel mirasından faydalanıldığı gösterilmektedir. İkinci olarak, daha karmaşık temalar ve sade bir dilin, özellikle tüm dünyadaki siyasi ve bilimsel gelişmelerden sonra, ilk dönemdeki hayalperest ton, ağdalı dil ve öznel temaların, yerini aldığı belirtilmektedir. Üçüncü olarak, erken-Modernist dönemin beraberinde sorgulayıcı bir ton, dolaysız kelime seçimi, gerçek olay ve mekan tasvirleri ile sembolist bir dil getirdiği analiz edilmektedir. Son olarak da, çalışmanın odağı sembolizmden imgeciliğe geçişe ve özbenlik arayışının jiroskopik dönüşüne çevrilmiştir. Böylece, bu tezin temel hedefi olan özbenlik arayışına ve Yeats' in şiirlerindeki uyumlu bir şekilde bir araya gelen karşıt yapılara ışık tutulmuş olur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anafor, Jiroskopik, Şiir, Özbenlik, Arayış, *Yaşam Çarkı*, Başkalaşım, Birlik, Yeats.

¹ Bu çalışmada, Yeats' in kullandığı *The Great Wheel* görselinin, tezin içeriğine uygun bir şekilde *Yaşam Çarkı* olarak çevrilmesi uygun görülmüştür.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the very first existence of human beings on the earth, the desire to know and consequently a need for quest—whether they are for the sake of wisdom, eternity, delight, sublimity, or some other purposes—have been matter of issue in almost all fields. Sometimes this urge has pushed men into the maze of the inner world of psyche, sometimes into struggle against nature, and even sometimes into a challenge against God. Regardless of the consequences, by pushing the limits of being human, man has been successful in getting beyond and reaching some other worlds in which self meets some other selves.

The fundamental aim of this thesis is to illustrate self quest—one of the situational archetypes—and the transformation of self and the quest in the selected poems by William Butler Yeats's (1865-1939) poetry *oeuvre* with the help of regenerative reading of gyre² and *The Great Wheel*³. In the light of this study, the relationship between poetic discourse and the path of self quest is unearthed. This path starts from complete “subjectivity”⁴ corresponding *Pulchritudo*⁵ in *The Great Wheel* and the wanderings of self in ancient Celtic's transcendent gardens of the otherworld⁶. Then the path follows *Violentia*,⁷ waning subjectivity, direction to the fall from the transcendent⁸ gardens of Ireland—“the home of

² A geometrical term—“circling movement beginning at the tip of a cone and expanding to the board end; it reverses and contracts back, changing the direction of spin, or pern”—initially used by Yeats as an image, later specialized as a symbol which turns into a metaphor in general perspective. Throughout this study, it will be used for referring the harmony of dualistic unity in the self quest. Moreover, the gyre is “involved the living and the dead in interactive conflict, as well as past and present, time and eternity, self and other, face and mask.” Robert Welch (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Irish Literature*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 232.

³ A lunar system based on birth, death and rebirth cycle of life in twenty-eight phases.

⁴ William Butler Yeats, *A Vision*, Palgrave Macmillan Company, Toronto, 1962, pp. 73, 76. [Hereinafter referred to as AV]

⁵ One of the Latin terms that Yeats used in *the Great Wheel*, meaning “inner beauty,” and it corresponds to the self quest's first period ideal referring to the seeking of the beautiful ancient Ireland.

⁶ Transcendent domain of deities, supernatural beings, fairies and the dead in Celtic mythology. To Yeats, “in Ireland this world and the world we go to after death are not far apart.” William Butler Yeats, *The Celtic Twilight*, The Project Gutenberg, EBook, 2003, p. 34.

⁷ One of the Latin terms used in *The Great Wheel* meaning ferocity and throughout this study it is referred as the manifestation of the fall of self from transcendent sphere.

⁸ Throughout this study, it will refer to the realm where free souls find a chance to internalize their existences by uniting death with life, evil with good etc. in harmony and peace.

ancient idealism”⁹—because of so-called modernity and its impact on human life. Later, the quest proceeds to *Temptatio*,¹⁰ waxing objectivity, of body and old age anxiety where man¹¹ finds himself in the limbo of two worlds: the mortal world and the transcendent world. The ultimate part of the quest’s way is complete objectivity—*Sapientia*¹²—darkness holding the light inside. Considering these, in Yeatsian poetry, self quest’s movement is cyclical, in other words gyrosopic¹³ rather than linear. In addition, the genesis of gyre following a four-phase transformation shows similarity with the process of *The Great Wheel* phases which are simultaneously scrutinized with the lyrical change of each poetic phase.

Ireland, geographically “being isolated from the world allowed [her] to create [her] own literature which composed of ancient myths, legends, and folklore,”¹⁴ was the “mythical queen”¹⁵ Eriu’s¹⁶ fairy land for Celtic people. Her folk lived under a unity of Celtic nation and spoke the same language for some centuries.¹⁷ “Before the arrival of English, various tribes had inhabited Ireland. They were the Firbolgs, the Fomorians, the

⁹ Maria Camelia Dicu, “The World in its Times. A Study of Yeats's Poetic Discourse versus the Concept of History”, (PhD Thesis, University of Craiova, 2013) European Scientific Institute Publishing, Kocani, p. 81.

¹⁰ One of the Latin words used *The Great Wheel* meaning temptation, and in this study it is used for the equilibrium between approaching death and the distant memory of youth.

¹¹ Throughout this thesis, the word will be used for both woman and man.

¹² One of the Latin terms is used in the fourth quarter of *The Great Wheel* corresponding wisdom and in this study it refers to the knowledge derives from the dualities’ harmonic unity in the self quest’s last phase.

¹³ “Gyroscopes are physical sensors that detect and measure the angular motion of an object relative to an inertial frame of reference. [Over 200 years-history, they have been used in sea navigation and aviation.] The term "gyroscope" is attributed to the mid-19th century French physicist Leon Foucault who named his experimental apparatus for earth's rotation observation by joining two Greek roots: gyros-rotation and skopeein-to see. Unlike rotary encoders or other sensors of relative angular motion, the unique feature of gyroscopes is the ability to measure the absolute motion of an object without any external infrastructure or reference signals.” Alexander A. Trusov, “Overview of MEMS Gyroscopes: History, Principles of Operations, Types of Measurements”, (PhD Thesis, University of California, 2011), p. 2. The term, thought to be adapted for the gyre symbol of Yeats, is used by the author to symbolize self’s cyclical movements which are independent and at the same time interdependent during the quest.

¹⁴ Mohammed Abdumageed Hassan, “Mysticism in William Butler Yeats' Selected Plays” (Master Thesis, Süleyman Demirel University, 2015), p. 40.

¹⁵ Lester I. Conner, *A Yeats Dictionary*, Syracuse University Press, New York, 1998, p. 53.

¹⁶ “Gaelic Celts invaded Ireland, which they called Eriu (Erin), [Gaelic goddess of the land] in about 350 B.C.” Edward Malins, *A Preface to Yeats*, Longman, London, 1974, p. 24.

¹⁷ “By the sixth century the Gaulish language [ancient Celtic language] was everywhere extinct, without having left behind a single record of its literature. The same fate was shared by all Celtic nationalities of the Continent, and by those numerous Germanic tribes that were conquered by Rome, or came within the sphere of the later Roman civilisation.” Kuno Meyer, *Ancient Irish Poetry*, Constable and Company Limited, London, 1994, p. viii.

Tuatha De Danann, the Milesians, the Celts,¹⁸ and migrants from Scotland.”¹⁹ However, in time, due to the abuse of scientific progressions combined with wars, the technological progressions in science all around the world and the following irrecoverable political destructions almost in every facet of life changed Ireland’s political face as well. Once an independent nation, Ireland became a colony of more powerful government of England and amenable to a transformation in terms of her language which becomes, as Adorno alleges, “a vehicle of false consciousness, a veil of rationality, a means of knowing, classifying, and quantifying the self and the external that hide the fundamental irrationality of a world,”²⁰ history, belief, literature, and culture. Ireland’s transformation, like her geographic shape which is narrow first and widens downward, and then gets narrow again, was gyroscopic in that she was a free nation, corresponding the wide part of a gyre, she experienced a fall and had to fought for being a nation again, from the narrowest point. Then, when she was at the widest position on behalf of national unity, another cycle of the gyre started with famines, rebellions as well as wars in and around the country. Within that atmosphere, the transformation showed a waning movement. In the frame of this study, an Irish poet, William Butler Yeats’s poetry mirrors Ireland’s cultural history, sometimes by personalizing her with some mythological characters like the young lover Niamph, the warrior Cuchulain, the leader Cumhal, the god of transformation Fand, the sea-rider Oisín, the king Fergus, the last pagan king Dathi²¹ and sometimes concretizing with natural images or animals such as rose, bird, beast, wind, bough, peahen, dew, etc. The most suitable samples concerning the issue are exemplified in terms of self, quest, Ireland, and the gyroscopic phases of the self quest.

Although the poems do not explicitly belong to any literary movement on the surface, Yeats’s poetry career chronologically ranges from the late-Romantic period (1850-1900) to the early-Modernist (1900-1916) period. Especially his early and late poetry—“quite simply more public, more directly embroiled in the political debates of the day, than

¹⁸ “The people who live scattered over Europe while Gaelic are the one who live in Ireland. Therefore, ‘The Celtic’ has a broader meaning than ‘the Gaelic’”. Sung Sook Hong, “Reconciliation Strategies in Yeats’s and Heaney’s Poems”, *The Yeats Journal of Korea*, Vol. 46, (2015), p. 135.

¹⁹ Bc. Lenka Smidova, “Irish Folk Tales and Legends: A Modern Translation” (Master Thesis, Masaryk University, 2009), p. 5.

²⁰ (qtd. in) Rob Doggett, *Deep-Rooted Things: Empire and Nation in the Poetry and Drama of William Butler Yeats*, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana, 2006, p. 128.

²¹ L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 45.

Yeats's early efforts"²²—carry some of the traces of these periods in terms of themes and styles. However, “one should read *Yeats's Collected Poems* in much the same way one reads a novel, beginning at the beginning and going through the text in the order in which the author set it down.”²³ So, in this study, the whole *oeuvre* is divided into four parts due to their chronologic order, and literary patterns and the related poems are analyzed. The first quarter is composed of the early poems which reflect beauty in context. The second quarter consists of the middle period poems whose language is less figurative but more complicated. The third quarter is formed by the late period poems whose tone is ironic and themes reflect equilibrium. Finally, the fourth quarter comprises the last period poems which symbolize the harmonic unity of dualities.

In the first chapter, the quest desire of self and the first phase of its gyrosopic transformation is depicted via *The Great Wheel* and gyre. The transcendental landscape of Ireland and its reflection on poetic atmosphere are given within the context of the first group of poems which ranges from 1889 to 1910 consisting of four books: *Crossways* (1889), *The Rose* (1893), *The Wind among the Reeds* (1899), and *In the Seven Woods* (1904). In this period, Celtic myths, fairy and folk tales have major roles on Yeats's poetic material possibly due to the influence of Irish patriots' contemporary project to revive national unity and his “strenuous efforts to reawaken and to preserve the national memory”²⁴ by means of Irish Literary Renaissance during the late 19th and early 20th century. Thus, the pagan-Ireland's culture is used to resurrect the pristine unified soul of the nation and to create “[...] the poetic awakening in Ireland.”²⁵ In other words, “in order to escape the British culture and form its own identity, Ireland has to go back to pre-colonial times.”²⁶ Hence, some mythical protagonists and antagonists are revived in the literary works, fairy and human voices are fused; references are given to the archaic place names, the mortals' realm and the hazel woods²⁷ are deliberately intersected; and thus the quest,

²² Charles I. Armstrong, *Reframing Yeats: Genre, Allusion and History*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 2013, p. 28.

²³ John Unterecker, *A Reader's Guide to William Butler Yeats*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1988, p. a note.

²⁴ Michael J. Sidnell, *Yeats's Poetry and Poetics*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 1996, p. 98.

²⁵ Ernest Boyd, *Ireland's Literary Renaissance*, Allen Figgis, Dublin, 1968, p. 123.

²⁶ Sander Feys, “Cultural Nationalism in the Life and Work of William Butler Yeats: The Man Behind the Myth”, (Master Thesis, Ghent University, 2010), p. 30.

²⁷ In Celtic lore, hazel tree stands for wisdom; however, in Yeats's poems hazel woods refer to the place for quest. Also, the direction of the quest appears repetitiously from mortal world towards hazel woods: “I went out to the hazel wood, / Because a fire was in my head,” Peter Allt, and Russell K. Alspach (eds.), *The*

and the gyroscopic phases are started within the frame of Irish national unity ideal: *Pulchritudo*. Geometrically, a gyre starts from the bottom, and waxes towards zenith, in the same manner, the self quest follows a fractional transformation which springs from the lowest point of self-fulfillment, and reaches a wider circle in every level of its development. That is to say, the early period is the widest part of the poetry in terms of cultural material which hosts a lot of mythological characters, fairies, legendary stories and ballad-like structure of the poems; however, it is the narrowest part of the self quest with regard to the self-development.

The next chapter, covering the years 1910-1928 with four books: *The Green Helmet and Other Poems* (1910), *Responsibilities* (1914), *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919), and *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (1921), transforms the previous transcendental landscape into a fallen garden with its word selection, verse structure, and themes related with modern Ireland. The fall is necessary for the rise; therefore, *Pulchritudo* can be identified as the trigger and *Violentia* can be the initial phase of the quest. In this phase, the post-Romantic Yeatsian tone and the quest slough the Romantic aspect and begin to show the early-Modernist patterns due to the political events which globally strike not only diplomacy but also science, literature, and art. The dreamy Irelander self seeks *realities* rather than fairy tales or heroic ballads. Rewriting some epics in verse form and using a national terminology are no longer avail of the resurrection, self needs to break all the burdens and leave Ireland behind to actualize the self-fulfillment. Due to, some patriotic writers, including Douglass Hyde, James Joyce, Lady Gregory, George Russel, Sean O'Casey, George Moore, Alice Milligan, and J.M. Synger, apply a questioning and rebellious tone in their plays or poems. The mission of reviving Irishism meshes with the facts of modern Ireland, not with her legendary past. The descriptions turn into real and modern places' depictions, the actual events' narrations, and references to the renowned names. In this phase, self and quest tend to violence which is a defense against the results of political turmoil around and in Ireland's lands. Self gets into the second phase of the quest: *Violentia*. The myths and archaic legends of Ireland become a "forgotten beauty" buried under the wreckage of wars and rebels in and around the country. Also in this phase, the gyre waxes with the lyrical change towards another gyre—the dualistic structure of *The*

Variorum Edition of the Poems of William Butler Yeats. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1957, p.149. [Hereafter referred to as *Variorum*]

Great Wheel causes a creation of two gyres which simultaneously move together and towards each other.

The third chapter is the description of the equilibrium between the quest's levels in terms of the anxiety of approaching old age and following death and the distant memory of youth. The chapter encompasses the years between 1928 and 1938 with three books: *The Tower* (1928), *The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1933), and *Parnell's Funeral and Other Poems* (1935). The frame of this period is shaped by *The Great Wheel's Temptatio* quarter. In other words, self is in difficulty of stabilizing the equilibrium of life. In this phase, self and quest follow a way of waning gyre towards previous gyre's waxing point. Almost all the Irish legendary and folkloric materials die away in this phase, and individual quest culminates in seeking of a center—a never-ending way of self-fulfillment. Under the influence of the early-Modernist period, self is portrayed as climbing up the “winding stairs” of the “tower” of entity, and the lines demonstrate the transformation: “We were the last romantics [...] / But all is changed [...]”.²⁸ Time is emphasized but not lamented because the dual structure of life both requires death and birth, man and beast, peace and terror, natural and supernatural, self and anti-self, individual and nation, eternity and time, wise and fool—different from Shakespearean fool in that “Yeats's fool perceives his own [folly].”²⁹ This antithetical pattern of life and the changing verse structure, from symbolism, “says things that could not be said so perfectly in any other way”³⁰ to imagism, construct the core philosophy of the third chapter's poetry.

The next chapter, 1938-1939, comprises of one book *Last Poems* (1938). According to *The Great Wheel's Sapientia* phase, the poems hark back the early period where harmonic unity of past is aimed. However, with this phase, self accepts that the past—“both the historic and pre-history”³¹—is possible with present. While the quest moves gyroscopically to the starting point, self becomes more mature and enlightened with complete “objectivity.”³² On the other hand, self seeks a way to maintain the quest

²⁸ *Variorum*, pp. 491-92.

²⁹ M. J. Sidnell, *YPP*, p. 119.

³⁰ Horatio Sheafe Krans, *William Butler Yeats and the Irish Literary Revival*, Leopold Classic Library, London, 1905, p. 162.

³¹ Uta von Reinersdorff-Paczensky Tenczin. “William Butler Yeats's Poetry and Drama between Late Romanticism and Modernism: An Analysis of Yeats's Poetry and Drama”, *Peter Lang Pub Inc.*, Frankfurt, Vol. 320. 1996, p. 123.

³² *AV*, pp. 73, 76.

eternally. The reality of death's inescapability obliges self to find ways to confront it. Therefore, in this last phase, self, quest, and gyre turn their faces to the first point and try to unite the two diachronous transformation phases. This uniformity consists of two gyre's junctures which have been in the process of becoming the whole time of the quest. Likewise, when the last phase comes, self meets anti-self, and from this meeting the entity completes its essence.

Considering these, it is observed that there is a relationship between self quest which is one of the starting points of almost all scientific and social researches in every century, and poetry based on an oral background of almost all civilisations. Ancient bards traveled village by village and read eulogies, ballads, epics, or songs by heart in front of folk. In the same way, actors and actresses rehearsed rituals, performances and plays by heart. They could memorize the texts thanks to the rhymed and metric verse structures. So, it can be asserted that self and self quest's alliance of poetry dates to the ancient works such as *Gilgamesh*, *Aeneid*, *Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, *Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost* and so on so forth.

The self quest finds its way gyroscopically in Yeats's poetry and it is divided into multiple essences. These essences—in Yeatsian terms *tinctures*³³—move antithetically. While one waxes, the other wanes or the other way around. Effected by these movements, Yeats's poetry is shaped by the conflicted³⁴ pattern of essences and life itself because in nature, everything exists with its opposite. *The Great Wheel* consisting of twenty-eight phases, and its dual structures' are put into the core of the poems. While going through these twenty-eight phases, self transforms beginning with one self and ending with multiple selves.

To sum up, via William Butler Yeats's poetry, this study aims to show that poetry is one of the ancient fields that mirrors not only self but also self quest. Moreover, in the frame of this study, it is illuminated that self is not a single entity³⁵ but has multiple layers, and it is inside a quest in which it experiences a simultaneous transformation with every phase of antithetical structure of gyroscopic movements. Besides, the way of the quest is cyclical; however, it is not a vicious cycle. Since, in life, every end is a phase of a

³³ AV, p. 79.

³⁴ Throughout this thesis, the word is consciously used not for anarchy but for *harmony* which is complementary created by the gyroscopic movements of the binary essences or entities.

³⁵ See David Hume's "bundle theory".

beginning and every beginning is a phase of an end. Agreeably, “Alcemon, a pupil of Pythagoras, thought that men die because they cannot join their beginning and their end. Their serpent has not its tail in its mouth.”³⁶

³⁶ (qtd. in) *AV*, pp. 68-69.



Figure 1. *Ouroboros*, 3rd Century by Cleopatra the Alchemist.³⁷

³⁷ “The ancient symbol depicting a snake swallowing its own tail, thus creates the form of a perfect circle. Its etymological roots can be found in Ancient Greek where *oura* means tail and *boros* means the one who devours [...]. Deities or semi-deities of various cultures have been depicted in the form of *Ouroboros*, for instance in Norse mythology [As Jörmungandr, one of Loki’s (the deity of mischief) sons], in Aztec and Toltec mythology [The semi-deity Quetzalcoatl] and in Hindu [the dragon circling the tortoise that carries on its shell the four elephants which hold up the world on their backs] and Ashanti folk-lore [The demi-god Aidophedo]. However, [...] the most famous representation of the *Ouroboros* is the one found in the text “The Chrysopoeia of Cleopatra” dating to Alexandria [period]. In this drawing, the *Ouroboros* encloses the words ἓν τὸ πᾶν [pronounced as hen, to pan], which is translated as “one, the all”, i.e. “All is one”, referring us back to the idea of unity, cyclical and integration [of black and white, life and death, beginning and end of gyres.]” Panos Merkouris, “Debating the Ouroboros of International Law: The Drafting History of Article 31 (3) (c)”, *International Community Law Review*, Vol. 9/1 , 2007, pp. 1-2.

CHAPTER ONE

***PULCHRITUDO*: TRANSCENDENTAL SELF QUEST IN THE EARLY PERIOD (1889-1910)**

“The immortals are mortal,
the mortals immortal,
each living in the other’s death
and dying in the other’s life.”³⁸

Quest and self are one of the most frequently collocated terms in literature since literature has an oral background gathered mostly from legends which “determine the unified society,”³⁹ ballads, mythologies, primeval rituals, and epics of self quest. Since antiquity, men have been in search of expression the meaning of creation, natural events, death, truth etc.:

New dreams, new dreams; there is no truth
Saving in thine own heart. Seek, then,
No learning from the starry men,
Who follow with the optic glass
The whirling ways of stars that pass—
Seek, then, for this is also sooth,⁴⁰

In the simplest terms, quest is a kind of dream which takes its source from the inner world. Scientists—the people called as starry men with their technological devices in the poem—provide only pure knowledge; it is the individual who is responsible for going after that desire, truth, sooth, dream so on, and so forth.

³⁸ See Greek philosopher Heraclitus’s *Homeric Questions—On Nature*, Fragment D 67.

³⁹ Lenka Pokorna, “Celtic Elements in Yeats’s Early Poetry and their Influence on Irish National Identity” (Master Thesis, Masaryk University, 2012), p. 21.

⁴⁰ *Variorum*, p. 66.

In a traditional quest archetype, hero has a task to fulfill, and quest is completed when the quester reaches a goal on behalf of society's perpetuity; however, in Yeats's early poems, the conventional quest and the idealized hero are deconstructed. In his poetry, the quest is not completed; on the contrary, the main task—if there is any—is just to start the quest, and unite its end with the beginning. On the other hand, in his poems “the hero becomes godlike as the gods become human.”⁴¹ The traditional heroic adventures correspond to the transformation of self which can simply be explained as an entity with multilayers, and they transform phase by phase during the quest. So,

Yeats gives a vivid description of a group of legendary Irish nobles and warriors including poet and warrior Oisín, leader of heroes King Goll, poet and leader of heroes Fergus and warrior Cuchulain, who are all national heroes [...]. But different from the historical heroes praised by the patriotic national poets who were also Yeats's predecessors, Yeats's heroes lack a strong sense of contemporaneity, and are multifaceted. They usually end their story as failed questers or with madness.⁴²

In a typical Yeatsian quest, a hero does not necessarily have to be strong. Self confronts the other self but not monsters or tricksters, and he is mortal because Yeats's characters are from ordinary people that make them deficient in supernatural powers. Moreover, the direction of the quest is cyclical; in other words, gyroscopic “turning and turning”—“the use of gerund in ‘turning’, ‘ing’ gives an open period, no limit for the corruption and the destruction”⁴³—like a “widening gyre”⁴⁴ because it is a never ending search returning to the beginning and starting again. The hero struggles to find the equilibrium of inner and outer world for the sake of self-fulfillment. Hence,

Yeatsian hero is that he has not made his peace with the modern world. Industrialisation, secularism, democracy, the state itself strike him as alien, as the enemy. He not only longs for a simpler, more primitive world but frequently seems to be unaware of its disappearance. In this sense, many of Yeats's heroes are distinctly different from the anti-heroes of so much modern fiction. They seldom waste their time quarreling directly with the society they reject; they fashion for themselves an alternate, imaginary heroic world in which they do have a place. This is one of the reasons why so many of the characters in Yeats's poems and plays are connected with a

⁴¹ Alex Zwerdling, *Yeats and the Heroic Ideal*, New York University Press, New York, 1965, p. 147.

⁴² Yue Zhao and Lihui Liu, “On the Idealized Landscape in Early Yeats”, *English Language and Literature Studies*, (2014 Nov), Vol. 4/4, p. 96.

⁴³ Khader T. Khader, “William Butler Yeats' “The Second Coming”: A Stylistic Analysis”, *IUG Journal of Humanities Research*, Vol. 24/1, (2015, May), p. 30.

⁴⁴ *Variorum*, p. 401.

dead civilization or a dying one: ancient Greece, Celtic Ireland, the eighteenth century, or the decadent modern aristocracy. [...] For Yeats, the word 'heroic' referred neither to a man nor to a situation taken in isolation, but rather to a specific human reaction to the specific situation to defeat.⁴⁵

The quest desire has forced people to fictionalize stories and narrate them to each other in verse form thanks to the convenience of recitation. Consequently, the aim to ensoul the quest causes the emergence of poetry which is "a kind of ritual, [and] an effort to share the mystical moment, to create a semblance of one's own experience [...]"⁴⁶ and also it "is the most condensed and concentrated form of literature."⁴⁷ Likewise, in the past "the quest of the twentieth-century man for identity is the internalization of a primary search for a centre whose axis is located inside himself,"⁴⁸ and that is why in William Butler Yeats's poetry self quest is one of the most frequently reiterated patterns. In other words, "poetry or more specifically, writing itself, was Yeats's ready-to-hand immortality, an atemporal dimension within which one could be reborn again and again"⁴⁹ because poetry springs from life, and life is made up of a struggle story of finding the center:

... *I will my heavy story tell
Till my own words, re-echoing, shall send
Their sadness through a hollow, pearly heart;
And my own tale again for me shall sing,
And my own whispering words be comforting,
And lo! my ancient burden may depart.*⁵⁰

Carrying a story to tell is the "ancient burden" of the speaker, and it is one of the characteristics of self quest because journey requires recognition the whole aspects of self and the other self. The enjambment⁵¹ used in the poem supports the idea that the speaker has something to tell and there is a hesitation in the sentences as if they are going to flee. Hence, Yeats's poetry, especially the early period, nourishes from the battle between

⁴⁵ A. Zwerdling, *YHI*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁶ Joan S. Carberg, "A Vision by William Butler Yeats", *Daedalus/ MIT Press Journal*, 1974, Vol. 103, No. 1, p. 155.

⁴⁷ Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson (eds.), *Perrine's Literature-Structure, Sound, and Sense-Poetry*, Thomson Wadsworth Publishing, Boston, 2006, p. 653.

⁴⁸ Rajeshwari Patel, *The Ideal of "Unity of Being"*, Mehra Offset Press, New Delhi, 1990, p. 155.

⁴⁹ Vereen M. Bell, *Yeats and the Logic of Formalism*, University of Missouri Press, Missouri, 2006, p. 109.

⁵⁰ *Variorum*, p. 68. Throughout this thesis the italicized font of the poems belongs to the poet.

⁵¹ A literary device used for when a sentence or a thought steps over from one line, couplet, or stanza to another without a pause or a punctuation mark.

contraries of mind and intellect as well as body and soul which provide knowledge of self (to Plotinus) “is the author of all living things.”⁵²

Modern poet would like to get beyond deception, attempt to recover “radical innocence”, and restore the lost bearings of poetry. The fundamental problem is to discover a central, governing principle that can lend value to existence. The lack of informing center, whether we call it a frame of reference, a *weltanschauung*, world picture, a received system of values, Degree of the Elizabethans, or what the Indians refer to as “Dharma Chakra” has a wide and varied impact on human life.⁵³

Yeats, who is late for Romanticism and early for Modernism, says in *The Second Coming* that humanity experiences a non-centrality in the twentieth century. The underlying reason of this existentialist problem is the dualities deriving from past and present, human and divine, innocence and reality, nature and mortality, art and science, etc. Hence, Yeats’s literary career is mainly based on these conflicts which create the world.⁵⁴ These conflicts lead to find a centre since, to Yeats, “we make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry.”⁵⁵ However, it is not a new argument that everything in the universe exists because of its contrast, and this contradiction is not a negation,⁵⁶ as Blake asserts, but a harmony. However, Yeats with “murdering impossibilities”⁵⁷ builds on the idea that conflict brings unity with harmony, and it offers a way to find the self and other possible selves because “[...] all the gains of man come from conflict with the opposite of his true being.”⁵⁸

In the poem *The Cloak, the Boat, and the Shoes*, self and anti-self—one of the entities of human existence and this pair is one of “the dialectical terms used by critics when discussing Yeats”⁵⁹—engage in a catechetical dialogue depicted with dark and light’s union:

‘What do you make so fair and bright?’
 ‘I make the cloak of Sorrow:
 [no break]

⁵² (qtd. in) Donald A. Stauffer, “W. B. Yeats and the Medium of Poetry”, *ELH*, Vol. 15.3 (1948, Sept), p. 242.

⁵³ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 11.

⁵⁴ *AV*, p. 72.

⁵⁵ William Butler Yeats, *Mythologies*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1959, p. 331.

⁵⁶ (qtd. in) *AV*, p. 72.

⁵⁷ Donald A. Stauffer, “YMP”, p. 246.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵⁹ David Pierce, *Yeats’s Worlds: Ireland, England, and the Poetic Imagination*, Yale University Press, London, 1995, p. 1.

O lovely to see in all men's sight
 Shall be the cloak of Sorrow,
 In all men's sight.'

'What do you build with sails for flight?'

'I build a boat for Sorrow:
 O swift on the seas all day and night
 Saileth the rover Sorrow,
 All day and night.'

'What do you weave with wool so white?'

'I weave the shoes of Sorrow:
 Soundless shall be the footfall light
 In all men's ears of Sorrow,
 Sudden and light.'⁶⁰

The *primary* self,⁶¹ which is “reasonable and moral” in the quest, seeks for the “actual facts of outward things” with “objectivity.”⁶² Thus, it asks questions about the function of Sorrow and tries to perceive the contradiction it creates. On the other hand, the *antithetical* self which is “emotional and aesthetic” in the quest and reflects “desire and imagination of the inner world” with subjectivity.”⁶³ It answers three⁶⁴ questions by personalizing Sorrow wearing a bright garment by which its appearance contradicts with its content. Its velocity, making it non-spatial and time independent, enables every man to see and hear Sorrow.

As it is mentioned above, self is not a single entity but with anti-self which makes identity a whole. “The creation of this opposing image makes the frustration of the natural self a mode of transcendence, not through a knowledge revealed to and passively borne by the poet but through the deliberate transformation of nature into image, or, to use his own later word ‘emblem;’ it being the inescapable and determining function of the poet to effect this transformation.”⁶⁵ Throughout his literary career, “Yeats felt that life and art should be founded on the dynamic relationship between actual self and created anti-self. [...] In Yeats’s world, the ostensibly antithetical or disparate process by which art becomes life and

⁶⁰ *Variorum*, pp. 69-70.

⁶¹ Yeats describes the spirit as a concept with two basic *tinctures*: *primary* and *antithetical*. Because “all physical reality, the universe as a whole, every solar system, every atom, is a double cone [...]” AV, p. 69.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ A sacred number in Celtic mythology which is used in dividing deities according to their symbols. Also there is a three-headed hero deity Lugh, triple Goddess Brigid, goddess of poetry, healing and smithcraft and poet Athirne’s three magical cranes. Ireland’s symbol is also trifoliated clover.

⁶⁵ M. J. Sidnell, *YPP*, p. 101.

life becomes art are made curiously interchangeable.”⁶⁶ Yeats makes advantages of this conflict especially the *antithetical* self’s aesthetic creativity in his works by merging the dualities in a harmonic way. “He developed a theory of poetry that would lead to a fuller realization of himself, relying on conflict as a formative principle of poetic expression. Yeats saw the inevitable discrepancy between art and life, and between his present and future self.”⁶⁷ Hence, he creates characters and makes them speak like Hic and Ille in *Ego Dominus Tuus* or My Soul and My Self in *A Dialogue of Self and Soul*. Hence, “the dialogue between self and anti-self enacts the confluence of past and present”⁶⁸ phases of the self quest. Therefore, “[...] the ‘anti-self’ can be understood as a projection of the unconscious mind; as such it is comprised of qualities which are opposite, in nature, to those of the personality, or conscious mind.”⁶⁹ Understanding self interdepends understanding the anti-self. The union of these two *tinctures* leads to Yeatsian *Unity of Being*⁷⁰ which is simply to hypostatize the dark and bright sides of the psyche. Yeats’s art is based on the equilibrium of these sides because “the poet achieves Unity of Being when he finds his anti-self in an act of artistic creation.”⁷¹

Experience, apart from quest desire, is another medium of poetry in Yeats’s verse in that quest is full of experiences of conflicts such as soul and body, self and anti-self. If the contradictory structure of life is one of the main sources of poetry then experiences from that antithetical life provide poetic material as well. This is because “poetry must be rooted in experience to aspire what Yeats called Unity of Being and Unity of Culture.”⁷² *Unity of Being* which “is a momentary self-realization of the soul”⁷³ comprises of dualities. *Unity of Culture*, on the other hand, “[...] is constituted by the ability of an integrated self to direct

⁶⁶ David G. Wright, *Yeats's Myth of Self: The Autobiographical Prose*, Gill and Macmillan Ltd., Dublin, 1988, pp. 102-103.

⁶⁷ R Patel, *YIUB*, p. 42.

⁶⁸ James Longenbach, *Stone Cottage; Pound, Yeats & Modernism*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1988, p. 192.

⁶⁹ Stuart Hirschberg, “A Dialogue between Realism and Idealism in Yeats's ‘Ego Dominus Tuus’”, *Colby Quarterly*, Vol. 11/2, (1975, Jun), p. 129.

⁷⁰ It is also one of the *Four Perfections*: Self-Sacrifice, Self-Knowledge, Unity of Being and Sanctity. *AV*, p. 100.

⁷¹ Claude Julien Rawson (ed.), *Yeats and Anglo-Irish Literature*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 1974, p. 53.

⁷² (qtd. in) Wit Pietrzak, *Myth, Language and Tradition: A Study of Yeats, Stevens, and Eliot in the Context of Heidegger's Search for Being*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, 2011, p. 62.

⁷³ Alana J. White, “Symbolism in the Poetry of William Butler Yeats” (Master Thesis, Western Kentucky University, 1972), p. 13.

every part of the whole toward a unified development.”⁷⁴ In *A Vision*, Yeats refers to his ideas on dualities which based on experiences as “my instructors identify consciousness with conflict, not with knowledge, substitute for subject and object and their attendant logic a struggle towards harmony, towards Unity of Being.”⁷⁵ When self and anti-self is comprehended, *Unity of Being* is experienced, and a nation is required for *Unity of Culture*. For instance, Ireland once a unified culture, has still the possibility of gaining that united soul again and by reviving it the country can reach *Unity of Culture* because “man and race alike there is something called ‘Unity of Being’, using that term as Dante used it when he compared beauty in the *Convito* to a perfectly proportioned human body.”⁷⁶ Starting from this point, in Yeatsian poetry, *Unity of Culture* and *Unity of Being* have mutual relationship. Every individual has multiple selves, and the body is perfectly proportioned in the frame of these selves. The more one recognizes the body, the more the chance to reach *Unity of Being* which leads to *Unity of Culture* becomes higher.

Yeats starts his poetry career after the political turmoil of Ireland with England. “At this period in Yeats’s early development two distinct motions of mind were in conflict: the first was the turn toward the Irish subject matter, and the second was the transcendence of the Irish style.”⁷⁷ Considering these, it can be claimed that *Unity of Culture* is possible in a tranquil sphere transcending the real world and dwelling in a transcendent sphere where the eternal beauty and everlasting joy exist, and “death or old age do not enter.”⁷⁸

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.⁷⁹

In most of the poems, a balance of dualities and consequently a harmonic unity of contrast themes are pursued such as man and beast, past and present, dark and light, dream and

⁷⁴ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 57.

⁷⁵ *AV*, p. 214.

⁷⁶ William Butler Yeats, *The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1987, p. 128.

⁷⁷ Allen R. Grossman, *Poetic Knowledge in the Early Yeats: A Study of ‘The Wind among the Reeds’*, The University Press of Virginia Charlottesville, Virginia, 1969, p. 9.

⁷⁸ L. Pokorna, *CEYEP*, p. 43.

⁷⁹ *Variorum*, p. 77.

reality, “swan and shadow”⁸⁰ so on and so forth but “the eternal conflict between body and soul, between heart and intellect was a major preoccupation of Yeats. He rejected the ascetic view on the subject and aimed at a synthesis of the two poles of human personality, which he saw as a union of opposites.”⁸¹ Likewise, in this poem, a tranquil island suddenly clashes with the rage of an animal accompanied by an enamelled sea. The juxtaposition of serenity with wrath reflects the “antithetical nature of the universe”⁸² which makes easier to comprehend Yeats’s antithetical poetry structure.

To unite the contradictory *tinctures* a geometrical shape gyre—the initial source of inspiration and “the essential element of growth and life, representing the cyclical nature of the Ultimate Reality with the recurrent pattern of growth and decay, ebb and flow”⁸³—is utilized. Gyre helps to explain the antithetical progress of the self quest which starts from *Pulchritudo* and moves towards *Violentia* following *Temptatio* and *Sapientia*. They move together and towards each other in that every phase is build on the previous phase’s experience and prepared for the next phase. During this gyrosopic process, self quest follows a way that creates two gyres. Similarly, *Unity of Being*’s direction also rotates in that two antithetical things, self and anti-self, move together and towards each other that constructs a gyrosopic shape because the *tinctures* are entwined, and this posture makes them united and one:

⁸⁰ (qtd. in) Wonkyung Shin, “The Great Wheel and Byzantium Poems”, *The Yeats’s Journal of Korea*, Vol. 38, (2012), p. 174.

⁸¹ Shamsul Islam, “The Influence of Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim Thought on Yeats’s Poetry” (Master Thesis, McGill University, 1967), p. 24.

⁸² Donald Richard Theail, “William Butler Yeats: The Development of a Philosophy through Imagery” (Master Thesis, Texas Technological College, 1965), p. 56.

⁸³ David Garrett Izzo, *The Influence of Mysticism on 20th Century British and American Literature*, McFarland & Company Inc. Publishers, London, 1995, p. 98.

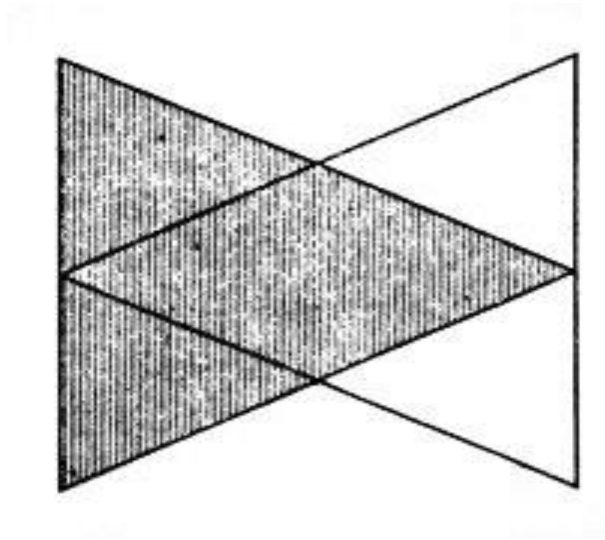


Figure 2. Gyroscopic Movements of Two Tinctures, 1937 by Yeats.

While the *primary tincture*—self—is waxing, the *antithetical tincture*—anti-self—is waning. On the contrary, while the *antithetical tincture* is waxing, the *primary tincture* is waning. One's end means the beginning of the other's. So,

Yeats's 'antithetical vision' could be said to have its origins in an ideology of conflict resolved by paradox. When he delights in conflict and antinomy, one can see him using the possibilities of language, the fictioneer's ability to tell the truth while lying, to resolve in life without opting unequivocally for one side or the other. Thus he creates linguistic, dramatic or imaginary resolutions of real and irresolvable dilemmas.⁸⁴

For instance, the poem *Ephemera* whose structure carries the traces of Romanticism in terms of the subject matter and the embellishment in its language, is one of the examples of this contradictory pattern. The title is an equivocation because the poet gives the impression of a minor subject, yet the poem consists of a dialogue between two lovers about aging and love; two contradictory but universal and archaic themes in literature in that in love's and old age's gyres, love is waning but old age is waxing:

'Although our love is waning, let us stand
By the lone border of the lake once more,
Together in that hour of gentleness
When the poor tired child, passion, falls asleep.
How far away the stars seem, and how far
Is our first kiss, and ah, how old my heart!'⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Stan Smith, *William Butler Yeats: A Critical Introduction*, Macmillan Education Ltd., Hong Kong, 1990, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁵ *Variorum*, pp. 79-80.

Almost over a half century of literary career “Yeats produced an extensive corpus of poems that deal with the quests for knowledge [...] with the themes of death, violence and war. Indeed, the typical Yeats poem is a dramatic lyric in which the poet-quester undertakes an odyssey of the spirit. Yeats was much more than a poet. He was the architect of the Irish Renaissance or⁸⁶ Celtic Revival (1890-1920)⁸⁷ and a vital figure in the Abbey Theatre (1904)⁸⁸.”⁸⁹ Due to these contributions, he is associated with literary reforms in Irish letters yet “transcending Irish issues, and placing Ireland as a literary construct at the centre of the literature of the English-speaking world,”⁹⁰ and “central to the role of folklore in the literary revival”⁹¹ which is actually a stance against British influence on Ireland “towards the end of the nineteenth century. It is often used as an umbrella term to include Gaelic revival, referring to an interest in the Irish language; the Celtic revival, referring to an all things Celtic, and the literary revival, referring to an interest in creating a literature that would culturally validate a separate Irish identity.”⁹²

The poet-quester finds a way to unite the contradictory ideas in other words to “hammer the thoughts, especially three interests which are a form of literature, a form of philosophy, and a belief in nationality, into unity.”⁹³ For this process, a method is needed in which all the discrepancies could be put in and transformed into harmonic dualities. In 1937, rewritten form of the first edition in 1925, *A Vision* which is “a pretext for a whole lifetime’s struggle toward Unity of Being”⁹⁴ is designed. At the core of the system, the unity of the antithesis is centered which constitutes a base for the poetic structure:

A Vision provides the most comprehensive systematization of Yeats’s formulation of man’s quarrel with himself in desiring-and idealizing-his

⁸⁶ The terms Revival and Renaissance can be interchangeably used. Robert Fitzroy Foster, *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2011, p. 2.

⁸⁷ “A movement [leading by Standish O’Grady, Douglas Hyde, Lady Gregory, George Russel (AE), and W. B. Yeats’s literary efforts of translations Gaelic works into English] against the cultural influences of English rule in Ireland during the Victorian period, and sought to promote the spirit of Ireland’s native heritage.” Bc. L. Smidova, *IFTL*, p. 8.

⁸⁸ Substituted after the first theatrical foundation; the Irish Literary Theatre (1899) and it is considered as the second phase of the Irish Dramatic Movement (1899-1939) which aims at uniting the national literary heritage in Ireland.

⁸⁹ Brian Arkins, *The Thought of William Butler Yeats*, Peter Lang, Bern, 2010, p. pref.

⁹⁰ Eugene O’Brien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of W. B. Yeats and James Joyce*, Edwin Mellen Press, London, 1998, p. 123.

⁹¹ Diarmuid Ó. Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, Cork University Press, Cork, 2000, p. 104.

⁹² E. O’Brien, *QII*, p. 97.

⁹³ William Butler Yeats, *Explorations*, The Macmillan Press, London, 1962, p. 263.

⁹⁴ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 51.

opposite, his daimon,⁹⁵ his anti-self or antithetical self. It is also the most comprehensive outlay of Yeats's esoteric concepts of objectivity and subjectivity, of primary and antithetical impulses.⁹⁶

The system “in which we find a synthesis of the mystic elements derived from the thoughts of various thinkers such as Empedocles, Heraclitus, Swedenburg, Blake, Plotinus and others,”⁹⁷ ensures the hammered thoughts into unity and the whole literary quest of the poet. Thus, a form of literature on a philosophy is grounded. Later, the *Unity of Culture* which is associated with a belief in nationality, corresponds the national materials and experiences. However, Yeats deconstructs the Romantic's traditional and highly praised ideal chivalry and heroic deeds.⁹⁸ For instance, “Yeats's antithetical questors,⁹⁹ The Sad Shepherd, King Goll, Fergus, Cuchulain, Oisín, suffer from the failure of their idealism. Their failure is the failure of man in general, and it is also the failure of the sentimental poet who adopts a purely emotional and intuitive approach to reality at the cost of intellect.”¹⁰⁰ In *The Madness of King Goll*, the king who is a member of Fenian Cycle¹⁰¹ is so obsessed with visiting Ireland that he gets mad: “*They will not hush, the leaves a-flutter round me, the beech leaves old.*”¹⁰² The poem is haunted by this refrain which occurs and reoccurs six times. Yeats, by everting the divine authority of kingdom, transforms a king into a lunatic. He finds an archaic king whose words are void anymore and revives him from his sepulcher to make him wander in the woods. Like an archaeologist,¹⁰³ Yeats excavates mythological stories since “myth is the hidden part of every story, the buried part, the

⁹⁵ One of the Yeatsian terms explained in *A Vision* as “ultimate self.” p. 83. In his another work *Ideas of Good and Evil*, he continues to express “The Greeks, a certain scholar has told me, considered that myths are the activities of the Daimons, and that the Daimons shape our characters and our lives. I have often had the fancy that there is some one myth for every man, which, if we but knew it, would make us understand all he did and thought.” W. B. Yeats, *E&I*, p. 107.

⁹⁶ Otto Bohlmann, *Yeats and Nietzsche*, The Macmillan Press, London, 1982, p. 125.

⁹⁷ Sevim Kantarcioğlu, “The Theme of Self-Realization in the Poetry of Yeats and Eliot” (PhD Thesis, Hacettepe University, 1979), pp. 76-77.

⁹⁸ See pp. 11-12.

⁹⁹ Characters from Irish mythology and “all of these protagonists are tragic figures characterised by loss and madness as well as quest and fight.” Rainer Emig, *Modernism in Poetry: Motivations, Structures and Limits*, Longman, New York, 1995, p. 46.

¹⁰⁰ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, pp. 346-47.

¹⁰¹ One of the four mythological cycles (The Mythological Cycle, The Fenian Cycle, The Ulster Cycle and The Historical Cycle) of Irish Mythology.

¹⁰² *Variorum*, p.82.

¹⁰³ Jon Stallworthy, “The Poet as Archaeologist: W. B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney”, *ELH*, Vol. 33/130, (1982, May), pp. 158-74.

region that is still unexplored because there are as yet no words to enable us to get there.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, the aim is to reach that buried part with verse which leads a bridge between today’s Ireland and the ancient history of transcendent Celtic world or otherworld which is “next door”¹⁰⁵ and also “seen as a part of Ireland.”¹⁰⁶

By bridging these two distinct time periods and revising hidden parts of Ireland’s stories, “during his youth, [Yeats] hoped to help unify Ireland by gathering together her literature—the fairy tales, legends and myths—thus gathering together her people.”¹⁰⁷ Other than mythologies, “the fairies and heroes of the early work were an attempt to find through folk tradition a binding force of society.”¹⁰⁸ Coming from Anglo-Irish ancestry, “Yeats, with his Irish heritage of goblins and fairies, conveys an eagerness for the supernatural” which can be called as “the essence of humanity is the essence of supernatural in Celticism.”¹⁰⁹ The conflict associated with self and soul; the temporal and the timeless; the natural and the supernatural, is the ceaseless opposition of becoming and being.”¹¹⁰ He embeds fairies into his verse to narrate the buried part of the story. In *The Stolen Child*, through fairies to the transcendent world where faeries dance which symbolizes “a transcend representation [... and] the fullness of self-identity,”¹¹¹ and leap blithely to and fro in the hills an invitation is sent to the people living in the world full of troubles:

Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water-rats;
There we’ve hid our faery vats,
Full of berries
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
[no break]

¹⁰⁴ Italo Calvino, *The Uses of Literature*. (trans.) Patrick Creagh, Secker and Warburg, London, 1986, p. 18.

¹⁰⁵ Adam Wyeth, *The Hidden World of Poetry*, Sprint Print, Dublin, 2013, p. 21.

¹⁰⁶ L. Pokorna, CEYEP, p. 43.

¹⁰⁷ A. J. White, SPY, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ S. Smith, YCI, p. 16.

¹⁰⁹ Young Suck Rhee, “Yeats and Maud Gonne and “A Bronze Head””, *The Yeats Journal of Korea*, (2009, Dec), Vol. 32, p. 297.

¹¹⁰ O. Bohlmann, YN, p. 87.

¹¹¹ M. J. Sidnell, YPP, p. 6.

*With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.*¹¹²

“Today, fairies are visualized as tiny, supernatural winged-beings glowing with light, possessing strange magical powers. But before the conversion of Christianity, fairies were praised as deities in Ireland.”¹¹³ For this reason, it is believed that a fairy can easily carry away human beings. On the other perspective, like Shakespeare’s witches, Yeats’s fairies act as chorus and messengers from another sphere at the same time.

In the *Crossways* section, an outcome of four years’ study including one dramatic and sixteen lyrical poems, the main issue is the battle with time which is non-linear.¹¹⁴ Sometimes, there is a “[...] young and foolish boy who was too proud to take his sweetheart’s advice in the willow garden or by the river”¹¹⁵ conflicting with himself: “She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs; / But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears,”¹¹⁶ sometimes a fisherman who broods over “the anguish of mortality”¹¹⁷ appears and challenges sea:

The herring are not in the tides as they were of old;
My sorrow! for many a creak gave the creel in the-cart
That carried the take to Sligo¹¹⁸ town to be sold,
*When I was a boy with never a crack in my heart.*¹¹⁹

The general theme of turning back to the forgotten materials in *Crossways* reflects on the poems’ themes as young and old conflict which are silhouettes of time. The time cycle goes back to ancient Ireland; however, the space fronts. Since “Yeats at a crossways,”¹²⁰ and these two concepts: time and space has to be combined. To visualize the idea the gyre is used as a symbol which “is a kind of supernatural embodiment”¹²¹ and “a magical instrument the proper use of which reveals beneath the secondary world of appearances a primary world to the achievement of which the book, even ‘the sacred book

¹¹² *Variorum*, pp. 86-87.

¹¹³ A. Wyeth, *HWP*, p. 123.

¹¹⁴ D. G. Izzo, *IM*, p. 98.

¹¹⁵ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 74.

¹¹⁶ *Variorum*, p. 90.

¹¹⁷ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 74.

¹¹⁸ “Yeats spent much of his boyhood in Sligo town and its county environs, for both of his parents had roots there. It is accurate to say that almost all of the poet’s references to Irish places can be located in Sligo [...]” L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 174.

¹¹⁹ *Variorum*, p. 91.

¹²⁰ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 74.

¹²¹ D. A. Stauffer, “YMP”, p. 231.

of the arts.’ The symbol is a ‘gate,’ a tool of reverie. It is part of the complexity of Yeats’ mind that he never fully accepted the philosophical reality of the literary fact.”¹²² The time’s vortex [gyre] and space’s vortex mesh in somewhere beyond the actual world and quest is one of the ways to reach there. This is why time brings subjectivity with individual memories and space brings objectivity with its unalterable physical pattern. When they interlace and so the quest starts:

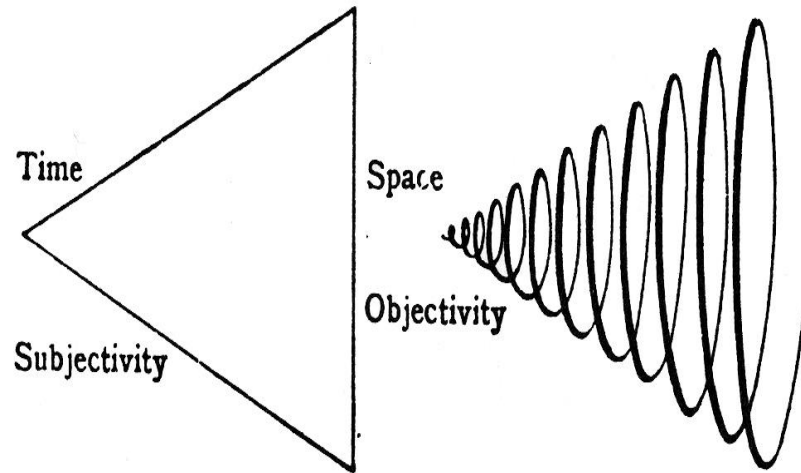


Figure 3. Time and Space's Gyroscopic Movements, 1937 by Yeats.

Yeats opens the cages of the birds when he closes the *Crossways* section and intertwines “the young birds and old birds”¹²³ to fly together. The two antithetical themes of the early poetry are united, and the harmony from their dualities is gained.

Like Dante’s division theory of spirits’, Yeats’s poetry is also perfectly proportioned. In the early poems, the main purpose is to reach *Pulchritudo* in order to achieve that purpose the rose is likened to the Irish soul. While *Crossways* is full with an individual poet-quester’s stories about Ireland’s ancient history, the next book, *The Rose* (1893) is a depiction of Ireland itself. In this section, Ireland is depicted as a rose, sometimes red rose, sometimes immortal rose, proud rose, secret rose, inviolate rose, and sometimes it is sad and dark rose. Like the anti-heroes, beauty and rose concepts are also depicted as antithetic in that they are intertwined with battle and sadness:

¹²² A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. 11.

¹²³ *Variorum*, p. 92.

*Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days!
 Come near me, while I sing the ancient ways:
 Cuchulain¹²⁴ battling with the bitter tide;
 The Druid,¹²⁵ grey, wood-nurtured, quiet-eyed,
 Who cast round Fergus¹²⁶ dreams, and ruin untold;
 And thine own sadness, where of stars, grown old
 In dancing silver-sandalled on the sea,
 Sing in their high and lonely melody.
 Come near, that no more blinded by man's fate,
 I find under the boughs of love and hate,
 In all poor foolish things that live a day,
 Eternal beauty wandering on her way.¹²⁷*

The whole poem is written in italic font style as if the inner voice is the speaker in order to reach the subconscious of Irish people and make them remember the buried mythical history through hero names and natural associations of Ireland because “myth not only serves unification and comprehension of the world but becomes an independent space wherein the poet desires to be lifted so that he might glance down on the earth and, while being a part of this earth, comprehend it in its entirety.”¹²⁸ Thanks to the mythological heritage, the poems of the early period are full with euphuisms, ornate sentences. For instance, “like many of [Yeats’s] early poems, *To the Rose upon the Rood of Time*, seems overladen with adjectives, many of which in other poems he removed in subsequent revisions.”¹²⁹ This embellished figure of speech and descriptive language are intentionally used so as to take the attention to the richness of Irish literature’s material heritage. The key phrase of this section, “eternal beauty”, corresponds to the first key phrase of the previous section’s: “ancient burden.”

As “‘Fergus and the Druid’ and ‘Cuchulain’s Fight with the Sea’ are, with Oisín, Yeats’s first important poetic contributions to that Unity of Culture which he hoped to

¹²⁴ In Irish mythology, he is Ulster cycle’s heroic warrior. “Late in life, Cuchulain killed an unknown young warrior who had challenged him, who proved to be his son. Afterwards, he was enchanted by Druids to fight with the ocean waves for several days of madness, lest in his grief he should kill his own companions.” James Pethicia (ed.), *Yeats’s Poetry, Drama and Prose*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2000, p. 12.

¹²⁵ “The ancient order of Celtic priests. The Druids believed in the transmigration of souls and were versed in magic and the ability to prophesy.” L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 50.

¹²⁶ “He was once king of all Ireland, but gave up his throne that he might live at peace hunting in the woods.” J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 12.

¹²⁷ *Variorum*, pp. 100-101.

¹²⁸ W. Pietrzak, *MLT*, pp. 12-13.

¹²⁹ E. Malins, *PY*, p. 80.

impose on Ireland by making her familiar with her own legends.”¹³⁰ Because of this, the legends—“the mothers of nations”¹³¹—are turned into ballads which are self-evident examples of the early poetry. Materials created from buried heritage prove that the “poetic form is ‘living’ rather than ‘dead’, dynamic rather than static, for its kinds of order do not stand still, and they are never finally ‘perfected’ while they can still be inhabited.”¹³² So, it can be asserted that the Irish material is blended with traditional Romantic poetry’s beauty concept. In Romanticism, poems are seen as vehicles to praise the beauty of the beloved one.¹³³ However, in *The Rose of the World* the way of beauty perception is changed from a woman towards a country: “He made the world to be a grassy road / Before her wandering feet.”¹³⁴ He also adds a Biblical tone to his poem by referring to the genesis because the fact that poetry is, in a way, God’s sacred language.¹³⁵ God made the world for human beings but in the poem, this belief is deconstructed in order to canonize the beloved one as a country not a human. In another rose poem, like Blake’s *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, a meeting of Heaven and Hell is hypothesized. If angle Michael saw the mentioned beauty, he would forget his duty:

And God would bid His warfare cease,
Saying all things were well;
And softly make a rosy peace,
A peace of Heaven with Hell.¹³⁶

Like other early poems which are slightly under the influence of the late-Romanticism, in this poem a contradiction of life’s natural flow is observed. A man who loves “the pilgrim soul in”¹³⁷ beloved, one’s country, not necessarily a woman, lives in a fear of passing over in foreign lands: “I dreamed that one had died in a strange place / Near no accustomed hand,”¹³⁸ Due to, *The Man who Dreamed of Fairyland* puts himself in a quest to find a peaceful and rosy place where the limits of linear space and “time can never mar a lover’s

¹³⁰ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 78.

¹³¹ A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. 71.

¹³² Peter McDonald, *Serious Poetry Form and Authority from Yeats to Hill*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002, p. 166.

¹³³ See, Lord Byron’s *She Walks in Beauty*.

¹³⁴ *Variorum*, p. 112.

¹³⁵ See, Polya Tocheva, “The Language of Man and the Language of God in George Herbert’s Religious Poetry”, (Master Thesis, American University, 2003).

¹³⁶ *Variorum*, p. 113.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

vows.”¹³⁹ Although escaping from the flow of time to “under a broken tree”¹⁴⁰—“as Yeats grew older, he liked to make the branches of the tree bare or broken, [...and] they can easily be read as old man, sterility, modern times, mortality, twentieth-century Ireland, ‘truth’, and—once in a while—reality”¹⁴¹—the narrator maintains the battle with time: “I spit into the face of Time / That has transfigured me.”¹⁴² As a transformed man, “the hero is both sheltered under broken tree and at the same time is symbolized by it.”¹⁴³ The antithetical feature of Yeatsian poetry contradicts the traditional tree image which has greeny connotations in Romanticism. Because “no image can exist without its opposite. Opposing the world of spirit is the world of flesh and blood the ‘bitter glass’ which we consider when we live exclusively for practical and worldly ends. There we see the ‘fatal image’ of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, its frozen roots, broken boughs, blackened leaves—all things turned into ‘barrenness.’”¹⁴⁴ However, the poet gives the same suggestion at the beginning to revive that broken tree: “Beloved, gaze in thine own heart, / The holy tree is growing there”.¹⁴⁵

There is a transition in natural images of the first quarter poems in which *the Rose* gives its place to *the Wind among the Reeds*¹⁴⁶ (1899) because “in Celtic lore, wind had supernatural associations.”¹⁴⁷ Hence, the section opens with the familiar hosts of the otherworld from the previous poems *A Faery Song*, *To Some I have Talked with by the Fire* and especially with *The Stolen Child* in which non-human beings visit the mortal realms and share their time with them:

And Niamh¹⁴⁸ calling *Away, come away:*
[no break]

¹³⁹ *Variorum*, p. 126.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁴¹ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 83.

¹⁴² *Variorum*, p. 132.

¹⁴³ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 84.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁴⁵ *Variorum*, p. 134.

¹⁴⁶ “Yeats’s early poetry swirls about in a dream-world with the wind whispering among the reeds and roses beside shadowy waters.” O. Bohlmann, *YN*, p. 88.

¹⁴⁷ L. Pokorna, *CEYEP*, p. 22.

¹⁴⁸ “The [fairy] daughter of the king of the Country of the Young. Niamh, or Niamh of the Golden Head, as she was also known, came before the Fianna and picked Oisín to be her lover from among all the men of both her country and his. Niamh and Oisín lived blissfully in the Country of the Young for many hundred years, until Oisín began to long for Ireland and for a glimpse of his old comrades. Despite Niamh’s fears and warnings Oisín made his way back but made the mistake he had been warned against of getting down from his horse and touching the ground. Thus time overtook him, and he became at once a withered old man.” L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 131.

*Empty your heart of its mortal dream.
The winds awaken, the leaves whirl round,
Our cheeks are pale, our hair is unbound,
Our breasts are heaving, our eyes are a gleam,
Our arms are waving, our lips are apart;
And if any gaze on our rushing band,
We come between him and the deed of his hand,
We come between him and the hope of his heart.*¹⁴⁹

In his early studies, Yeats juxtaposes the mortal world with the transcendent world and the quester is constantly called from free souls' realms. In pagan-Ireland's belief, "the gods [...] represent the unpolluted Soul of Ireland."¹⁵⁰ However, apart from deities, fairies or woods, bushes, wind is another characteristic symbol of otherworldly beings that invite mortals because the wind is believed as domain of otherworldly beings, the poet is haunted by *the Everlasting Voices* of Sidhe:¹⁵¹

O sweet everlasting Voices, be still;
Go to the guards of the heavenly fold
And bid them wander obeying your will,
Flame under flame, till Time be no more;
Have you not heard that our hearts are old,
That you call in birds, in wind on the hill,
In shaken boughs, in tide on the shore?
O sweet everlasting Voices, be still.¹⁵²

The poet begs to "the meddlesome Sidhe"¹⁵³ to stop time which is plague for human beings; however, nature, without time's destruction, is the same for centuries:

Time drops in decay,
Like a candle burnt out,
And the mountains and woods
Have their day, have their day;¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ *Variorum*, pp. 140-41.

¹⁵⁰ L. Pokorna, CEYEP, p. 26.

¹⁵¹ "The gods of ancient Ireland the Tuatha De Danaan, or the Tribes of the goddess Danu, but the poor called them, and still sometimes call them, the people of the Faery Hills. Sidhe is also Gaelic for wind. The journey in whirling winds, the winds that were called the dance of the daughters of Herodias in the Middle Ages." David A. Ross, *Critical Companion to William Butler Yeats: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*, Facts on File, New York, 2009, p. 119.

¹⁵² *Variorum*, p. 141.

¹⁵³ David S. Tomkins, "Remembering the Forgotten Beauty of Yeatsian Mythology: Personae and the Problem of Unity in The Wind Among The Reeds" (Master Thesis, North Texas University, 1999), p. 39.

¹⁵⁴ *Variorum*, p. 142.

The quester “[...] old with wandering / Through hollow lads and hilly lands”¹⁵⁵ *Mourns for the Change that has Come upon Him and his Beloved, and Longs for the End of the World* and shares the story with an otherworldly being:

Do you not hear me calling, white deer with no horns?
I have been changed to a hound with one red ear;
I have been in the Path of Stones and the Wood of Thorns,
For somebody hid hatred and hope and desire and fear
Under my feet that they follow you night and day.
A man with a hazel wand came without sound;
He changed me suddenly; I was looking another way;
And now my calling is but the calling of a hound;
And Time and Birth and Change are hurrying by.¹⁵⁶

Time is both friend and enemy, hope and fear, hatred and desire, light and dark, fire and ice, and birth and death. The quest is started “where the last Phoenix died,”¹⁵⁷ and a shelter is sought in which beauty—in this concept youth—will be “changing till change be dead,”¹⁵⁸ in other words “until God burn time.”¹⁵⁹ This change is necessary to distinguish the traditional and constructed Romantic beauty from natural and eternal Irish beauty. For this purpose, “The poets labouring all their days / To build a perfect beauty in rhyme”¹⁶⁰ but the constructed beauty is weak against time’s destructive power. In other words, “Time’s bitter flood will rise, / Your beauty perish and be lost”.¹⁶¹

In the poems, the beauty of art and symbolism are preferred to the conventional church doctrines. The enigmatic materials of nature are blended with literary devices. For instance, mysticism “is not an intellectual belief, but an emotional or artistic refuge. [Hence, Yeats’s] visions do not convince us because they are obviously ‘literary’ rather than spiritual. The concepts which are realities to Blake, or to Yeats’s contemporary, A. E., are to him symbols, nor do they strike the reader as being anything more.”¹⁶² Thus, “Yeats, like all mystics, regarded every object in the real world as a potential symbol, a point of view founded upon the presumption of the ideal origin of all things.”¹⁶³ In Yeats’s poetry,

¹⁵⁵ *Variorum*, p. 149.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹⁶² E. Boyd, *ILR*, p. 139.

¹⁶³ A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. 24.

the unity of birth and death, self and anti-self, time and eternity are often seen—“in the early period, eternity is the transformation of the self”¹⁶⁴—which are intrinsic antinomies of life and self quest ideal; however, “it is apparent, then, that in the very beginning of his poetic career, Yeats rebels against man’s purely scientific approach to reality as subjective. [...] a purely imaginative and intuitive approach will enable him to attain the ultimate reality which can be embodied in poetry, and thus he makes poetry a substitute for religion.”¹⁶⁵ In other words, he makes a religion of [his] art¹⁶⁶ and closes his sacred book’s *The Wind among the Reeds* page with the lines:

My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Mocharabuiee.
I passed my brother and cousin:
They read in their books of prayer;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.¹⁶⁷

During the interlude of this section and the other poems, Yeats’s poetic style starts to change in that “for in the five years that divide *The Wind among the Reeds* from *In the Seven Woods*¹⁶⁸ he became a practicing dramatist, and drama suggested to him possibilities for a poetry founded on the lean eloquence of speech. Pursuing drama, Yeats began to evolve himself a new poetic language”¹⁶⁹ and “[...] this new conversational manner dominates the entire group of poems. But though the manner is conversational the subject matter of the poems is passionately felt, for in spite of the Irish material which frames it, the core around which *In the Seven Woods* centers [...]”¹⁷⁰ again at the cyclical movement of quest. *In the Seven Woods* is a transitory book to the second chapter’s and it is the depiction of Ireland which transforms from the heroic realm into an “uprooted” island what the poet finds it as a “desecration:”

I have heard the pigeons of the Seven Woods
Make their faint thunder, and the garden bees
Hum in the lime-tree flowers; and put away
[no break]

¹⁶⁴ A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. 194.

¹⁶⁵ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 88.

¹⁶⁶ H. S. Krans, *YILR*, p. 176.

¹⁶⁷ *Variorum*, p. 178.

¹⁶⁸ “Referring to Lady Gregory’s estate where Yeats had written many of the lyrics in the volume, sets up, as a matter of fact, a tone of judicious but faintly ironic detachment.” J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 98.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

The unavailing outcries and the old bitterness
 That empty the heart. I have forgot awhile
 Tara¹⁷¹ uprooted, and new commonness
 Upon the throne and crying about the streets¹⁷²

The old is in the hearts and the new is “upon the throne” which results in *the Withering of the Boughs* along with the uneasiness of mind within the infinite wanderings of self:

I cried when the moon was murmuring to the birds:
 ‘Let peewit call and curlew cry where they will,
 I long for your merry and tender and pitiful words,
 For the roads are unending, and there is no place to my mind.’¹⁷³

Towards the last poems of the first quarter, especially “with ‘Adam’s Curse’ the mature style begins to show itself. The fey lyricism of the early poems remains in evidence, but it is complemented by conversational and dramatic sinew. In addition, the entire poem has a dramatic complexity and tension not seen before, a development probably stimulated by Yeats’s increasing immersion in the theater.”¹⁷⁴ In the poems, it is observed that characters, settings, and sometimes plots start to appear. In *Adam’s Curse*, a woman is in a dialogue about the pre-Raphaelite’s¹⁷⁵ constructed beauty; however, the source of pure beauty can be found in the “pagan and heroic Ireland”’s past. Besides, “the reconstruction of the Gaelic past”¹⁷⁶ is the essence of the quest which is reached not with stereotyped values or idealized books as written in the lines: “[...] To be born woman is to know— / Although they do not talk of it at school— / That we must labour to be beautiful,”¹⁷⁷ but with national heritage.

While closing every chapter of the first quarter, some kind of letters are sent to the people who are on the road riding to the beautiful, transcendent and *The Happy Townland*:

If he could see the townland
 That we are riding to;
 Boughs have their fruit and blossom
 [no break]

¹⁷¹ “Chief fortress of the Firbolg [q.v.], then of the Danaan [q.v.] folk, and finally the seat of the high kings of Ireland.” L. I. Cooner, p. 182 “Yeats had cosigned a letter to the *London Times* in June 1902 protesting the destruction caused by excavations made at the Hill of Tara, County Meath [...]” J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 30.

¹⁷² *Variorum*, p. 198.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹⁷⁴ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 36.

¹⁷⁵ A revolutionist group, founded in 1848, of artists against industrialization, urbanisation and also the British Royal Academy’s concrete stance in art. The group preferred high realism, detailed, natural and subjective depiction in their works in order to recreate the aesthetic concept of Medieval Era that is why the name derives from the wish to revolve the pre-Raphaelite period.

¹⁷⁶ E. Boyd, *ILR*, pp. 52-23.

¹⁷⁷ *Variorum*, p. 205.

At all times of the year;
 Rivers are running over
 With red beer and brown beer.
 An old man plays the bagpipes
 In a golden and silver wood;
 Queens, their eyes blue like the ice,¹⁷⁸

With *Pulchritudo* the first line of the initial gyre of the self quest is completed, and it is time to turn towards the antithetical gyre of *The Great Wheel's* next quarter *Violentia* which creates another gyre in the system that give rises to these questions: “What if every thousand and odd years something happens in the world to make one sacred, the other secular; one wise, the other foolish; one fair, the other foul; one divine, the other devilish? What if there is an arithmetic or geometry that can exactly measure the slope of a balance, the dip of a scale, and so date the coming of that something?”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ *Variorum*, p. 214.

¹⁷⁹ *AV*, p. 29.

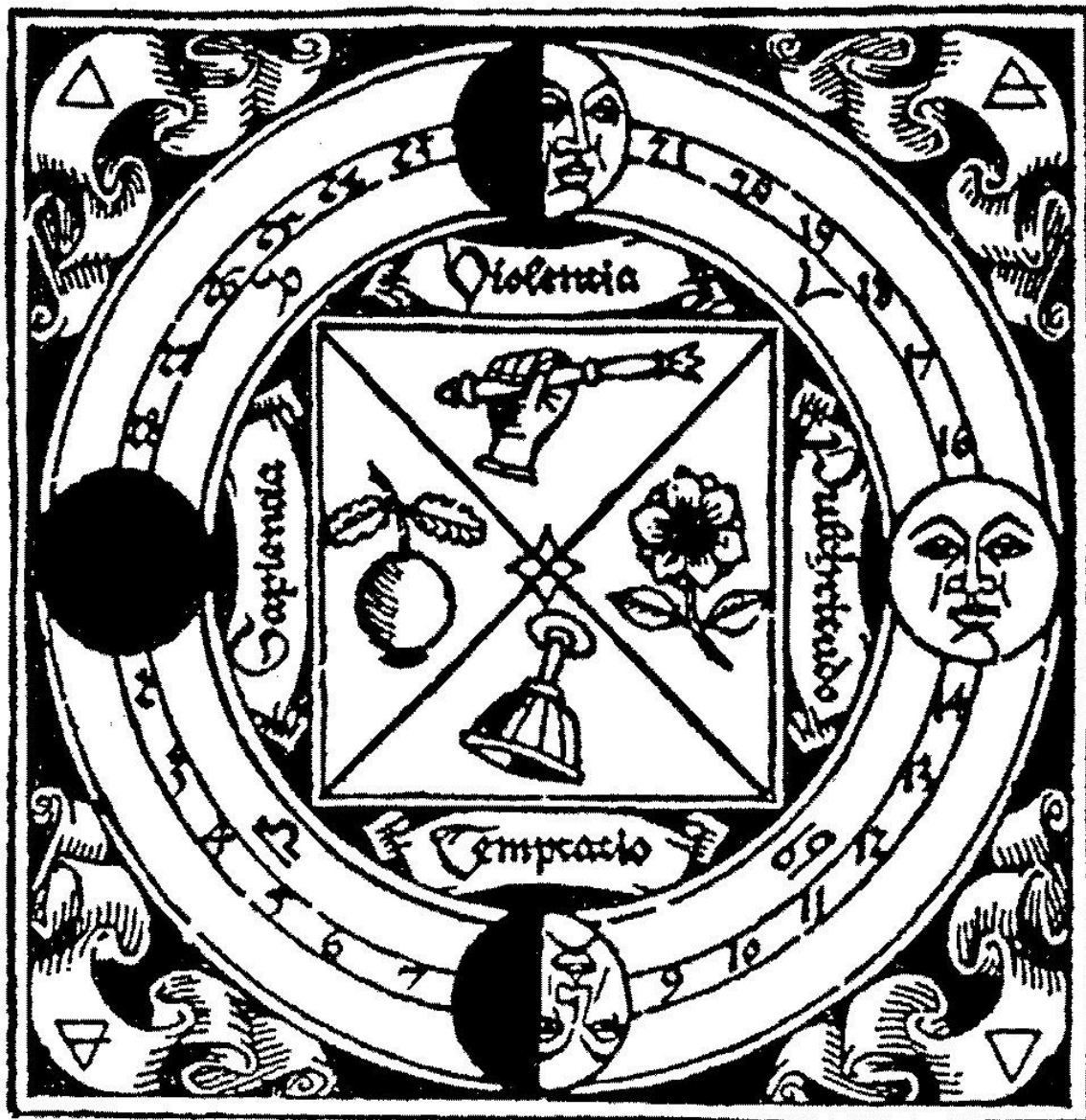


Figure 4. *The Great Wheel*, 1937 by Yeats.

CHAPTER TWO

VIOLENTIA: FALL OF SELF IN THE MIDDLE PERIOD (1910-1928)

If the fall of man consists in the separation of god and the devil, the serpent must have appeared out of the middle of the apple when Eve bit like the original worm in it, splitting it in half and sundering everything which was once one into a pair of opposites, so the world is a Noah's ark on the sea of eternity containing all the endless pairs of things, irreconcilable and inseparable, and heat will always long for cold and the back for the front and smiles for tears...and no for yes with the most unutterable nostalgia there is.¹⁸⁰

Almost all destructions lead to new creations because “the steps to self-renewal demand a process of dying or killing to as a blackening,” in other words, every “creation, whether universal or psychic, derives from the violence that must occur before any act of creation or renewal.”¹⁸¹ While Eve and Adam were obliterating the transcendent landscape of Eden on behalf of their quest desire for knowledge, they were de-creating a new formation which would rotate the quest's way. Likewise, there is an explicit difference between the elevated style and overladen lines of the first chapter's poetry depicted with *Pulchritudo*, and the second chapter's poetry transforming into *Violentia*, this enables the transcendent world immemorial for self. The former portrays the “eternal beauty;”¹⁸² however, the latter nourishes from the twentieth century's chaotic atmosphere and by deconstructing the concept transforms it into “a terrible beauty [since] all changed,¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ (qtd. in) Hope Jennings, “Journey towards the (M)Other; Myth, Origins and The Daughter's Desires in the Fiction of Angela Carter” (Ph.D. Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2008), p. 23.

¹⁸¹ Amanda Sperry, “‘Emblems of Adversity’ William Butler Yeats's Poetics of Violence and Contemporary Northern Irish Poetry” (Master Thesis, Wake Forest University, 2009), p. 3.

¹⁸² *Variorum*, p. 101.

¹⁸³ “Changed by not changing, dying uselessly, bewildered by love, Ireland's unexpected heroes create the ironic “terrible beauty” of tragedy [with planning a rebel called as The Easter Rising in 1916. 700 patriots, some of them were executed, aimed at reminding Christ's crucifixion and creating a free Ireland.]” J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 162.

changed utterly.”¹⁸⁴ Similarly, the aforementioned self quest transactivizes since the pre-colonial transcendent world and the twentieth century Ireland sunder “into a pair of opposites” because of the quest’s new phase effected by the First World War and the nationalist movements of the time. Namely, the reciprocal structure of the second chapter has its roots from the society’s situation of the time. “In the Ireland of Yeats’s time there were several disputes between opposing factions. There was division between Unionists and Nationalists, Catholics and Protestants, English and Irish, and rich and poor.”¹⁸⁵ These divisions show as violence on Irish society. The previous chapter’s focus on *Unity of Being* turns into *Unity of Culture* ideal by which it was aimed to re-create a unified culture via taking strength from historical and also cultural background with understanding the necessities of the time. The “cultural nationalism aims at uniting a nation by offering it a literature that is based on common heritage and culture”¹⁸⁶ but during this period, the dreamy individual ideal of reviving the mythical paradise gave its place to the aim of socially as well as politically united nation. To create a national awareness,¹⁸⁷ poets, playwrights, writers and artists used *Words* that became “children of the occasion.”¹⁸⁸ Possibly for this reason, the second phase’s poetic language with its wording, verse structure, themes and style changed. The “quiet boughs... / ...with the tide that gleams...”¹⁸⁹ translocated the scenery to a “blind bitter land.”¹⁹⁰ These fallen lines were the precursors of the “things fall apart.”¹⁹¹

One of the most striking changes in the second chapter is an increased questioning tone stemming from a reason which makes “the pursuit of knowledge is desirable.”¹⁹² That desire leads man to question life which triggers the quest because “man naturally questions, searches, and struggles, and when he ceases to do so, his life loses meaning. The

¹⁸⁴ *Variorum*, p. 391.

¹⁸⁵ S. Feys, CN, p. 29.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁸⁷ “Irish myth and folklore had been suppressed by church doctrine and British control of the school system. Yeats used his poetry as a tool for re-educating the Irish population about their heritage and as a strategy for developing Irish nationalism.” L. Smidova, IFTL, p. 31.

¹⁸⁸ George Bornstein and Hugh Witemayer (eds.), *Letters to the New Island: A New Edition*, The Macmillan Press, London, 1989, p. xviii.

¹⁸⁹ *Variorum*, p. 78.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 402.

¹⁹² Şeyda İnceoğlu, “The Faustus Myth in the English Novel” (PhD Thesis, Istanbul University, 2008), p. 13.

questioning itself is what stimulates the mind and causes the soul to sing. When one is no longer aware of life's contraries, he dies."¹⁹³

A twelve-lined poem, *No Second Troy*, holding nine questions with interrogative pronouns such as why and what and starting with the question: "Why should I [...]?" and an important question for the sake of the quest: "Had they but courage equal to desire?" First question is needed for questioning self itself and the other one is for questioning the courage which is required to ask questions and starting off a quest. However, there is only one hypophora¹⁹⁴ within the poem whose question is that: "Was there another Troy for her to burn?"¹⁹⁵ and it is replied with the title through an anthyphora:¹⁹⁶ *No Second Troy*.

According to Sheila, Yeats starts his poetic career by emulating the popular British verse; however, the British and the Irish needs are not the same. Hence, the contrast between them leads the poets, playwrights, artists and authors to discover their own style. To them, this inherited poetic language is "a fallen language"¹⁹⁷ which has no roots in "the world of Irish letters."¹⁹⁸ As Li Ou corroborates the idea in her *Keats and Negative Capability* while succeeding the tradition this attitude, at the same time, requires breaking it. "Because of this urge to write 'new' poetry," Yeats and some other poets stand against "manifest a rather mixed attitude towards their Romantic predecessors."¹⁹⁹ Hence, the post-Romantic imaginary poems gradually give their places to more direct and abstract wording and themes such as truth, mind, soul, knowledge, pride, time, death, duty, wisdom, etc. Based on the previous analyses and Unterecker's claim "'image,' 'metaphor,' and 'symbol' are terms which must be used so often in any discussion of Yeats's work,"²⁰⁰ it can be said that the first period poems are symbolic which are full with signs of fairy tales, pagan legends and transcendental descriptions of the ancient Ireland. On the other hand, the second period verse is structured with images. As for metaphors, they are mostly used in the following chapter's poems. For instance, the poem *A Drinking Song* meshes the

¹⁹³ Danita Sain Stokes, "The Labyrinth of the Wind and the Artifice of Eternity; A Study of the Lyric Poetry of William Butler Yeats" (Master Thesis, North Florida University, 1992), p. 66.

¹⁹⁴ A figure of speech that raises a question and then immediately answers in that it differs from the rhetorical questions which do not necessarily have the answers within the texts.

¹⁹⁵ *Variorum*, pp. 256-57.

¹⁹⁶ The answer of hypophora.

¹⁹⁷ Sheila Deane, *Bardic Style in the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, W. B. Yeats & Dylan Thomas*, UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1989, p. 233.441.

¹⁹⁸ E. Boyd, *ILR*, p. 123.

¹⁹⁹ Li Ou, *Keats and Negative Capability*, Continuum International Publishing, New York, 2009, p. 158.

²⁰⁰ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 33.

physical issues such as growing, death, drinking etc. with an abstract issue: truth. The truth is used as an image in the poem since it cannot be as concrete as death or old age which are equal to everyman; however, truth cannot be totally comprehended or experienced:

Wine comes in at the mouth
 And love comes in at the eye;
 That's all we shall know for truth
 Before we grow old and die.
 I lift the glass to my mouth,
 I look at you, and I sigh.²⁰¹

This six-lined poem directly refers to the images of *The Great Wheel*. At the center of the system, there are four gyres holding four images inside respectively a blossomed/ plucked flower, a hand rising a branch, a bell or a chalice, and a bud or a ripe fruit. All the images have dual or antithetical perspectives in that they carry the meaning of “either or” and “both”. To be more precise, the first blossomed flower representing the first quarter, *Pulchritudo*, reminds the quest for the beauty in transcendent pagan-Ireland; however, it is a plucked flower which is going to fade away. Like the uprooted Tara, the struggle for reviving Ireland again has to be left behind to proceed. This claim leads to the hand in the second quarter, *Violentia*, holding a bud as if it is a sign of victory; however, every victory brings impotence of power and after that violence and ferocity occur and fall happens. Fall reminds the bell/chalice of the third quarter, *Temptatio* which is a preparation for the next phase as fall is the first step of rising. So, the last image of *Sapientia*'s gyre, either a bud or a ripe, explains the unity of duality in all three quarters because it shelters all the way of the quest and unites the end with the beginning:

²⁰¹ *Variorum*, p. 261.



Figure 5. The Symbols in the Gyres of The Great Wheel, 1937 by Yeats.

In the previous section, “a poem—in the Yeatsian universe—is a set of symbolic abstractions which became verbal equivalents of a mental construct,”²⁰² yet in this section, the symbols, “the elements that turn literature into art,”²⁰³ are clearly given their places to images especially in *The Green Helmet and Other Poems*. In other words, the things substitute the essences. Wine matches/contrasts with drinking, love conflicts with appearance, knowledge clashes with truth and old age with death. In another poem—a symbol for the transcendent world in the first section yet it is an image for the second section—is canalized from the past. The poems and the references vary in every section because in almost every book “Yeats used certain motifs more than others.”²⁰⁴ That is to say, “the exotic imagery of Yeats’s earliest poems and the Irish fairy-tale settings are replaced by [...] images drawn from nature”²⁰⁵.²⁰⁶ According to O’Brien, imagery is “presage to accept a responsibility for an address to ‘otherness’ in what Yeats calls this ‘blind and bitter land’.”²⁰⁷ However, it should not be ignored that there is no clear-cut distinction between the sections. The chapters are divided thanks to some transitional

²⁰² Helen Vendler, *Our Secret Discipline: Yeats and Lyric Form*, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2007, p. 30.

²⁰³ M. C. Dicu, WT, p. 73.

²⁰⁴ L. Pokorna, CEYEP, p. 78.

²⁰⁵ The perception of ‘nature’ in this period should not be confused with the previous chapter’s. In this section the utilization level of depiction with nature is considerably low. Besides, it is a tool or an image rather than a source of muse as in the first chapter.

²⁰⁶ R. Emig, *MPSL*, pp. 126-27.

²⁰⁷ E. O’Brien, *QII*, p. 12.

poems what can be described with the words: “seize the moment between ripe and rotten—there was a metaphor of apples about to fall and just fallen.”²⁰⁸ For instance, in *At the Abbey Theatre* to make the poem enrich and to harmonize the cultural background with the modern age, the poet idiosyncratically consults one of the mythological deity Proteus:²⁰⁹ “Is there a bridle for this Proteus / That turns and changes like his draughty seas? / Or is there none...?”²¹⁰ If “the physical world is only a symbol of something beyond,”²¹¹ then in these early poems of the second chapter, the sun or Proteus might be used to refer as youth, power or the force of England on Ireland:

Though leaves are many, the root is one;
Through all the lying days of my youth
I swayed my leaves and flowers in the sun;
Now I may wither into the truth.²¹²

The truth is likened to a tree which has one root and many leaves. Along the same lines, truth is literally one word; however, it corresponds to several words in the macrocosm of discourse. In the poem, it is considered that “the sun as the source of all truth”²¹³ because the sun rises from darkness, and darkness holds the light since it is the domain of light, knowledge; however, the declining power of “the majesty”²¹⁴ is foreshadowed in *These are the Clouds*’ first line: “These are the clouds about the fallen sun.”²¹⁵ Its strength withers in the twentieth century due to the fact that “the whole earth change its tune.”²¹⁶

The process to be on the way of the self quest, in the mentioned poems as it is called as reaching the truth, requires knowing one’s whole entity consisting of multi-layered structure. In the first level of the entity, there are two *tinctures* “as intersecting states struggling one against the other” self and anti-self—in Yeatsian words *primary* and *antithetical*. The *antithetical* self is called as subjective “because it is achieved and

²⁰⁸ W. B. Yeats, *AV*, p. 18.

²⁰⁹ “In Greek mythology, an aged deity, subject of Poseidon, the sea god. Proteus was credited with great knowledge and great prophetic powers; but to get his prophecy, one had to steal upon him and keep him from escaping one’s grasp, even as Proteus exercised his power to change instantly into any form he wished. Yeats takes this image directly from the sonnet by Pierre de Ronsard [q.v.] that Yeats acknowledges imitating in the epigraph to his poem.” L.I. Conner, *YD*, p. 153.

²¹⁰ *Variorum*, p. 265.

²¹¹ S. Smith, *YCI*, p. 64.

²¹² *Variorum*, p. 261.

²¹³ Donald Richard Theail, *YDPI*, p. 57.

²¹⁴ *Variorum*, p. 265.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

defended by continual conflict with its opposite.” On the other hand, the primary self is called as objective “because whereas subjectivity tends to separate man from man, objectivity brings us back to the mass where we begin.”²¹⁷ Namely, “the vortex attributed to Discord [the *antithetical tincture*] as formed by circles diminishing until they are nothing and of the opposing sphere attributed to Concord [*primary tincture*] as forming from itself an opposing vortex, the apex of each vortex in the middle of the other’s base [...]”²¹⁸

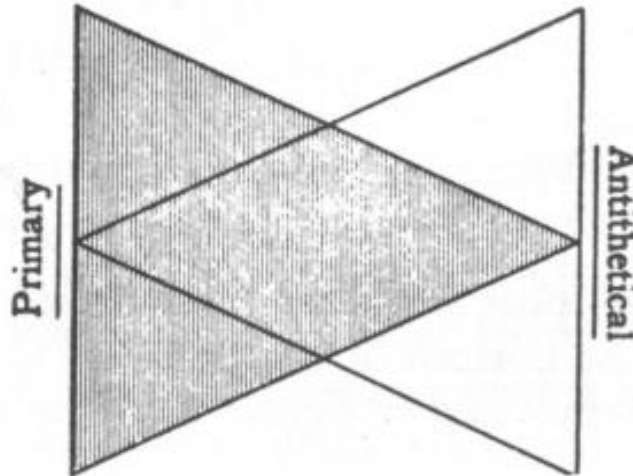


Figure 6. Primary and Antithetical Tinctures' Gyroscopic Movements, 1937 by Yeats.

Man’s self quest is composed of seeking for the harmony of pairs’ conflict. “The aim of his quest is to cure man’s spiritual disintegration by bridging the gap between the mind and the body [...],”²¹⁹ self and anti-self, existence and essence, objective and subjective, birth and death quintessentially through *Unity of Culture* to reach *Unity of Being*. The first level of this process is to understand and accept both sides of the essence. Then, there become the *Four Faculties*: *Will* is to be free to choose, *Mask*²²⁰ is the desire to be what is not, *Creative Mind* reflects the intellect, and *Body of Fate* represents the changing physical world.

Will and *Mask* as the will and its object [...] are lunar or *antithetical* or natural, the second two solar or *primary* or reasonable. Every *Faculty* is alternately shield and sword. The pairs of opposites whirl in contrary

²¹⁷ AV, pp. 71-72.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 68.

²¹⁹ S. Kantarcioğlu, TSRPYE, p. 46.

²²⁰ According to Finneran, the concept *Mask* is “grounded on the mask of classic and Noh drama, in which the mask, or one’s performance, is made the achievement of one’s true self.” Richard J. Finneran (ed.), *Yeats-An Annual of Critical and Textual Studies*, UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1986, p. 3.

directions. As *Will* approaches the utmost expansion of its *antithetical* cone it drags *Creative Mind* with it—thought is more and more dominated by will—but *Creative Mind* remains at the same distance from its cone's narrow end that *Will* is from the broad end of the *antithetical* cone. Then, as though satiated by the extreme expansion of its cone, *Will* lets *Creative Mind* weaken once more. These movements are but a convenient pictorial summary of what is more properly a double movement of two gyres. These gyres move not only forward to the *primary* and *antithetical* expansion, but have their own circular movement...²²¹

The *Four Faculties* have various movements and according to these movements the essence of self takes various shapes. Consequently, these movements mould the quest. First, they are located as in the *Pulchritudo* quarter of the quest's first phase:

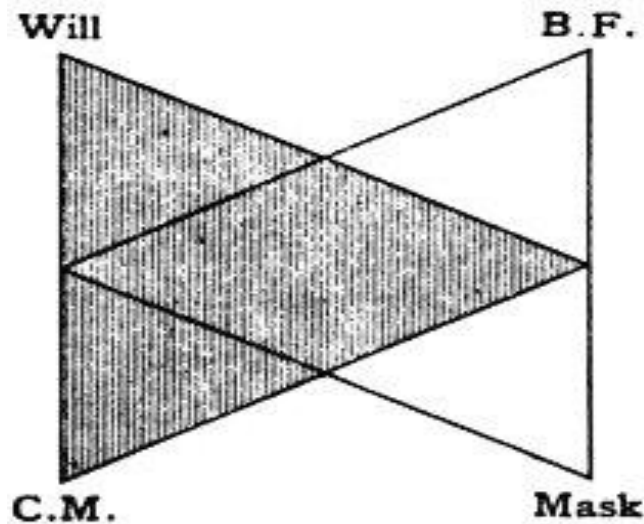


Figure 7. The First Movement of the *Four Faculties*, 1937 by Yeats.

In this state, man is completely *antithetical* which means that it is a level of “supernatural or ideal existence.”²²² In this quarter, self fantasizes and wishes for the past experiences. It needs a wish of isolation from physical life and a fantasy for an alternative world where life is more natural and tolerable. This desire for a dreamy otherworld makes the man completely subjective because an imaginary world is irrelevant to the physical world, and man cannot bridge the gap between them. Hence, this conflict starts the quest and the self, regardless of the outcome, seeks for the ideal beauty.

²²¹ AV, pp. 73-76.

²²² Ibid., p. 77.

The quest's second quarter—*Violentia*—is also formed out of the gyroscopic movements [towards each other and whirling around their own axis] of the two cones of the *Four Faculties* in which “the man is almost completely *antithetical* in nature”²²³ that means the conflictive gap, result of the previous section, creates violence which can be named as a kind of defense against the turmoil of the conflict and that leads self to a fall from natural flow:

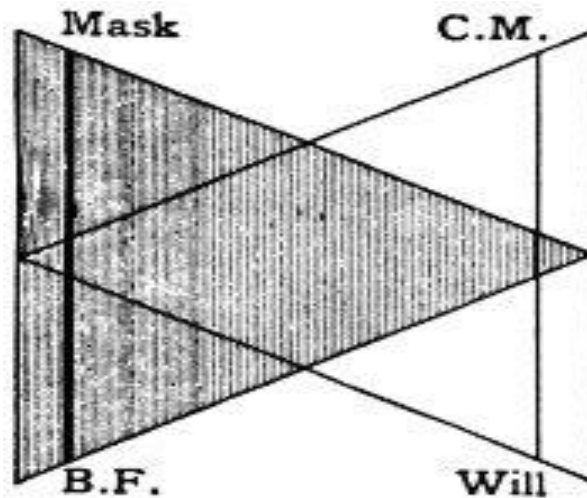


Figure 8. The Second Movement of the *Four Faculties*, 1937 by Yeats.

The faculty of *Will* gets closer to the complete *antithetical* shape which is bright and also lower side of the diagram “moving from right to left, and the gyre of *Creative Mind* as approaching it along the upper side, left to right, and then of their passing one another at complete expansion, then of their receding from it, *Will* upon the upper side, *Creative Mind* upon the lower, and always on the outside of the diagram until they pass one another at complete *primary* expansion.²²⁴ When these movements complete their phase, the third quarter of the quest—*Temptatio*—begins which is “almost completely primary”:²²⁵

²²³ AV, p. 77.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 76.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 77.

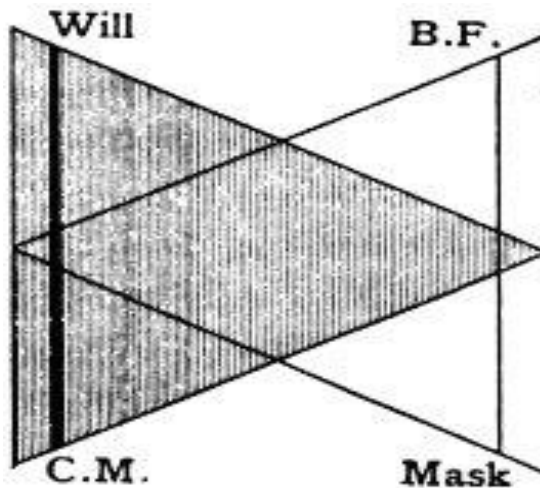


Figure 9. The Third Movement of the *Four Faculties*, 1937 by Yeats.

In this phase, the *Faculties* receding from *antithetical* extent get closer to *primary* expansion. On the other hand, the quest's transformation continues, and self becomes aware of oncoming end of life which creates a tendency to temptation in this phase.

The fourth quarter of self quest—*Sapientia*—in which man “is completely *primary*, a state which is like the completely *antithetical* state only a supernatural or ideal existence:”²²⁶

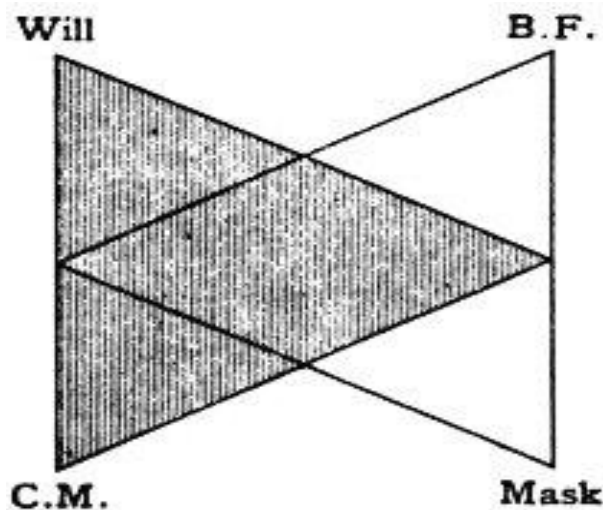


Figure 10. The Fourth Movement of the *Four Faculties*, 1937 by Yeats.

In this phase, man reaches the wisdom of *Unity of Being* and *Unity of Culture* union that leads a state of being objective to life and events. “He is midway between primary and antithetical and moving towards antithetical expansion. All four gyres are

²²⁶ AV, p. 77.

superimposed.”²²⁷ When man holds all the four phases’ experiences and knowledge, the state of equilibrium will be “at hand.”²²⁸

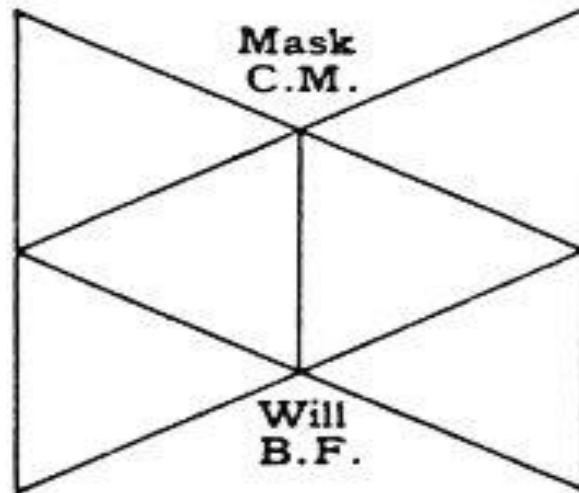


Figure 11. Ideal Movement of the *Four Faculties*, 1937 by Yeats.

During these *Four Faculties*’ gyrosopic movements, self needs a structure or a framework to use anti-self in every phase of the quest. Hence, “the theory of the *Mask* as a technique”²²⁹ corresponds this need in that it “allows the poet to be all that he cannot otherwise be in his life.”²³⁰ It holds both selves and makes easier to reach what is unseen. As Ellmann says “man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth.”²³¹ Because, “the *Mask* is defensive armour: we wear it, [...] a weapon of attack; we put it on to keep up a noble conception of ourselves; it is a heroic ideal which we try to live up to.”²³² However, truth is not the intention in love. The mask which is something more than an aim in the quest, to reach the ultimate purpose in love it becomes a tool. Thus, it is requested from the beloved one to put off the mask because “love also creates mask”.²³³

²²⁷ AV, p. 78.

²²⁸ *Variorum*, p. 402.

²²⁹ (qtd. in.) Barbara L. Croft, “Structure in the Collected Poems of William Butler Yeats” (Master Thesis, Drake University, 1970), p. 43.

²³⁰ W. Pietrzak, *MLT*, p. 48.

²³¹ Richard Ellmann (ed.), *The Critic as Artist: Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1969, p. 389.

²³² Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*, Penguin Books, London, 1987, p. 176.

²³³ William Butler Yeats, *Memoirs*, Papermac Publishing, London, 1972, p. 145.

'Put off that mask of burning gold
 With emerald eyes.'
 'O no, my dear, you make so bold
 To find if hearts be wild and wise,
 And yet not cold.'
 'I would but find what's there to find,
 Love or deceit.'
 'It was the mask engaged your mind,
 And after set your heart to beat,
 Not what's behind.'
 'But lest you are my enemy,
 I must enquire.'
 'O no, my dear, let all that be;
 What matter, so there is but fire
 In you, in me?'²³⁴

The conflictive and dualistic structure of love bringing fire and cold, deceit and love, wild and wise together is supported by the *Mask* on the lover. "The beloved represents perfection in art;"²³⁵ however, in love there is no perfection and it is *Mask* which engages mind. Moreover, it can be said that "the poem is a kind of key to all Yeats's plays and poems about ambiguities of personality."²³⁶ Like Eve and Adam's story of eating the forbidden fruit, the *Mask* over the self and anti-self of the lover creates ambiguity of reflecting her/his true essence. As Kantarcioğlu asserts, reality is perceived through intellect, senses, imagination and intuition explicitly with the experiences of all beings. These experiences can be obtained at specific moments "when man attains a perfect state of equilibrium in his soul, a perfect harmony of *Will, Mask, Creative Mind, Body of Fate*, which are the components of the self [...]. However, this is only the first level of self-realization [...]. Since man's perfection is unlimited, he can also reach a state of morality at which he possesses God's spherical wholeness by becoming identical with his Daimon."²³⁷

The *Violentia* section thematically differentiates from the previous section. In this phase, the quest transforms self into a patriot who takes national *Responsibilities* not like the wanderer of "supernatural responsibilities."²³⁸ Man's "sense of wandering that was prevalent in the early poetry has shifted to a search for wisdom. Instead of just desiring

²³⁴ *Variorum*, p. 263.

²³⁵ D. S. Tomkins, *RFB*, p. 12.

²³⁶ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 109.

²³⁷ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 46.

²³⁸ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 114.6

peace and escape [...], he seeks knowledge about the world and his place in it. His themes have progressed from physical love and aimless wandering and longing to a search for something more lasting—wisdom.”²³⁹ To reach this wisdom, self follows a familiar way the previous chapter. By re-creating the past and putting upon the heroic heritage, it re-writes old stories “imagining ‘twould better please” yet “[...] passion / that has more life in it than death”²⁴⁰ contradicts with wisdom. Passion comes with youth but wisdom comes with maturity. Passion needs courage; however, wisdom needs sediment of experiences. They are like Cain and Abel [like rhythmical and the abstract in poetry]²⁴¹. One is full with ambition, the other one is with tranquility. At this point, the poem *Easter 1913* can be called as an elegy for “the loss of Romantic innocence and passion.”²⁴² The legendary and mythological stories are destructed with rebels and wars, blood and death stories. “The poem contrasts such materialism with the heroic recklessness of patriotic figures from Irish history. It combines ballad-like lament for ‘Romantic Ireland:’”²⁴³

Was it for this the wild geese spread²⁴⁴
 The grey wing upon every tide;
 For this that all that blood was shed,
 For this Edward Fitzgerald²⁴⁵ died,
 And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,²⁴⁶
 All that delirium²⁴⁷ of the brave?
 Romantic Ireland’s dead and gone,
 It’s with O’Leary²⁴⁸ in the grave.²⁴⁹

By reminding the famous patriots of past it is aimed to show that the individual nationalism has lost its essence and the Romantic face of Ireland does not exist any more. That is to say “the workers’ riot from September 1913 would prove [...] that unity was no longer a

²³⁹ D. S. Stokes, LW, p. 23.

²⁴⁰ *Variorum*, p. 271.

²⁴¹ Allan Wade (ed.), *The Letters of William Butler Yeats*, Butler & Tanner Ltd., London, 1954, p. 609.

²⁴² M. C. Dicu, WT, p. 179.

²⁴³ Michael O’Neill (ed.), *A Routledge Literary Sourcebook on the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London, 2004, p. 115.

²⁴⁴ “After the Penal Laws of 1691, which prevented many Irishmen from being commissioned in the British army, many Irish soldiers went abroad to serve in European armies; they were known as ‘wild geese’.” Ibid., p. 116.

²⁴⁵ “Irish patriot (1763-98); died during [leading] the uprising of 1798.” Ibid.

²⁴⁶ “Robert Emmet (1778-1803) was executed after leading an uprising (1803) against the English; Wolfe Tone was an Irish patriot (1763-98) who died (probably at his own hand) after the uprising of 1798, which he had, failed.” Ibid.

²⁴⁷ “‘Delirium’ is doubled-edged, and implies a qualifying judgement.” Ibid.

²⁴⁸ “A Fenian (revolutionary nationalist) leader imprisoned for years.” Ibid.

²⁴⁹ *Variorum*, p. 290.

characteristic of the Irish people and [the middle classes are accused] of being led by materialism and contrasts them with Ireland's brave men who fought for their country and who should be the model of any Irishman."²⁵⁰ This means that Ireland has lost the transcendent landscape, and the fall is happening because "the human world is deserted"²⁵¹ and even beggars, who lives in the streets, yell at each other: "'Time to put off the world and go somewhere / And find my health again in the sea air,' / *Beggar to beggar cried, being frenzy-struck.*"²⁵² The beggars desire an escape to an idealized *windy*²⁵³ place and "a hope to live"²⁵⁴ which "may refer to faith in the immortality of the soul; it may equally or alternatively refer to a longing for the lusty adventure—knightly exploits and the like—associated with days gone by. An image of sensual joy transcendently breasting the infinite [...]."²⁵⁵ The desire and hope come from *Mask* yet the *Body of Fate* brings beggars back to the physical world. As there are "the two basic urges; one to fantasize, to wish, to celebrate wishes and the other to accept reality as it is and to be content with it, [...] the equilibrium between the urges gives the identity of each of us."²⁵⁶ With this purpose, the beggars search for a shelter of a tranquil place as if they are *Running to Paradise*:

The wind is old and still at play
While I must hurry upon my way,
For I am running to paradise;
Yet never have I lit on a friend
To take my fancy like the wind
That nobody can buy or bind:
*And there the king is but as the beggar.*²⁵⁷

Nature is not the enemy of man; on the contrary, man brings evil to nature since nature is the reflection of man. The wind, home of Sidhe in the previous chapter, now has a "monstrous crying."²⁵⁸ In this chapter, some poems "present the anguished cry of characters

²⁵⁰ M. C. Dicu, WT, p. 143.

²⁵¹ Nicholas Grene, and John O'Riordan, *William Butler Yeats and the Creation of a Tragic Universe*, The Macmillan Press, London, 1987, p. 110.

²⁵² *Variorum*, p. 299.

²⁵³ Wind is thought as home of divine beings. See, p. 27, citation 151.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

²⁵⁵ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 208.

²⁵⁶ M. C. Dicu, WT, p. 27.

²⁵⁷ *Variorum*, p. 301.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 312.

who claim that the stirring of the wind is a curse rather than a blessing.”²⁵⁹ So, by personifying, man humiliates nature. However, it still keeps being the desire of people who want to be free from the mortal world’s burdens. Since “the wind symbolizes the state when man is no longer a slave to his body. The wind itself knows no boundaries or confinement, so it is an appropriate metaphor for man’s soul. One’s breath, the difference between death and life, is also a type of wind.”²⁶⁰ In the last line:

the refrain, which sends the artist’s two supporting classes to Heaven, is made mysterious by an unitalicized ‘is’ in a line of italics. The pause created by that illegitimately accented word forces, unnaturally, a double meaning into the line. It is hard not to read a reference to Paradise ending ‘*And there the king is*’ as anything other than ‘God’s in his heaven.’ Yet the rest of the line clearly indicates that the king is merely lower-class mundane that strange ‘is’ unitalicized [...] that certainly compels us to keep in mind both readings.²⁶¹

Heaven, both holds kings and beggars, deities and mortals, humans and animals, good and evil but in the earth this balance is distructed by man because the way to keep the two conflicted edges harmonically together is not as easy as in the transcendental world. So, like the old wind’s cry, a cry rises from *The Mountain Tomb, To A Child Dancing in the Wind*: “Pour wine and dance if manhood still have pride, / Bring roses if the rose be yet in bloom;”²⁶²

The desire for sense in the first gyroscopic movement is replaced with the desire for reason in the second gyroscopic movement. While Cuchulain, Goll, Oisín, Druid and Fergus are the protagonists and the legendary past is the main subject matter of the previous quarter, this quarter follows knowledge of reality with art, books, wars, or sages of the time such as *Magi*—“the wise men who came to Bethlehem.”²⁶³ “In their stiff, painted clothes, [...] / With all their ancient faces like rain-beaten stones, / And all their eyes still fixed, hoping to find once more.”²⁶⁴ If *Magi* are the *Mask* of wisdom, the dolls are, as “substance against the flesh, art against life, design against accident,”²⁶⁵ the *Mask* of duplicity since the

²⁵⁹ Robert O’Driscoll, *Symbolism and Some Implications of the Symbolic Approach: William Butler Yeats during the Eighteen-Nineties*, The Dolmen Press, Dublin, 1975, p. 54.

²⁶⁰ D. S. Stokes, *LW*, p. 22.

²⁶¹ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 123.

²⁶² *Variorum*, p. 311.

²⁶³ J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 51.

²⁶⁴ *Variorum*, p. 318.

²⁶⁵ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 84.

whole *oeuvre* is haunted by the “obsession with the elusive task of combining realism with transcendent vision.”²⁶⁶

A doll in the doll-maker’s house
 Looks at the cradle and bawls:
 ‘That is an insult to us.’
 But the oldest of all the dolls,
 Who had seen, being kept for show,
 Generations of his sort,
 Out-screams the whole shelf: ‘Although
 There’s not a man can report
 Evil of this place,
 The man and the woman bring
 Hither, to our disgrace,
 A noisy and filthy thing.’
 Hearing him groan and stretch
 The doll-maker’s wife is aware
 Her husband has heard the wretch,
 And crouched by the arm of his chair,
 She murmurs into his ear,
 Head upon shoulder leant:
 ‘My dear, my dear, O dear.
 It was an accident.’²⁶⁷

As the sacred book says, God created man in his own image; therefore, man stands for perfection of creation. In other words, “the human body is considered the image of creation.”²⁶⁸ However, a typical Yeatsian conflict—“[a] skill grew like a second skin”²⁶⁹—enables a union of two far-fetched entities the created baby by God and by a craftsman. They represent self which pre-exists, and the anti-self which is created. Namely, the poems written with the *Mask* of self in the first chapter which are elevated with heroism and act as *A Coat* give their place to the anti-self’s *Mask* seeking something more concrete:

I made my song a coat
 Covered with embroideries
 Out of old mythologies
 From heel to throat;
 But the fools caught it,
 Wore it in the world’s eyes
 [no break]

²⁶⁶ Macha Louis Rosenthal, *Running to Paradise: Yeats’s Poetic Art*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1994, p. 9.

²⁶⁷ *Variorum*, p. 319.

²⁶⁸ A. J. White, *SPY*, p. 17.

²⁶⁹ M. L. Rosenthal, *RP*, p. xiv.

As though they'd wrought it.
 Song, let them take it,
 For there's more enterprise
 In walking naked.²⁷⁰

The poem is the summary of what has been said about the stylistic change so far. Before totally changing the verse structure, the poem as a messenger like the chorus of antique plays informs the reader. The reason of this change comes from a momentarily observation of life. While looking at *The Wild Swans at Coole*²⁷¹ which have for years showed “to defy time: ‘Unwearing,’ ‘Their hearts have not grown old.’ They even manage to anticipate the structure of eternity, the gyre [...] as the pattern of all things, when—halfway through—they rise from the lake to wheel [...] in ‘great broken rings.’ Linking the ‘still water’ to the ‘still sky’ [...], they are able—unlike man—to live in two elements (to live on earth and in eternity.)”²⁷²

While the time seems changeless for nature, its temporality swiftly advances as *The Four Ages of Man*²⁷³—youth, adulthood, maturity and old age respectively correspond in the poem as body, heart, mind and soul—culminate. As there is “no other youth”²⁷⁴ body, before old age comes, desires to live freely especially at *The Dawn* by declaring: “I would be ignorant as the dawn /... / I would be— for no knowledge is worth a straw— /... / Ignorant and wanton as the dawn.”²⁷⁵ The dawn is deliberately chosen since there is a mystic or magical inspiration in the dawn²⁷⁶—it has been regarded the time for witchcraft, spell or occultism since ancient times—however, it is not the reason when life cycles are considered. The dawn is chosen because “neither night nor day [or as cold and passionate²⁷⁷], the dawn represents a wavering moment in which the self momentarily escapes the poles of its possibility and exists as pure identity.”²⁷⁸ It is an instant of realism which “is created for the common people”²⁷⁹ turns into somehow surrealism:²⁸⁰

²⁷⁰ *Variorum*, p. 320.

²⁷¹ Coole Park is “a state consisted of nearly four thousand acres.” L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 31.

²⁷² J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, pp. 131-32.

²⁷³ For the poem, see p. 66.

²⁷⁴ *Variorum*, p. 391.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

²⁷⁶ Like the dew, “there is something magical about dew.” L. Pokorna, *CEYEP*, 66.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

²⁷⁸ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 79.

²⁷⁹ William Butler Yeats, *Essays and Introductions*, The Macmillan Press, London, p. 227.

I know that I shall meet my fate
 Somewhere among the clouds above;
 Those that I fight²⁸¹ I do not hate,
 Those that I guard I do not love²⁸²;
 My county is Kiltartan Cross²⁸³,
 My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,
 No likely end could bring them loss
 Or leave them happier than before.
 Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
 Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
 A lonely impulse of delight
 Drove to this tumult in the clouds;
 I balanced all, brought all to mind,
 The years to come seemed waste of breath,
 A waste of breath the years behind
 In balance with this life, this death.²⁸⁴

Through one of these surrealist moments *An Irish Airman Foresees His Death*. As “the real world is broken”²⁸⁵ due to the turmoil of the First World War, compelling people to “look death in the face”²⁸⁶ transforms the perfect moments into *Broken Dreams* and “Vague memories, nothing but memories.”²⁸⁷ As Malins asserts, the lower class—whose graves “withered to a bag of bones”²⁸⁸—has no benefit from the results of wars²⁸⁹ yet they are levied in high numbers without considering their age, social status, or country. They, believing that comes from their fate and following an instant patriotic urge, obey the duty which is intermingled with the fighting side and the guarding side. So, “man’s awareness of death”²⁹⁰ is lost with a “waste of breath” and the wisdom of being alive, “... a butterfly /

²⁸⁰ Roughly, it is an artistic and literary movement of the twentieth century which reflects the act of conflicted concepts’ combination such as intellect and irrationalism, unconsciousness and realism etc.

²⁸¹ The battle between “The Germans and the Austrians.” J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 58.

²⁸² “The English. Gregory served in the British Royal Flying Corps, enlisting as a volunteer in 1915. Military conscription was not ordered in Ireland until early 1918, and Nationalists were strongly opposed to Irish involvement in what they saw as “England’s war.” Yeats’s wording stresses that Gregory did not choose to fight out of allegiance to Britain.” *Ibid.*

²⁸³ “The crossroads village nearest to Coole Park.” *Ibid.*

²⁸⁴ *Variorum*, p. 328.

²⁸⁵ A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. 193.

²⁸⁶ *Variorum*, p. 357.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

²⁸⁹ E. Malins, *PY*, p. 84.

²⁹⁰ M. C. Dicu, *WT*, p. 172.

And not a gloomy bird²⁹¹ of prey,”²⁹² is left to decay in a frame of a dream which “is a symbol of both the birth and the death of consciousness, both the richness and the tyranny of the mind’s forces.”²⁹³ These mind forces, Unterecker called as “symbolic creatures—perhaps the *True Mask* and *False Mask*—represent, on one level, ‘desire’ and ‘hatred,’ [*Demon and Beast*] opposed possibilities of personality. Though freedom from them brings momentary relief [...]”²⁹⁴ which comes after a long perning²⁹⁵ in the gyre between hatred and desire,²⁹⁶ the duality of

love and hatred, focusd on the poet’s language has been a turbulent source of emotional energy in its gratest exponents and may even be a definitive characteristic of Anglo-Irish literature, whether, as for Thomas Kinsella, as the consequence of the cultural trauma of a linguistically enforced silence or, as for John Montague, of linguistic mutilation. But, in Yeats, and many other poets, there is another level of loss and aspiration, which has to do not with cultural antinomies but with the fact that writing is never speech and that poetry nevertheless attempts to cross *that* uncrossable linguistic gulf.²⁹⁷

As *Men Improve with the Years* these lines fall: “I am worn out with dreams; / A weather-worn, marble triton²⁹⁸ / Among the streams;”²⁹⁹ of battle between self and anti-self and “man’s uncertain, self-conscious journey from innocence to experience”³⁰⁰ leads to the *Lines Written in Dejection*: “I will talk no more of books or the long war / But walk by the dry thorn until I have found / Some beggar sheltering from the wind,”³⁰¹ which hauntedly *perns* around the quest. Moreover, *On Being asked for a War Poem* with making an irony, poem which is a piece of art and creation, and war which is totally a destruction, the aesthetic and elevated language of the poet turns a prosaic speech:

I think it better that in times like these³⁰²
A poet’s mouth be silent, for in truth
[no break]

²⁹¹ “Birds were often companions of goddesses, either as sinister, death foreboding, images, or as messengers of joy.” L. Pokorna, CEYEP, p. 66. Here a contrast is done between two animals: a butterfly and a raptor respectively one symbolizes innocence and the other guilt, life and death, tranquility and passion etc.

²⁹² *Variorum*, p. 338.

²⁹³ A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. 40.

²⁹⁴ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 164.

²⁹⁵ A created word by the poet meaning whirling or gyring.

²⁹⁶ *Variorum*, p. 400.

²⁹⁷ M. J. Sidnell, *YPP*, p. 38.

²⁹⁸ “Sea-gods in Greek legend.” J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 58.

²⁹⁹ *Variorum*, p. 329.

³⁰⁰ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 15.

³⁰¹ *Variorum*, p. 351.

³⁰² “World War I began in August 1914 and continued until 1918.” J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 65.

We have no gift to set a statesman right;
 He has had enough of meddling who can please
 A young girl in the indolence of her youth,
 Or an old man upon a winter's night.³⁰³

“The savage colloquialism is more in harmony with the poet's true attitude towards his subject.”³⁰⁴ These lines which “[...] are lightly spoken, / Maybe a breath of politic words” cause *The Rose Tree*, a kind of The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, to fade. Hence:

‘It needs to be but watered,’
 James Connolly³⁰⁵ replied,
 ‘To make the green come out again
 And spread on every side,
 And shake the blossom from the bud
 To be the garden's pride.’

‘But where can we draw water,’³⁰⁶
 Said Pearse to Connolly,
 ‘When all the wells are parched away?
 O plain as plain can be
 There's nothing but our own red blood
 Can make a right Rose Tree.’³⁰⁷

According to Kantarcioğlu, there is a contrast between the symbolic meanings of The Tree of Life and The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The first one “symbolizes a state of morality ready to embrace the flood of life spontaneously and with one's whole being and this requires a completely integrated self. [On the other hand], man's purely intellectual approach to reality is associated with sterility and with the Tree of Knowledge which means the acquisition of the knowledge of evil at the cost of the state of innocence and the knowledge of good.”³⁰⁸ Similar to this, Parkinson sees these two trees as the conflict of the active and the contemplative life.³⁰⁹ While *The Rose Tree* is being allusion for Ireland, it

³⁰³ *Variorum*, p. 359.

³⁰⁴ Jon Stallworthy, *Between the Lines: Yeats's Poetry in the Making*, Oxford University Press, London, 1963, p. 6.

³⁰⁵ “One of the prominent revolutionaries in the disastrous Easter Rising of 1916. L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 31.

³⁰⁶ “Yeats's own questions in poems, not intended for response; rather, they set up a series of uncertainties, or possibilities.” P. McDonald, *SP*, p. 149.

³⁰⁷ *Variorum*, p. 396.

³⁰⁸ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, pp. 56-57

³⁰⁹ Thomas Francis Parkinson, *W. B. Yeats, Self-critic: A Study of His Early Verse, and The Later Poetry*, University of California Press, London, 1971, p. 14.

also is holding the passion for the dualistic structure of life in that it refers to both for the rose, The Tree of Knowledge, and the tree, The Tree of Life itself.

The slowly transition from symbolism to imagism, “turning from physical passion to [...] wisdom,”³¹⁰ and perning³¹¹ the first gyre into the second gyre become proofs for the self-referentiality in the poems. This does not mean that Yeats refers to him”self”, rather he refers to the self in genreal. Thus, “surely no other poet of our century has been at once so present and so absent in his poems,”³¹² it is clearly observed in some poems that “[...] Yeats rejects depersonalization in art defended by Pound and Eliot and stresses the importance of the personality, the relationship between the persona of a poem and the implied poet. However, relying on the personality as the source of poetry does not mean being sentimental or confessional for Yeats. He objectifies what is personal through mythification.”³¹³ The poem *To Be Carved On A Stone At Thoor Ballylee* can be an example for reflecting the self which is in a gyroscopic quest:

I, the poet William Yeats,
With old mill boards and sea-green slates,
And smithy work from the Gort³¹⁴ forge,
Restored this tower for my wife George;
And may these characters remain
When all is ruin once again.³¹⁵

³¹⁰ A. J. White, SPY, p. 85.

³¹¹ The word is specifically used in some poems such as *Shepherd and Goatherd*, *Demon and Beast*, *Sailing to Byzantium* and *The Spirit Medium* to refer the gyroscopic pattern of two things.

³¹² Perloff Marjorie, “The Traditional of Myself: The Autobiographical Mode of Yeats”, *Journal of Modern Literature*, Vol. 4/3, (1975, Feb), p. 573.

³¹³ S. Kantarcioğlu, TSRPYE, p. 66.

³¹⁴ “A town in county Galway near Yeats’s home, Thoor Ballylee. The name signifies a tilled field. L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 74.

³¹⁵ *Variorum*, p. 406.

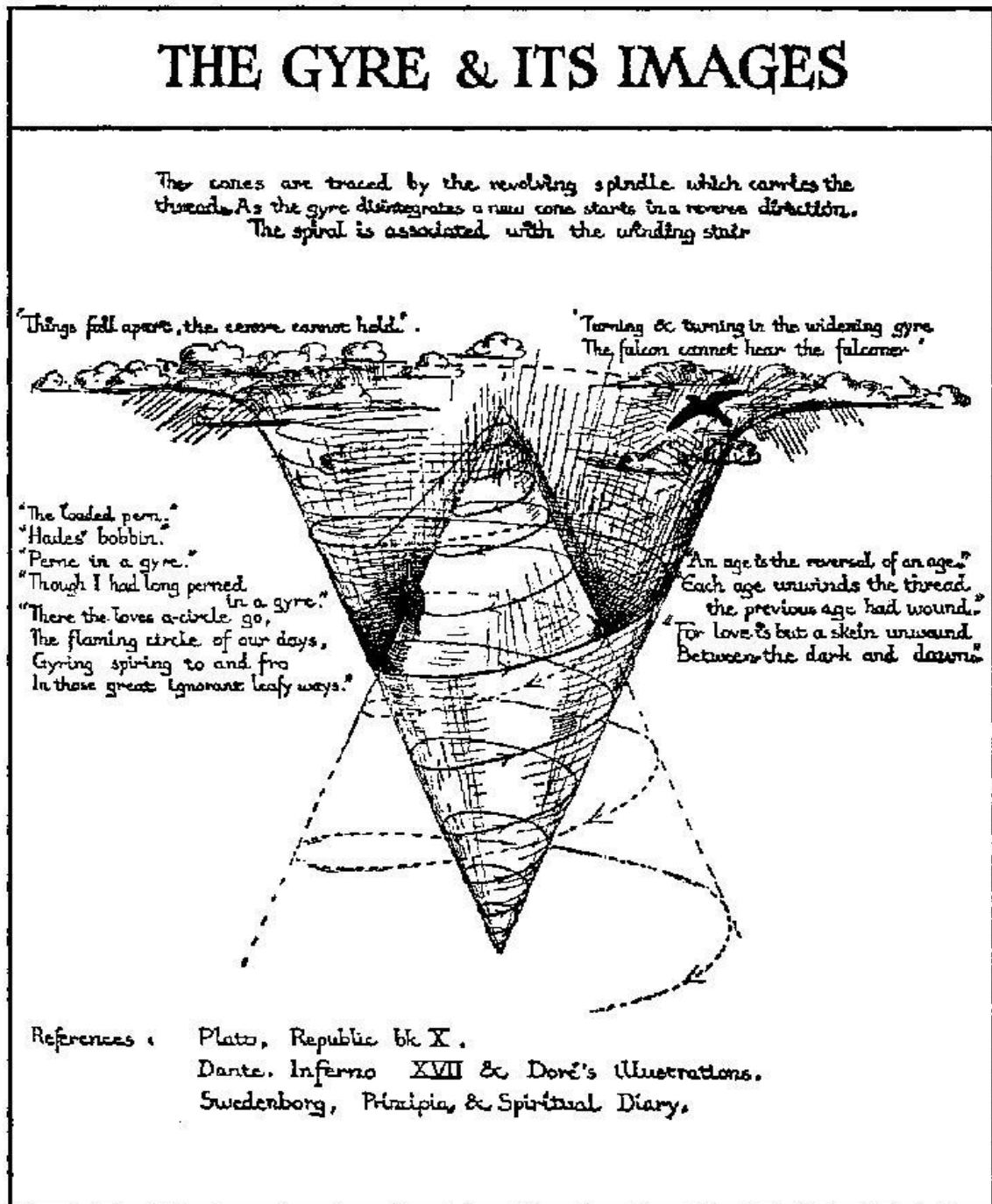


Figure 12. The Gyre & Its Images, 2013 by Michael Caines.³¹⁶

³¹⁶ An analysis of the gyroscopic structure of *The Second Coming*.

CHAPTER THREE

TEMPTATIO: ODYSSEY OF EQUILIBRIUM IN THE LATE PERIOD (1928-1938)

It is the tragedy of Sisyphus. In the myth, Sisyphus had to roll the rock to the top of the mountain, only to watch it roll back again and again. Thus, life struggles to achieve complexity and significance, and is again and again crushed down to its most primitive level. It is a series of icy Wormwoods, over and over. Maybe those nihilist philosophers are right; maybe this is all we can expect of the universe, a relentless crushing of life and spirit, because the equilibrium state of the cosmos is death...³¹⁷

If Sisyphus puts Death in chains³¹⁸ and Knowledge inside rock,³¹⁹ it can be said that he finds a way to instrumentalize death against life and to transform tragedy into delight because “we begin to live when we have conceived life as tragedy.”³²⁰ Based on this belief, in *The Great Wheel*, unlike the last phase reflecting wisdom, body, termination and also inception, the direction of the self quest and the facets of the two faces/phases in the middle of the quest are towards to the bright side reflecting beauty, innocence, and spirit. This is not a stance against inevitable tragedy of death but “a stance based upon the paradox of joy in tragedy”³²¹ which is gained after experiencing equilibrium in life. Sisyphus comprehends

³¹⁷ Arthur C. Clarke and Stephen Baxter, *The Light of Other Days*, Tor Doherty Associates, New York, 2000, p. 78.

³¹⁸ Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, trans. by Justin O’Brien, Vintage Books, New York, 1991, p. 119.

³¹⁹ According to Greek myth, Sisyphus, a notorious king of Corinth, steals Gods’ secrets and defies them. Hence, Zeus empowers Thanatos, son of Night and Darkness and representative spirit or god of Death, to punish him by chaining in the Underworld. However, Sisyphus eludes and chains Death instead. After this trickery, Ares, the god of war, unlooses Thanatos and hands Sisyphus in to Hades. When he cheats also Hades without resigning to his fate, he is sentenced to an eternal punishment which finishes his quest for knowledge yet starts for wisdom.

³²⁰ W. B. Yeats, *AY*, p. 123.

³²¹ B. L. Croft, *SCPY*, p. 85.

“the whole human predicament”³²² with finding the balance of tragedy and delight. So, in the third phase—*Temptatio*—the primary aim of the quest becomes to find equilibrium of two edges between death and life. However, this phase, the odyssey, should not be confused with the previously mentioned *Unity of Being* which is based upon the balance of self and anti-self’s quest. In this phase the balance stands for soul, which “moves always toward its opposite in an endless dialectical rhythm,”³²³ and the body which follows a linear development from vigour to decay. Since soul, holding self and anti-self’s essences, reflects the immortal side of life; however, body holding physical world’s values, reflects the mortal side. Through the odyssey for equilibrium self reaches wisdom deriving from knowledge of a duel with conflicted forces especially evil and good. According to Eliot, “so far as we are human, what we do must be either evil or good; so far as we do evil or good, we are human; and it is better, in a paradoxical way, to do evil than to do nothing: at least, we exist. It is true to say that the glory of man is his capacity for salvation; it is also true to say that his glory is his capacity for damnation.”³²⁴ As Patel claims, knowledge, self-knowledge, makes self a tragic character, and the tragedy brings wisdom which turns all into a tragic gaiety. “Tragic gaiety transfigured the dread of the ultimate fate of man into an affirmation of his true greatness and grandeur.”³²⁵ Since “*The Rose* is the chief symbol of Yeats’s youth, so *The Tower* [the first poem of the late period] is the chief symbol of his maturity, an emblem of both rootedness and transcendence, of the accretion of history and the purity of solitude.”³²⁶

What shall I do with this absurdity—
 O heart, O troubled heart—this caricature,
 Decrepit age that has been tied to me
 As to a dog’s tail?

Never had I more
 Excited, passionate, fantastical
 Imagination, nor an ear and eye
 That more expected the impossible—
 No, not in boyhood when with rod and fly,

...

And I declare my faith:
 [no break]

³²² R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 11.

³²³ B. L. Croft, *SCPY*, p. 40.

³²⁴ Thomas Stearns Eliot, *Selected Essays-Baudelaire (3rd ed.)*, Faber & Faber, London, 1951, p. 429.

³²⁵ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 150.

³²⁶ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 256.

I mock Plotinus' thought
 And cry in Plato's³²⁷ teeth,
 Death and life were not
 Till man made up the whole,
 Made lock, stock and barrel
 Out of his bitter soul,³²⁸

With a caricature heart, a decrepit age, and an absurd declaration, the bitter soul proves that “human intellect is an unsentimental force. It is the original Pandora. Art, meanwhile, is our inward, transforming mirror.”³²⁹ The poetic art of the third section springing from that Pandora which mirrors a different stance and brings some changes from the late Romantic approach such as free verse structure, more direct wordings and a transition from symbolism to imagism, is one of the examples of the early Modern poetry of Yeats's. While “the purely lyrical poetry of ancient Ireland may be roughly divided into two sections—that of the professional bard attached to the court and person of a chief; and that of the unattached poet, whether monk or itinerant bard,”³³⁰ in the twentieth century, “the modern or protomodern³³¹”³³² Irish verse transforms its previous position into a more complicated and elaborate style:

What if the glory of escutcheoned doors,
 And buildings that a haughtier age designed,
 The pacing to and fro on polished floors
 Amid great chambers and long galleries, lined
 With famous portraits of our ancestors;
 What if those things the greatest of mankind
 Consider most to magnify, or to bless,
 But take our greatness with our bitterness?³³³

After the First World War and the Civil War in Ireland (1922-23),³³⁴ the “Postromantic”³³⁵ tone of “the faerie beauty of Ireland”³³⁶ become nothing but buried moments in the memory

³²⁷ Greek philosopher, Aristotle's teacher, Socrates's student and the institutor of the Academy in Athens considered as the first foundation of Western higher education.

³²⁸ *Variorum*, pp. 409-15.

³²⁹ M. L. Rosenthal, *RP*, p. viii.

³³⁰ K. Mayer, *AIT*, p. xi.

³³¹ It “means before Modernism.” Clement Greenberg, “Modern and Postmodern”, *William Dobell Memorial Lecture*, Sydney, (1979, Oct) Arts: 54, No.6, p. 4.

³³² A. R. Grossman, *PKEY*, p. xiii.

³³³ *Variorum*, p. 418.

³³⁴ A “fought between those who accepted the treaty signed with England in 1922, creating the Irish Free State but leaving Northern Ireland as part of Great Britain, and those who opposed the treaty on the grounds that they refused to accept a partition of the island of Ireland; the military wing of the latter faction was the Irish Republican Army.” M. O'Neill, *RLSPY*, p. 75.

³³⁵ V. M. Bell, *YLF*, p. 15.

that of Irish's with its glorified doors, polished floors, great chambers and long galleries in the *Ancestral Houses*. The transparent distinction of these two literary periods reflects upon the verse material of the Irish letters. Under the reason for this literary change there lie two political events: "Romanticism is closely associated with the French Revolution whereas Modernism is more closely associated with the First World War."³³⁷ The attitudes of these two periods differ also on time concept. Since "the Modernists celebrate the present to build the future. They do not emphasize past because they see themselves as alienated from the past. In contrast to this, the Romantics forget about the present and celebrate the past."³³⁸

An ancient bridge, and a more ancient tower,
 A farmhouse that is sheltered by its wall,
 An acre of stony ground,
 Where the symbolic rose can break in flower,
 Old ragged elms, old thorns innumerable,
 The sound of the rain or sound
 Of every wind that blows;
 The stilted water-hen
 Crossing Stream again
 Scared by the splashing of a dozen cows;
 A winding stair, a chamber arched with stone,
 A grey stone fireplace with an open hearth,
 A candle and written page.
 ...
 Forgetting and forgot;
 And I, that after me
 My bodily heirs may find,
 To exalt a lonely mind,
 Befitting emblems of adversity.³³⁹

The Rose, previously a "proud Rose," now turns into only an artificial symbol. The pages are written, and the previous gaiety, is under "a grey stone", in a kind of "deserted human world". They leave "befitting emblems of adversity" behind them. Likewise, the past which is previously a shelter from that "deserted human world" turns into an image full of old lies.

³³⁶ In the cited text, it is used as a metaphor for Maud Gonne, Yeats's lifelong love; however, it is adapted for Ireland. Samuel N. Welch, "William Butler Yeats: Nationalism, Mythology, and the New Irish Tradition" (Undergraduate Thesis, Salem State University, 2015), p. 10.

³³⁷ Hatice Avcı, "The Contribution of Romanticism to Modernism as Seen in Keats, Ibsen and Yeats" (Master Thesis, Eastern Mediterranean University, 2012), p. 5.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³³⁹ *Variorum*, pp. 419-20.

Because “reality itself can never be found in things of the world,”³⁴⁰ in other words in the created world of images which becomes a new shelter and a new source. So, in the third period:

the poet places the work of art as superior ideal of creative life above the earthly human existence, so his interest is represented by the artefact. He discusses about the faculties and human powers acquired in the phenomenological existence, which are apparent and spring into consciousness, but the principles are acquired through birth and they remain immutable even in the afterlife. So Yeats believes that we know history because we have created it, just in the same way that God knows nature. We cannot know for sure, however, if W. B. Yeats was seeking a poetic formula or a philosophical truth. In his subjective reason the self begins a journey of knowledge and creation, looking for its antithetic, named by the poet as phantasmagoria. His development from the dreaming idealist to the sceptic and finally conserver makes him a blend of contradictions and antinomies of love and hate, hope and despair, joy and bitterness.³⁴¹

This created history is an ancient labyrinth, and it holds “mummy truths to tell,”³⁴² yet they become the illusions of reality:

Civilisation is hooped together, brought
Under a rule, under the semblance of peace
By manifold illusion; but man’s life is thought,
And he, despite his terror, cannot cease
Ravening through century after century,
Ravening, raging, and uprooting that he may come
Into the desolation of reality:
Egypt and Greece, good-bye, and good-bye, Rome!
Hermits upon Mount Meru or Everest,
Caverned in night under the drifted snow,
Or where that snow and winter’s dreadful blast
Beat down upon their naked bodies, know
That day brings round the night, that before dawn
His glory and his monuments are gone.³⁴³

Wars, rebels, political turmoil, and the gap between past and present of the twentieth century take several things from people which create a loss in the sense of belonging that leads the poet to write poems titled with the words *My House*, *My Table*, *My Door*, *My Window* etc. A nauseating existentialism emerges causing a change the perception of things and essences:

³⁴⁰ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 253.

³⁴¹ M. C. Dicu, WT, pp. 12-13.

³⁴² *Variorum*, p. 474.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 563.

An affable Irregular,
 A heavily-built Falstaffian man,
 Comes cracking jokes of civil war
 As though to die by gunshot were
 The finest play under the sun.³⁴⁴

The new world has an absurd order with an irregular fellowship and an absurd sense of humour. The two unrelated things are combined: the traditional unity of conflicted dualities appear with jokes and war. This irregularity also reflects upon nature which is “no longer a sympathetic participator in the human drama. It became merely a neutral, detached spectator. Since everything existed only in so far as the subject it, even God became the object of man’s knowledge, no longer its motivator.”³⁴⁵

We are closed in, and the key is turned
 On our uncertainty; somewhere
 A man is killed, or a house burned,
 Yet no clear fact to be discerned:
 Come build in the empty house of the stare.³⁴⁶

A barricade of stone or of wood;
 Some fourteen days of civil war;
 Last night they trundled down the road
 That dead young soldier in his blood:
 Come build in the empty house of the stare.

We had fed the heart on fantasies,
 The heart’s grown brutal from the fare;
 More Substance in our enmities
 Than in our love; O honey-bees,
 Come build in the empty house of the stare.³⁴⁷

The Stare’s Nest by my Window was written “during the chaos of the Civil War, and [...] the poem emerged out of “an overmastering desire not to grow unhappy or embittered, not to lose all sense of the beauty of nature.”³⁴⁸ Under the influence of the time, humans are observed as caged in the darkness and the obscurity of modern reality, and God is beyond reach that is why the verb *come* is used like a prayer. However, the poem does not have answers to the prayer, in other words, God does not reply this call which forces the man to find a different authority or an answer inside the inner self which declares that “Doubtless I

³⁴⁴ *Variorum*, pp. 423-24.

³⁴⁵ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 24.

³⁴⁶ “West of Ireland name for a starling.” M. O’Neill, *RLSPY*, p. 153.

³⁴⁷ *Variorum*, p. 425.

³⁴⁸ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 233.

spoke or sang what I had heard / In broken sentences. My soul had found / All happiness in its own cause or ground.”³⁴⁹ The theme and the structure of the poem convey the reader to the Modernist movement which has “three most crucial areas [...] to struggle [...], firstly, the concept of a self, a controlling force [...]; secondly, the idea of a reality [...]; and finally, its own mechanisms of interchange between subjective inside and objective outside.”³⁵⁰ These three points summarize the third chapter’s poetry. The loss of nature, fate and historical connection lead man to seek a shelter inside self to escape:

But is there any comfort to be found?
 ...
 Some moralist or mythological poet³⁵¹
 Compares the solitary soul to a swan;
 I am satisfied with that,
 Satisfied if a troubled mirror³⁵² show it,
 Before that brief gleam of its life be gone,
 An image of its state;
 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.

A man in his own secret meditation
 Is lost amid the labyrinth that he has made
 In art or politics;³⁵³

According to Harper and Hood, the poet is aware of that the philosophic goals could be achieved only through myth;³⁵⁴ which is “true account of the remote past,”³⁵⁵ and “memory of nature that reveals symbols and events from the past.”³⁵⁶ However, the connection between myths “two contrasting worlds, the supernatural world based on mythology and natural solid world based on Christian Orthodoxy traditions”³⁵⁷ are dispatched. Hence, “the human faculty”³⁵⁸ needs another source which comes with a transition and a transformation

³⁴⁹ *Variorum*, p. 557.

³⁵⁰ R. Emig, *MP*, p. 4.

³⁵¹ “Possibly Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound*, II, v, 72-3: ‘My soul is an enchanted boat / Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float.’” M. O’Neill, *RLSPY*, p. 159.

³⁵² “The phrase [...] of the relationship in this poem between language and experience.” *Ibid.*

³⁵³ *Variorum*, pp. 429-31.

³⁵⁴ George Mills Harper and Walter Kelly Hood (eds.), *A Critical Edition of Yeats's A Vision (1925)*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, 1978, p. xviii.

³⁵⁵ L. Smidova, *IFTL*, p. 10.

³⁵⁶ A. J. White, *SPY*, p. 11.

³⁵⁷ M. A. Hassan, *MYSP*, p. 54.

³⁵⁸ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 24.

“myth through imagery.”³⁵⁹ This imagery in Yeats’s poems which are “in the great tradition of Milton, Blake, Coleridge and Shelley”, comes “from *Anima Mundi*, the source of life, according to Plato.”³⁶⁰ In *Among School Children*, the source of life is combined with dance which “is previously³⁶¹ depicted as being the favourite past time of fairies,”³⁶² now is a way of body-soul balance:

Labour is blossoming or dancing where
The body is not bruised to pleasure soul.
Nor beauty born out of its own despair,
Nor blear-eyed wisdom out of midnight oil.
O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,
Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance?³⁶³

Dance is used to underline the harmony of body-soul unity which is once found in old dancing Ireland:

*‘I am of Ireland,
And the Holy Land of Ireland,
And time runs on,’ cried she.
‘Come out of charity,
Come dance with me in Ireland.’*³⁶⁴

However, in the twentieth century *Those Dancing Days are Gone*:

Come, let me sing into your ear;
Those dancing days are gone,
All that silk and satin gear;
Crouch upon a stone,
Wrapping that foul body up
In as foul a rag:
I carry the sun³⁶⁵ in a golden cup.
The moon³⁶⁶ in a silver bag.³⁶⁷

The transformation of the quest is as clear as self’s transformation. For instance, “the transitional period between the early and later phases, is marked by a gradual renunciation

³⁵⁹ E. Malins, *PY*, p. 65.

³⁶⁰ (qtd. in) *Ibid.*, p. xi.

³⁶¹ See *The Stolen Child*.

³⁶² L. Pokorna, *CEYEP*, p. 81.

³⁶³ *Variorum*, pp. 445-46.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 526.

³⁶⁵ “A symbol of objectivity for Yeats, and hence of the refusal or failure of imagination.” J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 61.

³⁶⁶ “A symbol of subjectivity for Yeats and hence associated with mythology, Romanticism, and imagination of his earlier poetry.” *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ *Variorum*, 524-25.

of the misty and dream-like quality of much of the earlier verse, and a lesser reliance on elaborate mythology and folklore, turning away from ‘islands’ and a return to ‘earth.’”³⁶⁸ And this period can also be interpreted as “as a movement away from the pursuit of a Shelleyan ideal beauty toward a Syngean³⁶⁹ embrace of grotesque reality.”³⁷⁰ The self quest continues seeking balance of these contraries in the earth. In the poem, this balance is gained with holding both moon and sun. Silk and satin are references to the ocean of surrounding Ireland. That ocean is previously tranquil as satin and silk, but now it resembles a rag crouched upon a stone. “Both the moon and ocean symbolize the infinite physical world but at the same time they stand for the spiritual world since the secrets of the moon and the ocean are only confined to God,”³⁷¹ and “God has to be seen through darkness.”³⁷² However, the sun—mostly associated with male symbolic archetypes in mythology—is in a golden cup—mostly associated with female symbolic archetypes³⁷³—is kept in a silver bag. The dance is the dance of light and dark, and also the harmonic unity of the dualities occur.

To escape the influence of this changing new world to a safe area is needed like an imaginary place “because such a context is alone variable enough to enable [the poet] to make use of an unorthodox space in order to develop new ideas which are unconventional enough to break with a concept of strict rationality and the increasing abstraction of a modern world.” These abstractions “reveal themselves only through images which, and that makes them so interesting, can be interpreted in conflicting ways. This is, of course, what makes Yeats a modern.”³⁷⁴ For instance, in the *Mad as the Mist and Snow* madness, a single subject, is directly approached with a plain language:

Bolt and bar the shutter,
For the foul winds blow:
Our minds are at their best this night,
[no break]

³⁶⁸ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 99.

³⁶⁹ John Millington Synge is one of the contemporaries of Yeats, the founders of the Abbey Theatre and pioneers of the Irish Literary Renaissance with his poems and plays.

³⁷⁰ R. J. Finneran, *YACTS*, p. 178.

³⁷¹ Ş. İnceoğlu, *FM*, p. 36.

³⁷² Neil Mann, Matthew Gibson, Claire Nally (eds.), *W. B. Yeats's a Vision: Explications and Contexts*, Clemson University Digital Press, South Carolina, 1920, p. 161.

³⁷³ See the poem *The Mother of God* in which motherhood and womb words refer to the moon: “...I bore / The Heavens in my womb.” *Variorum*, p. 499.

³⁷⁴ T. Und and R. Uta Von. “YPDLRM”, p. 124.

And I seem to know
That everything outside us is
Mad as the mist and snow.

Horace³⁷⁵ there by Homer³⁷⁶ stands,
Plato stands below,
And here is Tully's³⁷⁷ open page.
How many years ago
Were you and I unlettered lads
Mad as the mist and snow?

You ask what makes me sigh, old friend,
What makes me shudder so?
I shudder and I sigh to think
That even Cicero
And many-minded Homer were
Mad as the mist and snow.³⁷⁸

Madness is expressed with knowledge. The structure of the poem resembles two gyres' converging movements in that firstly from outside to inside. Outmost depiction belongs to nature which is macrocosm. The wind, one of the mostly applied natural elements in almost four chapters, is depicted as an enemy which is why in the twentieth century man is alienated from nature due to self isolation against historical and cultural roots. As a result of this situation, man pursues an escape and seeks for a shelter from nature, once an acquaintance but now is an outsider. If it is true to say that man is the soul of the universe, yet currently an outsider, the urge of bolting or barring the shutter derives from the mentioned disconnection of man—microcosm—with nature—macrocosm—respectively the soul and the body. After framing of the outside world, man is put in the center. Now, the self, *I*, is alone with anti-self, *us*. Discovering that self is not the sole entity of the inner world, but it is with another self man reaches self-knowledge which brings madness. Man tries to escape once again, and the same gyroscopic movement starts yet this time it is from inside to outside, from microcosm of *us* to macrocosm of past. Namely, Horace, Homer, Plato and Cicero (Tully) are leading philosophers and poets of the great civilizations. As in the third line of the second stanza underlines with the phrase of an “open page”, they have

³⁷⁵ Roman critic, satirist and poet.

³⁷⁶ Greek poet and putative author of epic poems the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey*.

³⁷⁷ Anglicized surname of Marcus Tullius Cicero who is “the great orator of Roman antiquity, also eminent as politician and philosopher and as the purist of prose stylists.” L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 28.

³⁷⁸ *Variorum*, pp. 523-24.

been studied since ancient times. However, knowledge is equaled to madness: “How many years ago / Were you and I unlettered lads / Mad as the mist and snow?” Again, the pronoun *you* refers to the ancient thinkers and *I unlettered lads* refers to self and anti-self by proving that *I* is not a single entity but plural—lads. Lastly, the third stanza supports the mentioned claim, there is a connection between knowledge and madness, and with the refrain, repeated three times, becomes “the return of the thing that simply refuses to go away, the question that repeats and repeats because it cannot be answered.”³⁷⁹

Besides, clarifying self and anti-self, body and soul, man and nature relationship, *The Great Wheel* and also gyres are kind of explanation to the historical cycles.³⁸⁰ According to the image, there are *Four Ages of Man*—represented by four parts in the poem as body, heart, mind and soul—can be likened to the four quarters of *The Great Wheel* respectively *Pulchritudo*-youth, *Violentia*-adulthood, *Temptatio*-maturity, and *Sapientia*-old age and also the *Four Faculties*: *Mask*, desire to be, *Will*, desire to continue, *Creative Mind*, desire to think, *Body of Fate*, desire to unite death and birth. On the other hand, the ages can resemble to the *Four Faculties* respectively *Mask* corresponds the desire to be which appears in youth, *Will* accounts for the desire to continue in adulthood, *Creative Mind* equals to the desire to think in maturity, and lastly *Body of Fate* is applicable for the desire to unite death with life. Furthermore, “in Yeats’s early poetry we find the four elements: fire, air, water and earth to correspond to the four human faculties respectively: imagination, intellect, feeling and the senses”³⁸¹ Moreover, “in his earlier poetry Yeats’s preference for spirit to matter, for the ideal to the real or for imagination—mostly seen “in Romantic poetry, pioneering by Coleridge as he explains the imagination is ‘the highest faculty of man’ that ‘synthesizes raw materials into concrete images’”³⁸²—reason, is obvious. [...] The struggle seems to be between the body and spirit in his youth. Nature wins, the spirit fails. In his last period, man fights against old age. He desires youth and energy, but “God shall win. The body will be defeated.”³⁸³

³⁷⁹ P. McDonald, *SP*, p. 65.

³⁸⁰ Because the subject matter is not directly relevant to the main argument of this thesis, it is suitable for another study.

³⁸¹ S. Kantarcıoğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 83.

³⁸² (qtd. in) John Nkemngong Nkengasong, *W. B. Yeats: Realms of the Romantic Imagination*, Cuvillier, Göttingen, 2011, p. 5.

³⁸³ S. Kantarcıoğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 119.

He with body waged a fight,
But body won; it walks upright.

Then he struggled with the heart;
Innocence and peace depart.

Then he struggled with the mind;
His proud heart he left behind.

Now his wars on God begin;
At stroke of midnight God shall win.³⁸⁴

The life is taken as an image in the poem, and it is discussed level by level. In the first phase, the bodily fight defeats, and the second phase which requires a battle with heart leading to the intellectual war, starts. However, this defeat does not prevent soul from the quest. While passing over the third phase to the last phase, the struggle to unite death—defeat—and life—victory—becomes evident. Yet, the last phase is the combat of spirit with death at which *A Prayer for Old Age* rises to Heaven; “God guard me from those thoughts men think / In the mind alone.”³⁸⁵ However, human beings are desperate to time’s destructive power:

‘O cruel Death, give three things back,’
Sang a bone upon the shore
‘A child found all a child can lack,
Whether of pleasure or of rest,
Upon the abundance of my breast’:
A bone wave-whitened and dried in the wind.
‘Three dear things that women know,’
Sang a bone upon the shore;
‘A man if I but held him so
When my body was alive
Found all the pleasure that life gave’:
A bone wave-whitened and dried in the wind.
‘The third thing that I think of yet,’
Sang a bone upon the shore,
‘Is that morning when I met
Face to face my rightful man
And did after stretch and yawn’:
*A bone wave-whitened and dried in the wind.*³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴ *Variorum*, p. 561.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 553.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 521.

The poem is a combination of three essences in life which are soul, body and anti-self respectively juxtaposed in the refrain *Sang* [soul] *a bone* [body] *upon the shore* [the other self/anti-self]. In the first stanza, soul is represented by a child who has pure *pleasure* of life. Singing a song initially requires at least momentarily freedom and a purged soul from earthly affairs. Despite the fact that “identity is constituted in relation to another,”³⁸⁷ in the second stanza, body is presented with a woman who is portrayed as superior to man in that she can both give birth a child, a man. Therefore, a woman knows that three things in life which are free soul coming with a child, an alive body in the physical world and man represents anti-self when the genders are considered. Since, woman has her soul, and she is somehow completed with her anti-self: man or her *Daimon*. In the last stanza, man finds his anti-self, and so the equilibrium of life and death is achieved. This process constantly occurs in life because the birth—hope—and death—dread—are also constructed by man:

Nor dread nor hope attend
A dying animal;
A man awaits his end
Dreading and hoping all;
Many times he died,
Many times rose again.
A great man in his pride
Confronting murderous men
Casts derision upon
Supersession of breath;
He knows death to the bone—
Man has created death.³⁸⁸

Man experiences rise and fall in life, like gyres’ movements, and these fluctuations intertwine. When “Man’s own resinous heart...”³⁸⁹ reaches the moment “Birth-hour and death-hour meet, / Or, as great sages say, / Men dance on deathless feet”,³⁹⁰ the self quest moves up to the second phase.³⁹¹ As underlined earlier, the dualities or antinomies are observed as harmonic elements, not chaotic. The poem *Vacillation*, both holding the dualities of *primary* and *antithetical* and also the unity of death and life pair:

³⁸⁷ Edward Larrissy, *Yeats the Poet: The Measures of Difference*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hertfordshire, 1994, p. 89.

³⁸⁸ *Variorum*, p. 476.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 438.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 496.

³⁹¹ For the first level, see p. 44, citation 237.

Between extremities
 Man runs his course;
 A brand, or flaming breath.
 Comes to destroy
 All those antinomies
 Of day and night;
 The body calls it death,
 The heart remorse.
 But if these be right
 What is joy?³⁹²

In the poems, there is no preference one over the other,³⁹³ the emphasis is equally balanced upon the two edges because “‘Fair and foul are near of kin, / And fair needs foul,’...”³⁹⁴ And “if ‘fair’ is the soul, ‘foul’ is the body, they are the indispensable parts [like self and anti-self] of the same whole.”³⁹⁵ To sum up, Yeats’s

early poems are full of simple contrasts between pairs, and such contrasts often provide the basic poetic structure: man versus nature, the domesticated versus the wild, the human versus the faery, the temporal versus the changeless, the modern versus the ancient, the familiar versus the remote, and so on. In his later poetry, he resolves these ‘antinomies of day and night’, achieving a resolution of opposites either in a *tertium quid*³⁹⁶ or else in a sense of the interpenetration of opposites.³⁹⁷

Whether it is an interpenetration of opposites or *tertium quid*, *There* is a specific moment of self-realization and a sphere of internalization the quest:

There all the barrel-hoops are knit,
 There all the serpent-tails are bit,
 There all the gyres converge in one,
 There all the planets drop in the Sun.³⁹⁸

The poem,

There, assembles all the crucial mythological circles—‘barrel-hoops,’ serpents with tails in their mouths, ‘gyres,’ and planet paths—into Yeats’s image for ultimate form of things. This image is the sphere. Sun, converging gyres, knit barrel-hoops—no matter what we visualize—resolve finally into a design of eternal coherence—of God—which in the world above (‘There’)

³⁹² *Variorum*, pp. 499-500.

³⁹³ Hamid Reza Ghadiri, “Yeats’s Ambivalence: An Analysis of his Poems ‘Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen’ and ‘Meditations in Time of Civil War’”, *Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet Databse*, 2015, p. 35.

³⁹⁴ *Variorum*, p. 513.

³⁹⁵ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 164.

³⁹⁶ In Greek means “a third thing that is indefinite and undefined but is related to two definite or known things.” The Oxford English Dictionary.

³⁹⁷ A. Norman Jeffares, and K. G. W. Cross (eds.), *In Excited Reverie-A Centenary Tribute to William Butler Yeats*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 1965, p. 50.

³⁹⁸ *Variorum*, p. 557.

contains all in its organic unity, a unity which opposes yet reflects what on earth is fragmented into 'multiplicity'.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁹ J. Unterecker, *ARGY*, p. 248.

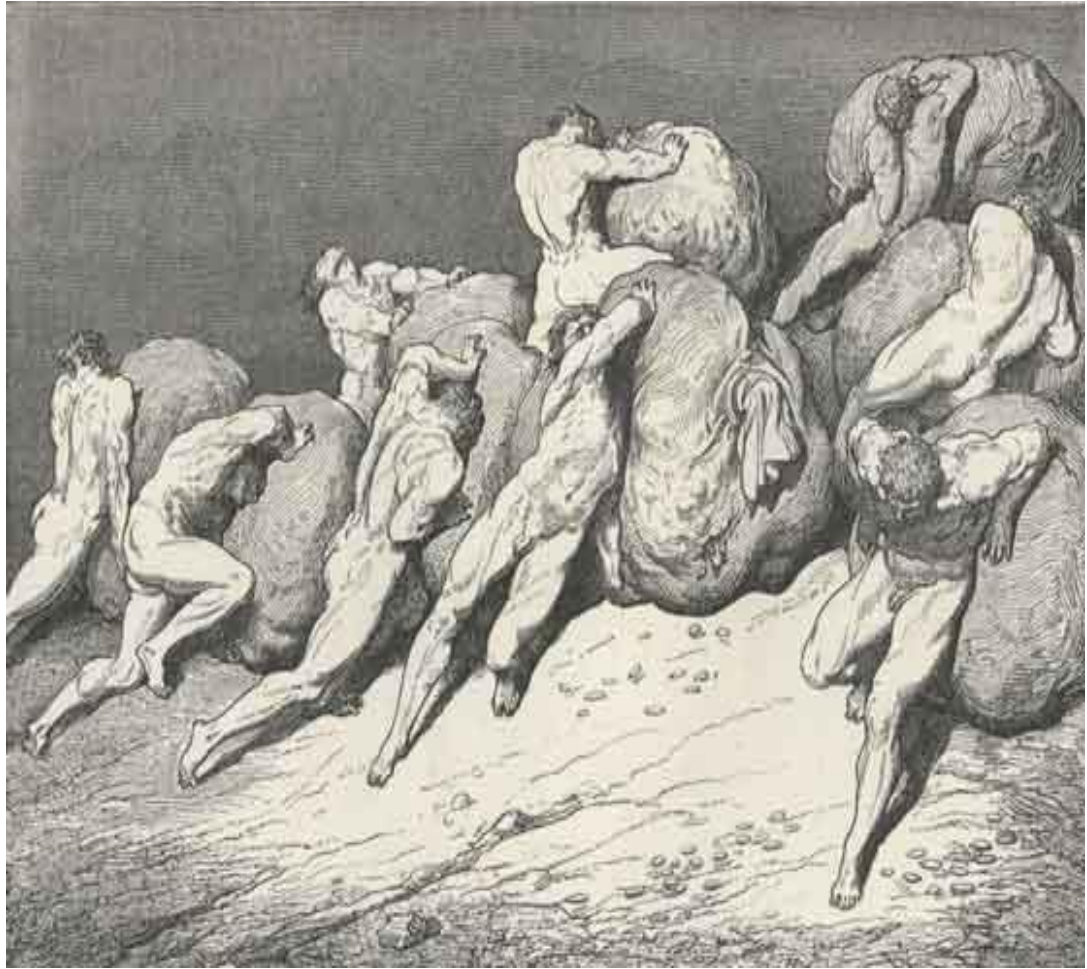


Figure 13. Team Sisyphus. (Gustave Doré's illustration to Dante's "Inferno." Plate XXII: Canto VII: The hoarders and wasters.)⁴⁰⁰

⁴⁰⁰ Sisyphus's struggle for the self quest starting with rolling up the rock to the mountain yet ending up returning to the first phase with wisdom acquisition is likened to the self quest in Yeats's poems.

CHAPTER FOUR

SAPIENTIA: GYROSCOPIC TURN OF THE SELF QUEST IN THE LATER PERIOD (1938-1939)

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, unremembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning;
At the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree⁴⁰¹

Man, unlike in the first phase of the quest, is alone in the fourth phase since the distance between the mythical roots and the physical world is far-off. To Pokorna, “Ireland’s history is a downfall from heroic unity to modern fragmentation.”⁴⁰² This fragmentation is necessary not only for the animate but also the inanimate part of life because of the way for actualization the self quest, man has to break all the burdens. In Yeats’s poetry, the aim to revive the nation becomes a burden for the self-fulfillment. The speaker of the poems goes to the transcendent world and makes self wander a life in the immortal’s world. Later, self invites the immortals to the mortal’s world. So, it can be asserted that, like the wanderer self, “Yeats situates himself in [...] death’s antechamber [...] and he travels to the afterlife-realm of Immortals.”⁴⁰³ There is always a traffic to the

⁴⁰¹ Thomas Stearns Eliot, *T. S. Eliot Collected Poems 1909-1962*, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York, 1943, p. 208.

⁴⁰² (qtd. in) L. Pokorna, CEYEP, p. 21.

⁴⁰³ H. Vendler, *OSD*, p. 27.

transcendent world to mortal world, and from mortal world to the transcendent. So, this leads to the ghosts of Plato, Roger Casement,⁴⁰⁴ Parnell,⁴⁰⁵ etc. wander in the earth:

O what has made that sudden noise?
 What on the threshold stands?
 It never crossed the sea because
 John Bull⁴⁰⁶ and the sea are friends;
 But this is not the old sea
 Nor this the old seashore.
 What gave that roar of mockery,
 That roar in the sea's roar?
The ghost of Roger Casement
*Is beating on the door.*⁴⁰⁷

Like Emerson's statement to make⁴⁰⁸ individual Bible,⁴⁰⁹ Eliot reveals⁴¹⁰ a modern reality of recreating an individual belief of uniting ends with beginnings and reframing the infinity of human capacity in the twentieth century. In order to complete this modern task, man has to continue explorations and unite the edges just as the serpent Ouroboros. Since "every experience is a paradox in that it means to be absolute, and yet is relative; in that it somehow always goes beyond itself and yet never escapes itself."⁴¹¹ Therefore,—some⁴¹² divide the last year of Yeats's poetry into two sections: *New Poems* and *Last Poems*—to explain that this is not the terminal, but the fourth phase of the quest which does not finish, rather it starts as there are and will be new stories to tell:

⁴⁰⁴ "Irish Protestant and devoted nationalist." L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 23.

⁴⁰⁵ "Irish nationalist leader. Frequently called the uncrowned king of Ireland." *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁴⁰⁶ "Popularly, a name for England, supposedly personifying the English character as one of the robust solidity and forthrightness. The image of John Bull was established by Dr. John Arbuthnot in *The History of John Bull*, published in 1727, with a preface by Pope and Swift." *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴⁰⁷ *Variorum*, p. 583.

⁴⁰⁸ My emphasis.

⁴⁰⁹ "Make your own Bible. Select and collect all the words and sentences that in all your readings have been to you like the blast of a trumpet." Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks (1835-1838)*, William H. Gilman (ed.) Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2009, 16 Vols. 5, p. 186.

⁴¹⁰ T. S. Eliot, *CP*, p. 151.

There is no beginning, no movement, no peace and no end
 But noise without speech, food without taste.
 Without delay, without haste
 We would build the beginning and the end of the street.
 We build the meaning:

⁴¹¹ Leon Surette, *The Modern Dilemma: Wallace Stevens, T.S. Eliot, and Humanism*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2008, p. 75.

⁴¹² Richard J. Finneran (ed.), *W. B. Yeats-The Poems Revised*, The Macmillan Press, London, 1983, pp. xvi-xvii.

What we call the beginning is often the end
 And to make an end is to make a beginning.
 The end is where we start from. And every phase
 And sentence that is right (where every word is at home
 Taking its place to support the others,
 The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,
 An easy commerce of the old and the new,
 The common word exact without vulgarity,
 The formal word precise but not pedantic,
 The complete consort dancing together)
 Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,
 Every poem an epitaph. And any action
 Is a step to the block, to the fire, down the sea's throat
 Or to an illegible stone: and that is where we start.
 We die with the dying:
 See, they depart, and we go with them.
 We are born with the dead.⁴¹³

As Patel asserts, “the struggle itself was always more valuable and important, for Yeats, than the final reconciliation. [...] There is greater power and glory in the quest or pilgrimage undertaken than the end of the journey.”⁴¹⁴ The poem, *What Then?*, supports this claim thanks to its title holding up a rhetorical question which is deliberately remained unanswered to emphasize the prosecution of the quest:

His chosen comrades thought at school
 He must grow a famous man;
 He thought the same and lived by rule,
 All his twenties crammed with toil;
 ‘*What then?*’ sang Plato’s ghost. ‘*What then?*’⁴¹⁵

From the first chapter till this section, the poems clearly display that “the passionate self and the stylized self are both necessary for an understanding of the whole man”⁴¹⁶ and to continue the quest. Similar to the second chapter’s poem with hypophora and anthypophora,⁴¹⁷ in the poem, *Are You Content?*, the stylized self/self asks a question in the title and the passionate self/anti-self directly gives the reply: “I cannot, but I am not content.”⁴¹⁸ The conflict of these two selves helps understand the Yeatsian poetry which “stands on the crucial intersection between the literary epochs of the Victorians and the

⁴¹³ T. S. Eliot, *CP*, pp. 207-208.

⁴¹⁴ R. Patel, *YIUB*, pp. 51-52.

⁴¹⁵ *Variorum*, p. 576.

⁴¹⁶ S. Deane, *BS*, p. 117.

⁴¹⁷ See p. 35.

⁴¹⁸ *Variorum*, p. 604.

Romantics, however, in his later poems he shares the desire of the modernists to ‘find [the self] and not an image’.⁴¹⁹ While in the first period there is a seeking for “an escape from the actual day-to-day world by flying to isles of bliss and gaiety, in the later, maturer poetry [there is] like Nietzsche, [a rejection of] the real world [...]. In other words, what was a basic conflict right from the beginning, became a strong motivating principle of [the] later work when the conflict converted itself into an artistic strategy based on the idea of self and anti-self.”⁴²⁰ Because “the polarities may be distinguished from each other, but cannot be separated. The poet unites opposites such as heart and intellect, self and soul, thought and feeling, and similarly.”⁴²¹ The lyrical harmony of these polarities is observed in *An Acre of Grass* in which life is represented by greeny grass, but at the same time the grass is on the grave representer of death:

Picture and book remain,
 An acre of green grass
 For air and exercise,
 Now strength of body goes;
 Midnight, an old house
 Where nothing stirs but a mouse.

My temptation is quiet.
 Here at life's end
 Neither loose imagination,
 Nor the mill of the mind
 Consuming its rag and bone,
 Can make the truth known.

Grant me an old man's frenzy,
 Myself must I remake
 Till I am Timon and Lear⁴²²
 Or that William Blake
 Who beat upon the wall
 Till Truth obeyed his call;

[break]

⁴¹⁹ Sanjhee Gianchandani, “The Passage of Time, Youth and Old Age in William Butler Yeats's Poetry” *The Golden Line*, 2015, Vol. 1/3, p. 40.

⁴²⁰ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 42.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴²² “Luis MacNiece comments that Timon and Lear ‘are chosen because in both of them passion was stronger than reason and in both of them disillusionment, anger, and hatred, which would seem to lead to nihilism, lead actually to a most articulate assertion of human vitality and individuality,’” D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 35.

A mind Michael Angelo⁴²³ knew
 That can pierce the clouds,
 Or inspired by frenzy
 Shake the dead in their shrouds;
 Forgotten else by mankind,
 An old man's eagle mind.⁴²⁴

With the comparisons of art [picture] and literature [book]; soul [temptation] and body; imagination and mind; appearance [rag] and reality [bone]; and poetry [Blake], and drama [Shakespeare] the poet “defies the loss of emotional and intellectual intensity that putatively comes with old age.”⁴²⁵ Until the last breath or even “in their shrouds,” “Yeats insisted on seeing man heroically fighting against the odds of life and transcending its given limitations.”⁴²⁶ Like *The Wild Old Wicked Man* who tries to “make the Muses sing”⁴²⁷ again, yet accepts the brokenness⁴²⁸ of the old age, the second childhood or the enemy⁴²⁹ and death which is “a natural part of human existence in the example of three poems: *The Wheel, Youth and Age, The New Faces*”⁴³⁰ says that “A young man in the dark am I / But a wild old man in the light”.⁴³¹ At this point, it can be said that the poet has “a dipolar view, an ‘either and or’ or ‘both-and’ way of looking at things”⁴³² leading the reader to the gyre metaphor, a figure of two edges, which is initially used as a term in the first chapter then as a symbol in the second chapter and as an image in the previous chapter. To Kantarcioğlu, “the gyres stand for the world of appearances. They symbolize the opposing elements of time and space such as sun and moon; day and night; life and death; love and hate; man and God; man and woman; man and beast; man and his spiritual archetype—his Daimon.”⁴³³ The poems discussed in this chapter externalize the metaphors since life is a

⁴²³ “Stands as an almost mythic incarnation of the antithetical type. [...] Not only was Michelangelo the consummate artist, but he was an artist who remained vigorously active and creative into old age.” D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 35.

⁴²⁴ *Variorum*, pp. 575-76.

⁴²⁵ D. A. Ross, *CCY*, p. 35.

⁴²⁶ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 148.

⁴²⁷ *Variorum*, p. 601.

⁴²⁸ E. Larrissy, *YPMD*, p. 179.

⁴²⁹ Virginia D. Pruitt and Raymond D. Pruitt, “W. B. Yeats on Old Age, Death and Immortality”, *Colby Quarterly*, Vol. 24/1, (1988, Mar), p. 38.

⁴³⁰ M. C. Dicu, *WT*, p. 164.

⁴³¹ *Variorum*, p. 589.

⁴³² R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 135.

⁴³³ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 78.

metaphor for death, and death is a metaphor for life. Unlike Bell's claim "in metaphors, the traffic is always running from nature to human,"⁴³⁴ it is sometimes human to nature.

The Great Wheel, "a metaphor for the poetry,"⁴³⁵ and the titles of the previous section's poems, *Fragments* or *Parting*, give clues to the reader about this sections' poems which have a grumpy old man struggling to find a balance of the passionate heart still seeking *The Spur* to sing a *song* despite his "waning imaginative powers"⁴³⁶ in company with *dance* like the movements of *The Gyres* which are called as "the anguish of birth and death cry in the same instant. Life is no series of emanations from divine reason such as the Cabalists imagine, but an irrational bitterness, no orderly descent from level to level, no waterfall but a whirlpool, a gyre."⁴³⁷ By "whirling, the gyres are trying to complete their predetermined cycles, running towards the goal of spherical wholeness,"⁴³⁸ the wholeness of death and life:

You think it horrible that lust and rage
Should dance attention upon my old age;
They were not such a plague when I was young;
What else have I to spur me into song?⁴³⁹

While the first section is opened with songs of shepherds, deities or fairies in isles and gardens, the fourth section is opened with ghostly depictions of *Those Images*, *Beautiful Lofty Things*, *What Was Lost*, *The Black Tower* and *An Acre of Grass* which is an example of euphemism⁴⁴⁰ for the tomb. The tomb is a reference for the static world and the eternal world stands for death or ending; on the other hand, grass signifying change stands for nature or life's animate side, and beginnings. Although certain natural elements are used such as wind, grass, hills, sea etc., "nature imagery is less frequent in Yeats's later poetry, as he turns for inspiration from nature to art. Yeats's later poetry reflects his frustration at aging, as well as the uproar and confusion caused by Ireland's civil war. Themes in his later poetry include intellectual ancestry, the permanence of art, and art's influential power as

⁴³⁴ V. M. Bell, *YLF*, p. 60.

⁴³⁵ B. L. Croft, *SCPY*, p. 9.

⁴³⁶ James H. O'Brien, "Yeats's Discoveries of Self in the Wild Swans at Coole", *Colby Quarterly*, Vol. 8/1, (1968, Mar), p. 1.

⁴³⁷ *AV*, p. 40.

⁴³⁸ S. Kantarcioğlu, *TSRPYE*, p. 121.

⁴³⁹ *Variorum*, p. 591.

⁴⁴⁰ A figure of speech to express an unpleasant phrase or word sound in a less indecent or offensive way.

the conveyor of values.”⁴⁴¹ This frustration comes from the fear of inevitable old age carrying with debilitation and fatefully death:

Could Crazy Jane⁴⁴² put off old age
And ranting time renew,
Could that old god rise up again
We'd drink a can or two,
And out and lay our leadership
On country and on town,
Throw likely couples into bed
And knock the others down.
*From mountain to mountain ride the fierce horsemen.*⁴⁴³

Because “man is genetically programmed to prefer order and balance,”⁴⁴⁴ the old age causing a discrepancy between spirit and body contradicts with order—one of the main characteristics of the quest. Hence, self firstly tries to deny the old age’s existence, yet later it accepts because there is a more powerful authority: death. Even though, the belief in Crazy Jane and Jack the Journeyman: “... God shall come,”⁴⁴⁵ death is there since God is dead—the creator of death itself. Before Modernism, the natural balance and order are monopolized by religious authorities either by the church or directly by God; however, with the Modern Age, this system is turned upside down. So, in art or literature, God is sometimes personified as human beings⁴⁴⁶ and sometimes annihilated. Moreover, science disappoints man and nature is no longer a guide or a muse for the man that is explained in the last line of *The Two Trees*’s: “Gaze no more in the bitter glass.”⁴⁴⁷ Hence, the modernity is depicted as filthy in *The Statues* when it is compared with the nature based pagan religion of the first chapter:

We Irish, born into that ancient sect
But thrown upon this filthy modern tide
And by its formless spawning fury wrecked,
Climb to our proper dark, that we may trace
The lineaments of a plummet-measured face.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴¹ D. S. Stokes, LW, p. 36.

⁴⁴² A character giving her name to a series of poems in *The Winding Stair and Other Poems*. See, *Variorum*, pp. 507-14.

⁴⁴³ *Variorum*, p. 606.

⁴⁴⁴ R. Patel, *YIUB*, p. 18.

⁴⁴⁵ *Variorum*, p. 511.

⁴⁴⁶ See the poem *The Two Trees*: “...when God slept...” *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 611.

The pre-Christian belief is praised in the first line with the word ancient, however, the second line is sharply separated with the conjunction “but,” and modernity is depicted with negative connotations such as formless, fury, and wrecked. Man becomes alienated in the modern times yet still with hope to maintain or to be maintained the self quest with prays: “Childless I thought, ‘My children may find here / Deep-rooted things,’ but never foresaw its end,”⁴⁴⁹ Therefore, “the hidden world of poetry begs us to re-familiarise ourselves with our ancient mythological past and the other world of the imagination; a world beyond the senses that like our knowledge of the ancient Celts in neither quite solid or well defined and yet it has an ever-enhancing effect on the imagination.”⁴⁵⁰ It is necessary to make the quest eternal with a gyroscopic move of uniting the end with beginning and overcoming the burdens of created lines of the world. For instance, the poem *In Tara’s Halls*—as previously mentioned in the first chapter, *Tara* is an ancient seat of the high kings of Ireland and “it is a placename commonly featured in the Celtic, heroic tales of the revival.”⁴⁵¹—conflictedly reminds the reader the transcendental bounds which “are reflections of a different kind of reality, one that modernity sought to efface,”⁴⁵² and the mortal bounds in the limited and physical world. The Tara which was praised before as a place for the kings, later uprooted which is a necessary destruction for the sake of self quest. If Tara is a place for revival that explains the quest’s pattern which has to gyroscopically turn to the beginning and proceed, then the poem:

A man I praise that once in Tara’s Halls
Said to the woman on his knees, ‘Lie still.
My hundredth year is at an end. I think
That something is about to happen, I think
That the adventure of old age begins.⁴⁵³

shows a typical Yeatsian feature which illuminates that life is composed of beginnings and ends by showing the conflicted edges of the mythical bounds, and the modern age, or the dialogue between a woman and a man. Since,

in the early poetry of Yeats, wherein the verse is generally imitative in style, the conflict remained largely vague and peripheral. There is very little attempt at realism. The predominant mood is one of other-worldliness. And,

⁴⁴⁹ *Variorum*, p. 603.

⁴⁵⁰ A. Wyeth, *HWP*, p. 142.

⁴⁵¹ E. O’Brien, *QII*, p. 52.

⁴⁵² M. C. Dicu, *WT*, p. 70.

⁴⁵³ *Variorum*, p. 609.

the themes are drawn from Celtic legends and ballads. The verse is dreamy and misty, the manner descriptive but external and weak. [...] in the early Yeats, the search for Unity remained uncertain and distinct. Unity is 'stated' but no attempt is made to 'earn' it. The transition from the early, to the later style was achieved in terms of a gradual change from vagueness and generalization to a hardness and definite strength.⁴⁵⁴

The directness in the language reflects upon the themes, and the reader is aware of that she/he is reading a poem and the speaker is the poet not a character or a voice. Moreover, as in the previous poem recalling past, *The Circus Animal Desertion* reminds *The Two Trees* recommending to gaze in one's own heart, and it reminds the never-ending goal of quest: seeking and being on the road:

I sought a theme and sought for it in vain,
I sought it daily for six weeks or so.
Maybe at last, being but a broken man,
I must be satisfied with my heart, although
Winter and summer till old age began
My circus animals were all on show,
Those stilted boys, that burnished chariot,
Lion and woman and the Lord knows what.

II

What can I but enumerate old themes?
First that sea-rider Oisín led by the nose
Through three enchanted islands, allegorical dreams,
Vain gaiety, vain battle, vain repose,
Themes of the embittered heart, or so it seems,
That might adorn old songs or courtly shows;
But what cared I that set him on to ride,
I, starved for the bosom of his faery bride?⁴⁵⁵

As the statement for Ibsen who is "a Modernist [with] a Romantic background,"⁴⁵⁶ Yeats late for Romanticism but early for Modernism experiences a gradual development in the world of Irish and English letters. Hence,

Yeats's *Last Poems* show a Modernist technique of writing poetry- that is of imagism and intertextuality. As opposed to the Romantic style of poetry in his earlier poems, Yeats appropriates the Modernist style of representation, perhaps because the 'shock value' of such a technique suits the theme of sexual and intellectual energy that the poet is seeking for as an antidote for old age's loneliness. The speaker is caught in a world of such spiritual and

⁴⁵⁴ R. Patel, *YIUB*, pp. 85-94.

⁴⁵⁵ *Variorum*, p. 629.

⁴⁵⁶ H. Avci, *CRM*, p. 28.

bodily stasis that the Dantean hell seems to be recreated in the existential angst of the present.⁴⁵⁷

Because the angst of Modernity turns into alienation and isolation:

John Synge, I and Augusta Gregory, thought
 All that we did, all that we said or sang
 Must come from contact with the soil, from that
 Contact everything Antaeus⁴⁵⁸-like grew strong.
 We three alone in modern times had brought
 Everything down to that sole test again,
 Dream of the noble and the beggar-man.

VII

And here's John Synge himself, that rooted man,
 'Forgetting human words,' a grave deep face.
 You that would judge me, do not judge alone
 This book or that, come to this hallowed place
 Where my friends' portraits hang and look thereon;
 Ireland's history in their lineaments trace;
 Think where man's glory most begins and ends,
 And say my glory was I had such friends.⁴⁵⁹

However, in the second stanza "Irishry"⁴⁶⁰ or "Irishism"⁴⁶¹ is praised with some of the pioneers of Irish Literary Movement. There is a distinction between their art which has their strength from mother earth like god Antaeus and the weakness of being alone in the "filthy modern tide." Gyroscopic turn to the beginning is emphasized to survive and maintain the quest.

If "art is a way of protecting the represented object from the effects of time, change and destruction to keep it 'unstained', which invests the objects with immortality,"⁴⁶² then cave walls or stones are perfectly serve this target. Since the first man in the cave, by drawing the walls, man has proved his existence as if saying that 'I am/was here.' For instance, the poem *Lapis Lazuli* which is written after getting a stone carved gift.

⁴⁵⁷ Nilanjan Chakraborty, "'Myself must I remake': Old Age, the 'Material' and the 'Spirit' in Yeats' Last Poems" *The Golden Line*, 2015, p. 44.

⁴⁵⁸ "In classical mythology, Antaeus was a giant, son of Poseidon, the god of the sea, and Ge, goddess of the earth. As long as Antaeus touched the earth, he drew new strength from his mother and was invincible." L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 8.

⁴⁵⁹ *Variorum*, pp. 603-604.

⁴⁶⁰ W. B. Yeats, *E&I*, p. 526.

⁴⁶¹ C. J. Rawson, *YAIL*, p. 72.

⁴⁶² H. Avci, *CRM*, p. 2.



Figure 14. A Carved Lapis Lazuli Mountain 19th Century.

It is a stone which is mentioned in one of the letters of Yeats to Dorothy Wellesley, a British poet, author and editor, “[...] a piece carved by some Chinese sculptor into the semblance of a mountain with temple, trees, paths, and an ascetic and pupil about to climb the mountain.”⁴⁶³ These three men, representing everyman, are also about to cross a bridge presumably to reach the temple or to *transcend* it:

I have heard that hysterical women say
 They are sick of the palette and fiddle-bow.
 Of poets that are always gay,
 For everybody knows or else should know
 That if nothing drastic is done
 Aeroplane and Zeppelin⁴⁶⁴ will come out.
 Pitch like King Billy⁴⁶⁵ bomb-balls in
 Until the town lie beaten flat.

[break]

⁴⁶³ [qtd. in] Michael O’Neill, *RLSPY*, p. 173.

⁴⁶⁴ “A reference to Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859-1941), whose planes and zeppelins bombed England in World War I.” L. I. Conner, *YD*, p. 15.

⁴⁶⁵ “William III of England (1650-1702), he used ‘bomb-balls,’ that is artillery, against the Irish in the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.” *Ibid.*

All perform their tragic play,
 There struts Hamlet, there is Lear,⁴⁶⁶
 That's Ophelia, that Cordelia;
 Yet they, should the last scene be there,
 The great stage curtain about to drop,
 If worthy their prominent part in the play,
 Do not break up their lines to weep.
 They know that Hamlet and Lear are gay;
 Gaiety transfiguring all that dread.
 All men have aimed at, found and lost;
 Black out; Heaven blazing into the head:
 Tragedy wrought to its uttermost.
 Though Hamlet rambles and Lear rages,
 And all the drop-scenes drop at once
 Upon a hundred thousand stages,
 It cannot grow by an inch or an ounce.

On their own feet they came, or on shipboard,⁷
 Camel-back; horse-back, ass-back, mule-back,
 Old civilisations put to the sword.
 Then they and their wisdom went to rack:
 No handiwork of Callimachus⁴⁶⁷,
 Who handled marble as if it were bronze,
 Made draperies that seemed to rise
 When sea-wind swept the corner, stands;
 His long lamp-chimney shaped like the stem
 Of a slender palm, stood but a day;
 All things fall and are built again,
 And those that build them again are gay.

Two Chinamen, behind them a third,
 Are carved in lapis lazuli,
 Over them flies a long-legged bird,
 A symbol of longevity;
 The third, doubtless a serving-man,
 Carries a musical instrument.

Every discoloration of the stone,
 Every accidental crack or dent,
 Seems a water-course or an avalanche,
 Or lofty slope where it still snows
 Though doubtless plum or cherry-branch
 [no break]

⁴⁶⁶ "Yeats invokes Hamlet, Lear, Ophelia and Cordelia, Shakespeare's tragic fold. These do not weep, but in the moment of supreme calamity discover an intensity that erupts a transcendental joy." D. A. Ross, *CCY*, pp. 137-38.

⁴⁶⁷ "Greek sculptor of the fifth century B. C.E." J. Pethicia, *YPDP*, p. 115.

Sweetens the little half-way house
 Those Chinamen climb towards, and I
 Delight to imagine them seated there;
 There, on the mountain and the sky,
 On all the tragic scene they stare.
 One asks for mournful melodies;
 Accomplished fingers begin to play.
 Their eyes mid many wrinkles, their eyes,
 Their ancient, glittering eyes, are gay.⁴⁶⁸

The poem opens with a controversial gender based matter: madness, especially the madness of the women. From the ancient times until modern age, woman—Jane Eyre by Brontë, Mrs. Dalloway by Woolf, Nora by Ibsen, Daisy by Fitzgerald, Esther by Plath—has been associated with madness, witchcraft or illness hereat she is either caged in an attic or drowned in water. To describe her *otherness* male writers referred some words to woman organs or menstruation period. For instance, like lunatic, the word hysteric which is directly explained at the beginning of the second line as “They are sick”, derives from Latin *hystericus* and Greek *hysterikos* words which mean “womb” and uncontrollable neurologic laughter disorder related with uterus. Hence, the gaiety of artists, musicians and poets who are most likely men, *unreasonably discomforts women*. Moreover, Shakespeare’s two tragedies *Hamlet* and *King Lear* are intentionally mentioned for the *madness* of their main tragic characters such as Hamlet and Ophelia performed in their tragic plays. Besides, the second stanza again reminds Shakespeare’s line in *As You Like It* “All the world’s a stage, / And all the men and women merely players”⁴⁶⁹ with the lines:

All perform their tragic play,
 There struts Hamlet, there is Lear,
 That’s Ophelia, that Cordelia;
 Yet they, should the last scene be there,
 The great stage curtain about to drop,
 If worthy their prominent part in the play,

The next lines “All men have aimed at, found and lost” and “All things fall and are built again,” summarize the whole aforecited expression in Yeats’s poetry: life is a quest of beginnings and ends which bring both gaiety and tragedy. There is somewhere “joy is to be

⁴⁶⁸ *Variorum*, pp. 565-67.

⁴⁶⁹ William James Craig (ed.), *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Oxford University Press, London, 1928, 2. 7. 139-140.

found occasionally as we run between contrary positions.”⁴⁷⁰ The warrior of the first chapter, becomes *Cuchulain Comforted* in this chapter: “And great water sighed for love / And the wind sighed too”⁴⁷¹ in which the conflict of gaiety and tragedy is united and the stories of *The Stolen Child*, *The Sad Shepherd*, *The Madness of King Goll*, *The Wandering Angus* all turn into a dialogue between *The Man and the Echo*:

Man

In a cleft that’s christened Alt
 Under broken stone I halt
 At the bottom of a pit
 That broad noon has never lit,
 And shout a secret to the stone.
 All that I have said and done,
 Now that I am old and ill,
 Turns into a question till
 I lie awake night after night
 And never get the answers right.
 Did that play of mine send out
 Certain men the English shot?
 Did words of mine put too great strain
 On that woman’s reeling brain?
 Could my spoken words have checked
 That whereby a house lay wrecked?
 And all seems evil until I
 Sleepless would lie down and die.

Echo

Lie down and die.

Man

That were to shirk
 The spiritual intellect’s great work,
 And shirk it in vain. There is no release
 In a bodkin or disease,
 Nor can there be work so great
 As that which cleans man’s dirty slate.
 While man can still his body keep
 Wine or love drug him to sleep,
 Waking he thanks the Lord that he
 Has body and its stupidity,
 But body gone he sleeps no more,
 And till his intellect grows sure
 That all’s arranged in one clear view,
 Pursues the thoughts that I pursue,
 [no break]

⁴⁷⁰ E. Larrissy, *YPMD*, p. 181.

⁴⁷¹ *Variorum*, p. 611.

Then stands in judgment on his soul,
 And, all work done, dismisses all
 Out of intellect and sight
 And sinks at last into the night.

Echo

Into the night.

Man

O Rocky Voice,
 Shall we in that great night rejoice?
 What do we know but that we face
 One another in this place?
 But hush, for I have lost the theme,
 Its joy or night-seem but a dream;
 Up there some hawk or owl has struck,
 Dropping out of sky or rock,
 A stricken rabbit is crying out,
 And its cry distracts my thought.⁴⁷²

As “he is of the tribe of Wordsworth and Coleridge, Blake and Shelley,”⁴⁷³ Yeats “who was among the first modernists by virtue of being the last romantic [...], is both romantic and modern in the way that Sartre’s claim that ‘existence precedes essence’ and that all human value derives from that proposition.”⁴⁷⁴ The lines emphasize previously mentioned self quest’s structure which consists of asking and seeking the answer:

All that I have said and done,
 Now that I am old and ill,
 Turns into a question till
 I lie awake night after night
 And never get the answers right.

Like Macbeth who “does murder sleep,”⁴⁷⁵ the poet will have sleepless nights until echo says that “We’ll learn that sleeping is not death.”⁴⁷⁶ If it is true that “poetry is dialectical,”⁴⁷⁷ then it can be asserted that *The Man and the Echo* consists of two voices a kind of self and anti-self’s dialogue. The first speaker is Man and the second one is Echo, and then again Man following Echo, however, when Man says his last words, Echo’s speech is required which means that the dialogue will continue. On the other hand, since “Yeats confronts opposite with opposite, flesh with spirit, love with hate, torturer with

⁴⁷² *Variorum*, pp. 632-33.

⁴⁷³ D. A. Stauffer, “YMP”, p. 230.

⁴⁷⁴ V. M. Bell, *YLF*, p. 14.

⁴⁷⁵ W. J. Craig, *CWS*, 2. 2. 37.

⁴⁷⁶ *Variorum*, p. 266.

⁴⁷⁷ S. Smith, *YCI*, p. 17.

tortured, light with dark,”⁴⁷⁸ self confronts anti-self. The last pair is centered in the problematique pattern of Yeats’s poems and gives rise to a question: Does darkness shelter light or light shelter darkness? “For nothing can be sole or whole,”⁴⁷⁹ the unity of both is needed and the possible answer for the question: Why do the two faces of *Violentia* and *Temptatio* quarters’ look towards *Pulchritudo*, in other words, light, lies in Eliot’s lines “So the darkness shall be the light”⁴⁸⁰ or Echo’s two combined lines: “Lie down and die / Into the light.”

⁴⁷⁸ N. Grene and J. O’Riordan, *YCTU*, p. 139.

⁴⁷⁹ *Variorum*, p. 513.

⁴⁸⁰ T.S. Eliot, *CP*, p.186.

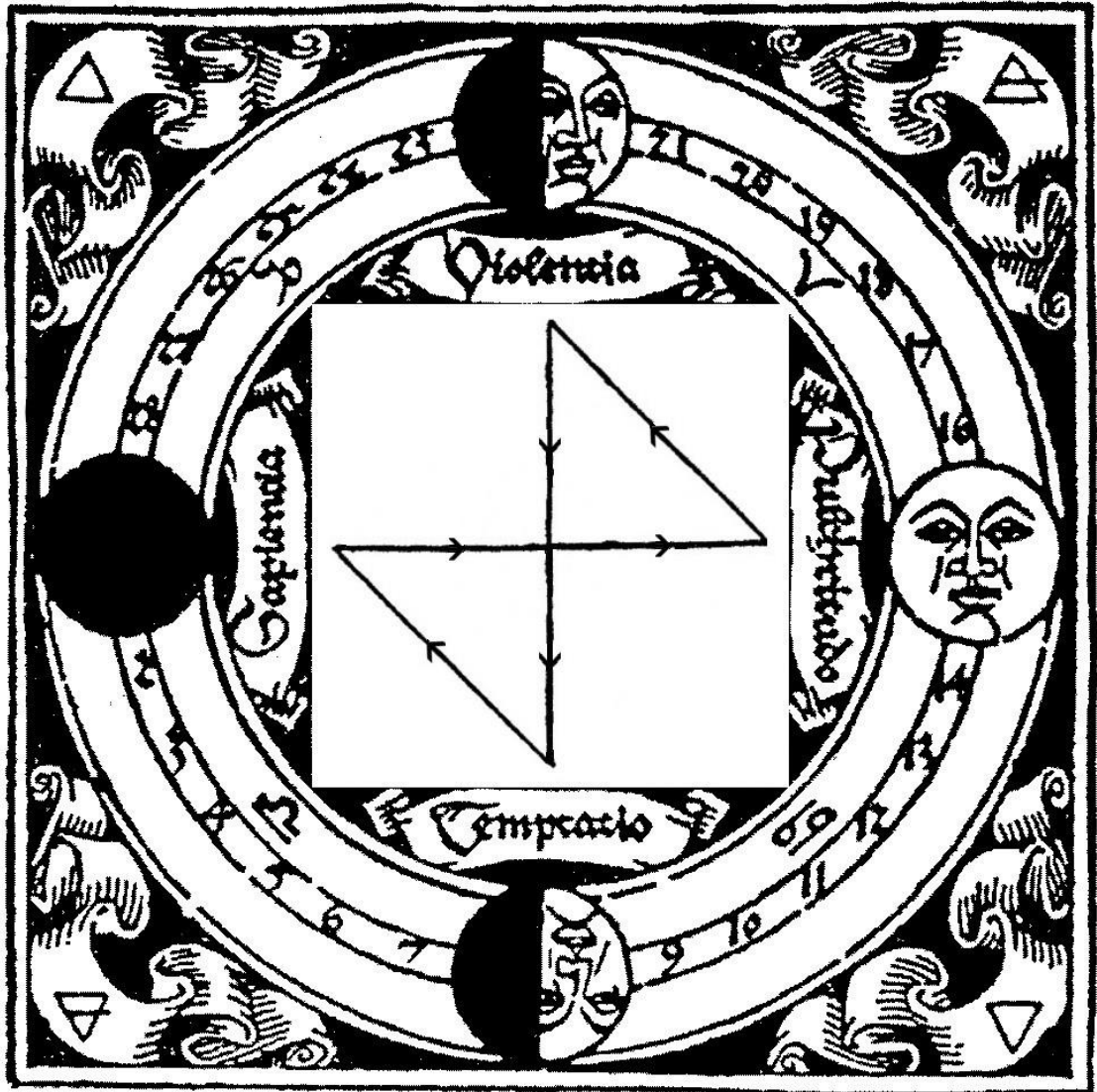


Figure 15. The Gyroscopic Movement of Self During the Quest.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁸¹ In the poems, self starts its quest from *Pulchritudo* and follows the arrow direction.

CONCLUSION

This study, limited only to the analysis of the selected poems of William Butler Yeats's poetry (1889-1939), has attempted to explore self, quest, self quest and poetry relationships, and the gyroscopic transformation of self and quest within the frame of the late-Romantic and the early-Modernist verse. Along with the lyrical change in the poems, self, by a desire for knowledge, has gone through four phases of *The Great Wheel* from light to darkness respectively *Pulchritudo*, complete subjectivity; *Violentia*, waning subjectivity; *Temptatio*, waxing objectivity; and *Sapientia*, complete objectivity. During the gyroscopic quest, self has discovered the anti-self—one of the entities in the essence—has made the quest eternal by harmonically uniting the antithetical edges, in Yeatsian words gyres (one is waxing and the other one is waning) in life such as death and birth; past and present; dark and light; tragedy and gaiety; transcendent and mortal; time and eternity etc.

In this study, it has been underlined that poetry has been one of the ways to verbalise self quest in that it has witnessed the most ancient self quest stories' of heroes, warriors, deities, goddesses, gods, faeries, and mortals of the world literature history such as *Gilgamesh*, *Aeneid*, *Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, *King Arthur*, *Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost*, etc. What makes poetry a preference is that it is easy to memorise as it has a kind of mechanism with its lines, stanzas and rhythm. Also, its concentrated language and structure enable to be applicable for the quest in that they both are the product of self and a vehicle for self-fulfillment. However, in some respects, the quest in Yeats's poetry is different from the conventional quest archetype. First of all, in the quest archetype, quester is mostly an idealized divine person who has supernatural powers such as a god or a national hero warrior. On the other hand, in Yeatsian quest, the quester is self itself which is an ordinary mortal being and has no magical or supernatural powers. The quest is triggered by a mysterious call from an external factor in the archetype, yet in Yeats's poems the quest is started by the fall of self and the source of the trigger is self itself. While the awakening happens after the quest in the archetypical quest, in Yeat's quest self is awakened from the

beginning. The place to go is towards the adventurous and dangerous lands of the outer world via the quester in the archetype; however, in the poems quest is towards the self, to the inner world, via outside world. During the fight against monsters or tricksters and after the battle, the archetypal quester has two tasks to accomplish for the sake of the whole nation; one is to complete the mission which is sometimes to rescue a captive, sometimes to find a cure for an illness or sometimes to gain a treasure, the second one is to return home. On the contrary, self struggles to find out anti-self and the equilibrium of two antithetical phenomenon in life such as ends and beginnings; dark and light etc. and there is no task but if there is any it can only be to unite the quest's end with beginning, consequently to make it eternal. So, there is a separation in the archetype but there is a unification in Yeatsian quest. The conventional quester gets help from somebody or something during the quest such as wise old man, natural events, or creatures, or a mate who is with the quester from the beginning. However, in the poems, self is alone with anti-self who is not a helper but a part of the self's entity. Lastly, the quest is linear in the archetype in that quester starts, fights, and finishes the quest. On the other hand, the self quest is circular, in other words gyroscopic. It does not end but becomes infinite. After all, there is one common point of two quest types: both the quester in the archetype and self in the poems experience transformation. After the end of the quest, the quester either mentally or physically transforms, meanwhile, he is either wounded or he dead. After the analysis of the poems, it can be said that both the quest and the self, with anti-self, transform.

Self has started the quest from desire to know and find a center. At the end of the quest, the desire for knowledge has been transformed into wisdom. The quest has followed a gyroscopic path as it explains the harmony of dualistic unities of the quest such as self and anti-self, dark and light, transcendent and mortal, man and beast, evil and good, vision and reality, past and present, death and birth, time and eternity etc. These pairs antithetically move towards each other; one is waxing and the other one is waning and the other way around. The gyre also transforms in that it is an image at the beginning which only verbalizes the word "gyre" in the poems, then it becomes a symbol standing for the antithetical structure of the poems, and lastly it becomes a metaphor for the harmonic union of the antithetical structures. Meanwhile, the *Four Faculties* also have a role on the transformation of the self. At the beginning, self has a *Mask* which handicaps the access to

the anti-self. Self wanders in the transcendent world of the ancient Ireland; however, with the fall the awakening happens, and self realizes that the quest should be towards to the inner world, and to be on a quest one should be totally free. The national quest becomes an individual one, and self turns towards darkness which holds light in it.

In the first quarter, self, full of quest desire, wanders in the transcendent world of pagan-Ireland to initiate the quest. Firstly, *Unity of Being*, the union of self and anti-self, is aimed. Self believes that to reach self-fulfillment one needs to go to the roots and actualize *Unity of Culture* a national union in a tranquil sphere which can be found in the mythical past. Hence, in the first quarter poems are full with Irish materials and struggle for reviving the Celtic Ireland. So, “a form of literature” is grounded with Celtic mythology and under the influence of the late-Romantic poetry. At the same time, the first line of the first gyre is formed in *Pulchrituro* as in figure 15. There are two gyres since the dual structure of life requires two gyres which move together and towards each other such as death and birth or dark and light. While one is waxing, the other one reaches the narrowest form. On the contrary, while the other gyre is waning, the other reaches the widest form and these gyroscopic movements continue eternally.

In the second quarter, a transition from light to darkness, self falls from the transcendental world because the ideal of *Unity of Being* and *Unity of Culture* become burdens of reaching self-fulfillment. After this awareness, the second quarter transforms fall into rise in that self leaves the roots behind to become totally free. The idea is changed with the idea that the past is meaningful with present. So, unlike the elaborated language of the early period, “a form of literature” is grounded on “a form of philosophy.” In this quarter, with the political and scientific changes all around the world and the early-Modernist tone which bring more direct word selection, a questioning mood, the real events’, places and people depictions, a less figurative but a symbolist language with the changing themes such as truth, wisdom, duty, pride etc. rather than mystery, magic, nature, heroism, dream, beauty etc. the poetry and consequently self quest become different. Meanwhile, the gyre starting from the narrowest of the previous chapter waxes towards the other gyre.

In the third quarter, quest transforms into odyssey of equilibrium between the dualities of the inner world of psyche and the outer world, tragedy and delight between

death and life and the harmony between self and anti-self. Self is in the state of almost objectivity in this phase since the anxiety of approaching old age and following death reflect upon the poems. There is no lamentation since self realizes that in the conflict of antithetical structure of life death is as vital as birth. It is one of the links of the gyroscopic life chain. That's why the ancient Ireland needs to be killed not to reborned. Also, this quarter is the state of transition from light into darkness, alike *Viloentia* phase and the evolution of the gyres continue to their waxing and waning movements with the lyrical change in that the ancient or modern Irish materials start to fade away totally. Besides, in the poems, an ironic tone is observed with the transition from a symbolist language to imagist.

In the fourth phase, self which is at complete objectivity turns its face towards the first phase, in other words, the end and the beginning are gyroscopically united since with this quarter self transforms knowledge into the wisdom of harmonically united antithetical dualities, and this makes quest eternal. It can be claimed that through the gyroscopic turn to the first phase quest is made eternal, yet the turning towards the first phase is not a wanton turn or to cause a vicious cycle by starting over but to transcend to the next level of discovering of self-fulfillment with transforming knowledge of light into wisdom of darkness. Meantime, with the gyroscopic move of this quarter, the formation of two gyres is completed as well.

To conclude, the analysis of the selected poems display that self is not a single entity but multiple and this duality forms the main characteristic feature of Yeats's poetry. With nearly fifty years literary career, it cannot be claimed that he is the only person to struggle for reviving Ireland; however, what makes his works important is that he not only carries the "Irishism" from the frontiers to the success to be exist in the English literature but also he makes transcend the issue to the world literature canon. There is a transition from Celtic mythology—mythology can be said that one of the oldest starting point of the whole world literatures since, before science and after/with the holy books, the creation, divinity and natural events are all explained with mythological background—in the early and middle period poems to the ancient Greek, referring to the philosophers such as Horace, Homer, Plato and Cicero in the late period poems and then to the Renaissance with Shakespeare and Blake lastly to everyman as if the title summarizes all the aforesaid

arguments: all comes out of *The Man and the Echo*. Hence, throughout the poems, self is in a gyroscopic quest and in every phase it experiences a transformation. Thanks to the gyroscopic features, the quest becomes eternal at the end. Lastly, the mentioned self is neither Yeats's nor a specific Irish hero's self, likewise the quest which is not attributed to a national or ideological background. Both self and quest belong to everyman who is free from all the burdens. Because of this, the passion for Ireland of the first chapter disappears in the following chapters. While the life, especially to revive, is strongly emphasised at the beginning, death becomes the main concern in the next chapters since self is aware of that death is as vital as birth to live, and the life actually begins when the two edges are harmonically united which explains that the quest is both eternal and gyroscopic not linear.

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