W. B. Yeats and the Creative Process: The Example of ‘Her Triumph’

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FULL TEXT

- **1** Professor Roy Foster, personal communication, 13 February, 2004.

- **2** Ronald Schuchard, ‘“An Attendant Lord”: H. W. Nevinson’s Friendship with W. B. Yeats’, *Yeats Annua* (...)

1‘HER TRIUMPH’ is surely one of the loveliest of W. B. Yeats’s poems, and one of the great love poems in the language. It may seem surprising, therefore, that it cannot confidently be related to any actual woman or specific romantic experience in his life.[1] On the other hand, 1926, the year of its composition ‘had been a poetic annus mirabilis for WBY.... The harvest of that frantic year’s writing would stand very near the summit of his artistic achievement’ (*Life* 2 338–39). In fact, although the poem literally celebrates the transforming power of love, its covert subject is the creative process itself—and possibly a transforming moment in the evolution of Yeats’s own work. Maud Gonne, herself the personal inspiration of so much of his work, had once written to him perceptively that ‘[w]hat makes the extraordinary charm of your poetry is the terrible though unseen effort of its creation. This somehow makes the atmosphere of a precious jewel about it. Like a gem it is the outcome of a terrible and hidden effort’ (*G–YL* 283). In 1916, H. W. Nevinson recorded a conversation in which Yeats ‘talked of Freud & Jung and the subconscious self, applying them to art; said the great thing is to reduce the conscious self to humility, as by imitation of some ancient master, leaving the unconscious free to work'.[2] Similarly, Yeats himself was to tell an interviewer in 1931 that '[t]he thing that gets you over the horrible business of beginning is the momentum of the subconscious. The subconscious is always there, lying behind the mind, ready to leap out. The weight of its momentum grows with experience. The whole aim of consciousness is to make the subconscious its obedient servant. That is why as one grows older one gets happier' (*Life* 2 419). The light tone of most of his statement is belied by the word 'horrible', which chimes with Maud's 'terrible and hidden effort'. His language also shows him drawing upon the concepts of depth psychology to explain his experience, and in fact it is such an approach that offers the most fruitful perspective for interpreting the hidden effort beneath the surface of 'Her Triumph'.

2Some of the manuscript record for the composition of 'Her Triumph' seems to have disappeared, but the early stages of what remains might actually refer to a real person or persons, whether someone he knew is imagined to be the speaker or the poet himself is speaking by way of a female mask:

- **3** W. B. Yeats, *The Winding Stair: Manuscript Materials*, ed. David R. Clark (Ithaca: Cornell Universi (...)

I am not evil now; until you came
I had thought the shamefulest things imaginable
And they but seemed the sweeter for the shame:
Thought love the better were it casual;
I had an opium eating friend, a friend
Who had drunk to drown a melancholy fit
The coils of the great dragon had no end.[3]

- **4** This change is noted by Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, *Gender and History in Yeats's Love Poetry* (1 (...)

3 But the specific detail involving the speaker’s ‘evil’ life was obscured in revision, much of it subsumed into the generalized ‘I did the dragon’s will’; and ‘I had fancied love a casual | Improvisation or a settled game’ metamorphoses what nowadays would be called casual sex into something apparently more benign.[4] Even what are apparently the earliest extant drafts incorporate the protective distancing and generalizing effect provided by the legendary stories of Saint George and Perseus. Some lines at this stage go better with the Christian saint than with the pagan hero: ‘In your companionship I turn to God’, ‘lost in dragon without an end’. In the latter instance, ‘lost’ seems to have the Dantean sense of ‘damned’. In another early draft, the word ‘evil’ appears repeatedly. But according to the Classical legend, Andromeda is a guiltless victim, a scapegoat, and as the drafts progress the text moves away from whatever the dark ‘private’ aspects of the poem’s donnee might have been towards the paradigm of hero, menacing dragon, and rescued maiden.

- **5** Adrienne Auslander Munich, *Andromeda’s Chains: Gender and Interpretation in Victorian Literature a* (...)

4 As Adrienne A. Munich has shown, the Perseus and Andromeda story was the subject of nearly innumerable Victorian poems and paintings, many of which Yeats certainly knew. His main visual source was Edward Burne-Jones’s painting ‘The Doom Fulfilled’; his primary literary source may have been William Morris’s verse tale ‘The Doom of King Acrisius’ from *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–70). Yeats had read ‘as a boy... the third volume of *The Earthly Paradise*’ (*Au 141, CW3* 131), and Morris was to become one of his favourite authors as well as his ‘chief of men’). He may have seen the painting when it was first exhibited at the New Gallery in May 1888. He was living in London then and taking French classes at Morris’s. In 1902 ‘The Doom of King Acrisius’ was published as a

separate volume with photographic reproductions by Frederick Hollyer of ‘The Doom Fulfilled’ and the other paintings in the Perseus series: a partial realization of the early plan to have Burne-Jones produce illustrations for the entire *Earthly Paradise*, and the first time the poem and the relevant painting were united.[5] In this volume the freed Andromeda is described on the page following the reproduction of the painting in terms that ‘Her Triumph’ seems to echo:

For her alone the sea-breeze seemed to blow,
For her in music did the white surf fall,
For her alone the wheeling birds did call
Over the shallows, and the sky for her
Was set with white clouds, far away and clear:
E’en as her love, this strong and lovely one
Who held her hand, was but for her alone (55).

- [6] Two other relevant studies are Joseph A. Kestner, *Mythology and Misogyny: The Social Discourse of* (...)

5 In Yeats’s poem, the speaker in her transformed state similarly feels a new relationship to the natural world, staring ‘astonished’ at the sea; and that world perceives her and her rescuer differently, as evidenced by the miraculous strange bird shrieking at them. Morris’s ‘wheeling’ birds would have carried implications for Yeats of a cyclical dimension to the experience, inaugurating not only a personal transformation but a new historical era as well; and in fact this perspective was to emerge in his own poem. Two cancelled references in the manuscripts—‘I thought the poets dreamed’ and ‘I laughed at poets talk’—had made artistic renderings of the story part of the story (*WS* 126-27). Munich’s study convincingly demonstrates that the majority of Victorian poets and painters who dealt with Perseus and Andromeda used their encounter as a vehicle for the expression of fears about women and their

increasing demands for political rights and greater personal freedom.[6] Yeats, however, was attracted to the myth for different reasons, reasons specifically connected with the creative process and the sources of his own creative power.

6 Yeats's work on the materials that became *A Vision* (dated 1925 but actually published in 1926) immersed him in speculations that bore upon the creative process, and elements of those speculations emerged in *The Trembling of the Veil*, written 1920–22 and published in 1922 and then again in 1926 in *Autobiographies*. One passage in particular might be considered the earliest version of 'Her Triumph', a virtual scenario for the poem he was to write a few years later:

> When a man writes any work of genius, or invents some creative action, is it not because some knowledge or power has come into his mind from beyond his mind? It is called up by an image, as I think…but our images must be given to us, we cannot choose them deliberately (*Au 272, CW3* 216).

- **7** See Phillip L. Marcus, *Yeats and Artistic Power*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 200 (…)

7 As the passage continues it becomes clear that 'mind' is used here in the sense of 'consciousness': 'I know now that revelation is from the self, but from that age-long memoried self, that shapes the elaborate shell of the mollus and the child in the womb, that teaches the birds to make their nest; and that genius is a crisis that joins that buried self for certain moments to our trivial daily mind'. Yeats sometimes used the term 'Self ' to refer to Unity of Being, what Jung termed individuation; but as he uses the term here, it corresponds to the Jungian concept of the collective unconscious. So creation of a 'work of genius' involves the joining of consciousness with the realm of the archetypes (a term used by both Yeats and Jung to refer to the paradigmatic forms found in

the collective unconscious).[7] Perhaps the ‘Gates’ and ‘Gate-keepers’ to which Yeats goes on to refer correspond to the archetypes themselves, which often assume in human experience a personified form: shadow, animus, anima, and so forth. Jung argued that the conscious mind must *confront* them as part of the process of achieving wholeness, and Yeats describes something similar in this passage: ‘through their dramatic power they bring our souls to crisis’.... The ‘chosen man’ is brought ‘to the greatest obstacle he may confront without despair’. Yeats had already explored this aspect of the process in ‘Ego Dominus Tuus’. In *The Trembling of the Veil* Dante and Villon serve as his examples of the greatest artists, those who have successfully undergone such a trial. In *A Vision* he would place Dante at Phase 17, the phase at which Unity of Being is most possible (*CVA* 75). In that volume he also speculated that either he identified strongly with Villon, ‘in whom the human soul for the first time stands alone before a death ever present to the imagination, without help from a Church that is fading away’; or alternatively that he ‘read into Villon’s suffering our modern conscience which gathers intensity as we approach the end of an era’. In the latter case, what seemed to Yeats ‘pitiless self-judgment may have been but heroic gaiety’ (*CVA* 200-01). These men achieved what few other writers have: ‘The two halves of their nature are so completely joined that they seem to labour for their objects, and yet to desire whatever happens, being at the same instant predestinate and free, creation’s very self. We gaze at such men in awe, because we gaze not at a work of art, but at the re-creation of the man through that art, the birth of a new species of man’. In contemplation of them ‘the hairs of our heads stand up, because that birth, that re-creation, is from terror’, from what Maud Gonne had called ‘the terrible though unseen effort’ of poetic creation.

8In contrast to Dante and Villon Yeats places ‘great lesser writers like Landor and like Keats’, in whose work ‘we are shown that Image and that Mask as something set apart; Andromeda and her Perseus—though not the sea-dragon’.... The distinction between the two pairs of writers, Yeats goes on to make clear, is that unlike Dante and Villon, Landor and Keats ‘lacked their Vision of Evil’. Had the latter possessed that vision, it would have been represented by the ‘sea-dragon’. The focus upon the creative process as involving the joining of consciousness with archetypal unconscious contents, producing ‘a new species of man’ at whom we ‘gaze... in awe’, the necessity of the Vision of Evil, and the specific reference to the story of Perseus and Andromeda all anticipate ‘Her Triumph’ and suggest that the poem might be read as a sort of allegory of Yeats’s prose speculations (*Au* 273; *CW3* 217).

- **8** C. G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1967; rpt. Princeton: Prince (...)
- **9** Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, trans. David M. Weeks (German edition 1985; New York: Shambala Pu (...)
- **10** See also *The Freud-Jung Letters*, ed. William McGuire, trans. Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull (Prin (...)
- **11** *ST* xxiv. The conflict between Freud and Jung involved many other issues, of course; see C. G. Jung (...)

9The early draft of the poem in which the word ‘evil’ resounds has a new meaning in this light. In it the speaker was made to say ‘O I am evil’; but also ‘I was most evil’ and finally ‘I am not evil now’. Whatever associations the word might have had with a private biographical event and/or the Christian values of Saint George (and Dante, perhaps), in terms of the Perseus and Andromeda story, the draft seems to show Yeats working towards the realization that the proper vehicle for ‘evil’ would be not Andromeda but the dragon.

The necessity of this identification from a Jungian point of view, and the psychological implications of prose passage and poem alike, are illuminated by Erich Neumann's *On the Origins and History of Consciousness*, a study that takes its starting point from and develops fully the perspective of Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*, a translation published in 1916 of his *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* (1912). Jung's study, written at a point when he was beginning to find Freud's 'conceptual framework... unendurably narrow',[8] was a transitional work, survivals of that Freudian conceptual framework mixed with elements of what would become Jung's own distinctive position, a 'mythopsychology' showing how 'the fantasy life of the individual is connected with mythological material' and enabling him 'to get closer to the archetypal structural elements of the psyche'.[9] What might seem individual memories might really be '"phylogenetic" reminiscences', a major step from Freud's largely personal unconscious towards the concept of the collective unconscious.[10] Jung was later to write that one of his main purposes in writing the book 'was to free medical psychology from the subjective and personalistic bias that characterized its outlook at that time, and to make it possible to understand the unconscious as an objective and collective psyche'.[11] There is reason to think that at some point Yeats actually read at least part of this book, for in the Introduction (first published in 1932) to *Fighting the Waves* he says 'a German psychoanalyst has traced the 'mother complex' back to our mother the sea' (*VPl* 571), which seems to refer to the following passage from *Psychology of the Unconscious*:

- **12** C. G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious*, trans. Beatrice M. Hinkle (1916; rpt. New York: Dodd, M (...)

The sound resemblance of *mar*, *mere* with *meer*=sea and Latin *mare*=sea is remarkable, although etymologically accidental.

Might it refer back to “the great primitive idea of the mother” who, in the first place, meant to us our individual world and afterwards became the symbol of all worlds? Goethe said of the mothers, “They are encircled by images of all creatures.” The Christians, too, could not refrain from reuniting their mother of God with water. “Ave Maris stella” is the beginning of a hymn to Mary. Then again it is the horses of Neptune which symbolize the waves of the sea….[12]

- **13** See James M. Olney, *The Rhizome and the Flower: The Perennial Philosophy— Yeats and Jung* (Berkeley (…)

10If Yeats did see this passage at the time of writing the Introduction, if not before, he might have been attracted by the resonance of the final sentence quoted above with the title of his own rewritten play; in and case, he seems to have recognized the essential procedure adopted by Jung in the book, the movement from the personal to the archetypal.[13] For the purposes of understanding ‘Her Triumph’, however, establishing that Yeats had any direct knowledge of Jung’s work at the time he wrote his poem is unnecessary: either Jung’s own theory of the collective unconscious or the two men’s equally great indebtedness to the tradition of ‘the perennial philosophy’ would be sufficient to explain the similarities.

- **14** Erich Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, with a Foreword by C. G. Jung, trans. R. (…)

- **15** *The Freud-Jung Letters*, 269.

11Because *The Psychology of the Unconscious* was written during the period when Jung’s perspective was undergoing a major redefinition, he came to feel that it was ‘in urgent need of revision’ (*ST* xxiii), and late in his life published a revised version as *Symbols of Transformation* (1952), but even then he felt too limited by the original study to bring it totally into line with his mature thought.

Thus he welcomed *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (1954) as the realization with 'outstanding success' of what he himself had attempted to do, and as a further advance: 'he has succeeded in constructing a unique history of the evolution of consciousness and at the same time in representing the body of myths as the phenomenology of this same evolution'.[14] Neumann, in turn, saw his own study as 'an application of the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung, even where we endeavor to amplify this psychology, and even though we may speculatively overstep its boundaries' (xv). Jung had in fact anticipated Neumann's core idea as early as 1909, when he had written to Freud 'I feel more and more that a thorough understanding of the psyche (if possible at all) will only come through history or its help. Just as an understanding of anatomy and ontogenesis is possible only on the basis of phylogenesis and comparative anatomy. For this reason antiquity now appears to me in a new and significant light. What we now find in the individual psyche—in compressed, stunted, or one-sidedly differentiated form—may be seen spread out in all its fullness in times past. Happy the man who can read these signs!'[15] There is no question, of course, of Yeats having been familiar with Neumann's book, but it is useful for understanding the psychological dimension of 'Her Triumph' precisely because it draws the crucial aspects of Jung's emerging thought into a 'unified whole' (*OHC* xiii), and because one of its 'amplifications' involves an interpretation of the Perseus and Andromeda story, which Jung had not discussed.

- **16** Jung offered an early version of this paradigm in a lecture given in 1916 and available in English (...)

12The core of Neumann's argument is that 'in the course of its development, the individual ego consciousness has to pass through the same archetypal stages which determined the evolution of consciousness in the life of humanity. The individual has in his own life to follow the road that humanity has trod before him, leaving traces of its journey in the archetypal sequence of the mythological images' examined in his study (*OHC* xvi). Mythology, in other words, is composed of *projections* of the unconscious, so that by interpreting the one we can come to understand the other (*OHC* 262–63 *et passim*). More specifically, Neumann claims, '[t]he evolution of consciousness as a form of creative evolution is the peculiar achievement of Western man. Creative evolution of ego consciousness means that, through a continuous process stretching over thousands of years, the conscious system has absorbed more and more unconscious contents and progressively extended its frontiers' (*OHC* xviii). He discerns three 'mythological stages in the evolution of consciousness': 'the Creation Myth', the Hero Myth', and 'the Transformation Myth' (*OHC* 5), and all of these, but especially the second and third, are important for understanding Yeats's poem. The emergence of consciousness from the primal unconscious appears in mythology as the hero's fight with the symbols of that archetypal androgynous primal state, the slaying of the transpersonal (this in contradistinction to Freud) Father and the Terrible Mother (again, not Woody Allen's 'castrating Zionist' but the negative transpersonal archetype—'the obsolete psychic stage which threatens to swallow us up again' (*OHC* 182). Projected into mythological images, '[t]he three basic elements of the hero myth were the hero, the dragon, and the treasure' (*OHC* 191); the last frequently takes the form of a captive female, corresponding in Jungian terms to the anima or unconscious female side of the male psyche. Through the hero's slaying of the dragon, this 'feminine image extricates itself from the grip of the Terrible Mother, a process known in analytical psychology as the crystallization of the anima from the mother archetype'.[16] The 'task of the hero is to free, through her, the living relation to the ‘you’, to the world at large’ (*OHC* 202). Contact with the anima figure ‘is the source of all fruitfulness’, the ‘world of art, of epic deeds, poesy, and song... revolves round the liberated captive’ (*OHC* 203). In other words, the myth presents allegorically not only the essential Jungian process of individuation, of full self-realization and wholeness, but also the creative process lying behind a work of art. As a specific illustration of this argument, Neumann chooses the story of Perseus ‘as a paradigm of the hero myth’ (*OHC* 213): ‘the sequence so typical of the hero myth is recapitulated in the story of Perseus. The killing of the transpersonal mother and father (the Medusa and the sea monster) precedes the rescue of the captive, Andromeda’ (*OHC* 216).

13By the backward light of Neumann’s argument we can see that in ‘Her Triumph’ Yeats was embodying the story of his own self-realization and of the process whereby the poem itself was created. ‘I did the dragon’s will until you came’, for example, personifies the anima recalling ‘her’ captive state before her rescue by the hero and her ‘crystallization’ from the mother archetype. The next several lines elaborate ‘doing the dragon’s will’ at a superficial level, but much of the language used has a deeper significance as well. ‘[W]ill’ and ‘fancied’ are terms from a faculty psychology outmoded by the work of Freud and Jung. The manuscript versions had featured in this context the word ‘thought’: ‘I was all evil thought until you came’, ‘My thoughts were full of evil’, ‘I thought the evil things unspeak in MS NLI 13589 (29), 1v; and ‘I thought the shamefulest things imaginabel’ and ‘Thought love the better were it casual’ (MS NLI 13,592 (5), 2v (*WS* 122-23, 120-21). The word ‘thought’ resonates with many other Yeats poems, including ‘Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen’, in which it appears repeatedly and ironically; and, later, ‘Meru’ (But man’s life is thought...’) and ‘The Gyres’ (‘Things thought too long can be no longer thought’). In all these instances it is associated with the end of an historical cycle. Even more relevant is ‘Michael Robartes and the Dancer’, which opens with a description of a painting of Saint George and the Dragon and includes the punning line ‘The half-dead dragon was her thought’. This poem also anticipates ‘Her Triumph’ more generally in its consideration of male / female issues and in the use of a female speaker (there balanced by a male one). None of the ‘thought’ references survived into the final text, but the underlying concept remains in the historical dimension of the finished poem.

- **17** Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 2nd ed., trans. Ralph Manheim (1963; rpt. Princeton: Princeton Un (...)

14Other words in lines 2-6 that have a deeper significance include ‘heavenly’ and ‘fall’ (linked with ‘temptation’ in the earliest draft), which have traditional religious associations but also correspond to the psychological concept of primal unity, ‘the perfect beginning because the opposites have not yet flown apart’ (*OHC* 8), represented in Neumann’s schema by ‘the circular snake, the primal dragon of the beginning that bites its own tail, the self-begetting *Uroboros*’ (‘The coils of the great dragon had no end’ in Yeats’s drafts [*WS* 12223]) and the ‘fall into division’ at which point ‘the ego begins to emerge from its identity with the uroboros,... being born and descending into the lower world of reality, full of dangers and discomforts (*OHC* 39) and the archetypal Feminine and Masculine have been differentiated.[17] Finally, ‘deeds’ and ‘gave the moment wings’ anticipate Perseus with the winged shoes of Hermes: ‘wing heeled Persius’ [*sic*] in NLI 13,592 (5), 2v (*WS* 122-23).

- **18** The goal, as Neumann makes clear in his companion study *The Great Mother*, is a *balance* of male and (...)

15The turning point of the poem at all levels comes in line seven, ‘And then you stood among the dragon-rings’, which in terms of depth psychology would correspond to the moment when the conscious element of the psyche confronts and overcomes the threat of powerful unconscious forces. The involvement of Perseus in the dragon's coils is unusual in iconographic versions of the story (found among Yeats's possible visual sources only in Burne-Jones's 'The Doom Fulfilled') and suggests the close bond and also the tension between conscious and unconscious dimensions. In terms of the creative process, this is the moment of the 'crisis that joins the buried self for certain moments to our trivial daily mind', as Yeats had put it in *The Trembling of the Veil*. It includes the sea-dragon and therefore the 'Vision of Evil' that he felt distinguished the greatest artists. '[M]astered' in line eight is also significant in psychological terms, for as Neumann makes clear the hero figure's triumph has a 'patriarchal' dimension in that the *dominance* of the *matriarchal* has been ended. But the new state is not a substitution of one dominance for another; it corresponds historically to a period *before* 'the female is subjugated' (*OHC* 199), and the goal is a *balance* of male and female elements.[18]

16 The final two lines of 'Her Triumph', 'And now we stare astonished at the sea, | And a miraculous strange bird shrieks at us', apparently came comparatively easily to Yeats, for along with 'And broke the chain and set my ankles free' they were the first lines of the poem to reach final form (*WS* 122–23). Unquestionably they correspond to the final stage in Neumann's schema, the Transformation. Neumann relates this moment to the anthropological researches of Sir James Frazer in *The Golden Bough*:

> Every culture hero has achieved a synthesis between consciousness and the creative unconscious. He has found within himself the fruitful center, the point of renewal and rebirth which, in the New Year fertility festival, is identified with the creative divinity, and upon which the continued existence of the world depends (*OHC* 212).

17The stress here on imaginative fertility and creativity continues throughout Neumann's analysis of the Perseus and Andromeda story: '[i]t is, however, impossible to find the treasure unless the hero has first found and redeemed his own soul'. This statement corresponds precisely to the manuscript line 'You have redeemed my soul' (NLI 13,592 (5), 2v WS 122–23]). 'The inner receptive side is, on the subjective level, the rescued captive,... who is at once man's inspiration, his beloved and mother, the enchantress and prophetess.... [T]he fruitfulness of the hero who gains the captive is a human and cultural fruitfulness. From the union of the hero's ego with the creative side of the soul, when he "knows" and realizes both the world and the anima, there is begotten the true birth, the synthesis of both' (*OHC* 213–14).

- **19** Julia Briggs, *Virginia Woolf: An Inner Life* (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2005), 166.

18The subjective 'we' and objective 'us' of Yeats's final lines are crucial, as they point to the union and balanced relationship of the male and female elements of the psyche, the 'hierosgamos' or sacred marriage of occult tradition. As Neumann puts it, '[t]he symbolic marriage of ego-hero and anima, as well as being the precondition of fertility, offers a firm foundation on which the personality can stand and fight the dragon, whether this be the dragon of the world or of the unconscious.' Remarkably, Yeats's drafts contain the same phrase: 'The dragon of the world' (NLI 13,592 (5), 2v [WS 122–23]). Neumann continues, '[h]ero and princess, ego and anima, man and woman pair off and form the personal center which, modeled on the First Parents and yet opposed to them, constitutes the proper sphere of action. In this marriage, which in the oldest mythologies was consummated at the New Year festival immediately after the defeat of the dragon, the hero is the embodiment of the "heaven" and father archetype, just as the fruitful side of the mother archetype is embodied in the figure of the rescued virgin' (*OHC* 213). In *To the Lighthouse*, written largely in the same year as 'Her Triumph',[19] Virginia Woolf was to depict this process symbolically in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe (the artist in whose psyche the male and female elements must fuse); and in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) she would assert directly that 'the androgynous mind' (figured as a married couple) was essential to the creative process.

- **20** Clark, *Yeats at Songs and Choruses*, 98.

19The lovers in Yeats's poem 'stare astonished at the sea' not because they have never seen it but because their new way of seeing transforms it, they inhabit 'a new heaven and a new earth'. And because they, too, have been transformed, they represent 'a new species of man'. As Yeats had put it in *The Trembling of the Veil*, 'we gaze at such men in awe;… and it may even seem that the hairs of our heads stand up, because that birth, that recreation, is from terror'.... Thus the 'miraculous strange bird' (which David Clark has suggested might derive in part from a Blakean passage identifying it as an 'illustration of the Moment of Inspiration, as seen by the Poet') 'shrieks' at them.[20] And as 'creation's very self ', they constitute both the triumphant conclusion of 'Her Triumph' and the symbols of its genesis as well as a celebration of the creative highpoint that 1926 represented for its author.

- **21** Helen Hennessy Vendler, *Yeats's 'Vision' and the Later Plays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, (...)

20The romantic aspect of this moment in the poem naturally leads to speculations about some contemporary romantic involvement in Yeats's own life, speculations that up to now at least have proven fruitless. Perhaps, however, in the final analysis the autobiographical core of 'Her Triumph' was the 'sacred marriage' of the poet and his wife. After nine years of marriage and two children, the superficial romance of their relationship had no doubt faded; but at a deeper level those same years had only intensified the bond. George Yeats, after all, had been since their marriage Yeats's own direct link to the unconscious, via the automatic script and other methods, had served as the conduit through which that 'knowledge or power ha[d] come into his mind from beyond his mind'. The most extended fruit of their collaboration, the first version of *A Vision*, had been published shortly before 'Her Triumph'. In that volume itself Yeats had celebrated their collaboration and acknowledged Mrs. Yeats's crucial role elliptically by including the poem 'The Gift of Harun Al-Rashid'. The spirits themselves had said 'we have come to give you metaphors for poetry' (*AVB* 8), and, as Helen Vendler long ago demonstrated, *A Vision* itself can be read as an account of the creative process.[21] In this context, 'Her Triumph' highlights both the success of the Instructors' mission as manifested in Yeats's creative abundance in 1926 (something despaired of not long before in 'The Tower') and the union of husband and wife, male and female, subjective and objective, conscious and unconscious, 'the hero's ego and the creative side of the soul' through which it came about.

- **22** Joseph Henderson, 'Ancient Myths and Modern Man', in *Man and His Symbols*, ed. Carl G. Jung (1964; (...)
- **23** *Gender and History*, 214. Elsewhere in her discussion of the poem Cullingford notes that '[p]sychoa (...)
- **24** The painting is reproduced in Gilles Néret, *Tamara de Lempicka 1898-1980* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen, (...)

21 In Jungian theory it is only when a man has accomplished the freeing of his anima that he can 'achieve his first true capacity for

relatedness to women’.[22] What impact if any the process had upon Yeats’s own relationships can never certainly be known. It may be said with greater confidence that his poem celebrating that act extends the treatment of the Perseus and Andromeda story in a way more positive that was typical among Yeats’s Victorian predecessors. The contemporary scholar Elizabeth Cullingford, imagining ‘“alternatives beyond appropriation”—instances, however rare, when [the male writer] has let femaleness transform, redefine, his textual erotics, allowed himself *to be read through* femininity and femaleness’, has speculated that Yeats in ‘Her Triumph’ has provided such an alternative, though she is still disturbed that he ‘strips his modern woman of her clothing and her power in the love game and restores her, naked and grateful, to her rock by the sea’.[23] Perhaps, as Cullingford suggests, ‘the nature of the myth’ itself makes such reservations inevitable. A comparison of Yeats’s poem with a contemporary painting by a *female* artist, the ‘Andromeda’ (1927-28) of Tamara de Lempicka, supports such a supposition.[24] In this modernist work there is *no* ocean; and the rock to which traditionally the heroine has been bound has been metamorphosed into an urban space with Cubist skyscrapers. Moreover, there is no Perseus. Andromeda herself, placed to the very front of the picture plane and nearly filling the large canvas, is an imposing figure. In Jungian terms she would make a formidable personification of the anima. But the painting remains ambiguous: does Andromeda’s enigmatic expression suggest a search for the absent rescuer? Or is his absence the point? She looks powerful enough to break the binding chains herself—no rescuer needed. Was the artist exploiting the erotic dimension of Andromeda’s plight, exposing her to ‘the male gaze’, or celebrating post-War female power and independence?

22Neumann’s paradigm also has an historical dimension, and this, too, is relevant to the interpretation of Yeats’s poem. ‘[T]hese things are true also of nations', Yeats had suggested at the end of the passage in *The Trembling of the Veil* (*CW* 218). At this level, 'the hostile dragon is the old order' (*OHC* 182), and the hero is the avatar of a new era and is 'destined to bring that new order into being and destroy the old' (*OHC* 175). His task is to 'awaken the sleeping images of the future which can and must come forth from the night, in order to give the world a new and better face' (*OHC* 174). Of course Yeats's fascination with historical cycles and points of apocalyptic historical transformation goes back to the very early years of his career, to such seminal texts as *The Wanderings of Oisin* and 'The Secret Rose'. But the researches that he and Mrs. Yeats had been conducting since 1917 had culminated in the new synthesis of the 'Dove or Swan' section of *A Vision* (1925/1926). Both international events since the beginning of World War I and the Russian Revolution and Yeats's experiences as a Senator in post-Revolutionary Ireland offered him abundant new evidence that the end of an historical cycle was approaching, and he expected that times were destined to grow still darker before the dawn of any new era. His visions of the future were often bleak, 'Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen' being a case in point. 'Her Triumph', however, symbolically anticipates the moment of the new era's arrival in more positive terms. Morris's poem had connected the story of Perseus and Andromeda with 'wheeling birds' and in Yeats's drafts the word 'thought' hinted at the moment of cycle end. In the final version, the dragon's 'rings' (not typically stressed in the iconographic tradition before Yeats) identify it with the cyclical process as well as the old order, and the transformed lovers' vision in the final lines does 'give the world a new and better face'.

23Only implied in this poem but clearly discernible in other Yeatsian contexts is the artist's role in the process of historical transformation. In another episode of the Perseus legend, the winged horse Pegasus springs from the decapitated trunk of the Medusa. In Neumann's view, 'the winged horse strikes the fountain of poesy from the earth.... [T]his aspect of the Pegasus myth lies at the root of all creativity' (*OHC* 217-19). His statement that the hero's task is to 'awaken the sleeping images of the future which can and must come forth from the night' identifies the hero with the individuated artist, in touch with his unconscious, with his anima—one of whose roles is 'prophetess' (*OHC* 214). More than merely celebrating the advent of a new era, the visionary artist may also be responsible, at least in part, for bringing it about or determining its essential nature.

- **25** *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton Univer (...)

- **26** *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Pres (...)

24Neumann does not elaborate on the subject, but his position can be understood more fully by reference to Jung, whose views about literature were generally congruent with Yeats's own as well. One of Jung's essays on Eastern religion, for example, contains passages very similar to the crucial section of *The Trembling of the Veil*, with the substitution of Goethe and Nietzsche for Dante and Villon: '[i]t is only the tragedies of Goethe's *Faust* and Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* which mark the first glimmering of a break-through of total experience in our Western hemisphere'—*they* understood that the process of 'daemonic rebirth' is beset with 'unknown terrors'. *Zarathustra*, Jung claimed, 'is no longer philosophy at all: it is a dramatic process of transformation which has completely swallowed up the intellect. It is no longer concerned with thought',—that word so pregnant with implications for Yeats in the manuscripts of 'Her Triumph' and elsewhere—but, in the highest sense, with the thinker of the thought.... A new man, a completely transformed man, is to appear on the scene, one who has broken the shell of the old and who not only looks upon a new heaven and a new earth, but has created them'.[25] Particularly relevant are Jung's two essays about the creative process, 'On the Relationship of Analytical Psychology to Poetry' (1922) and 'Psychology and Literature' (1930), essays from the same decade as the composition of 'Her Triumph'. In them Jung suggests that the creative process begins with 'the unconscious activation of an archetypal image', one of those images that 'give form to countless typical experiences of our ancestors,... the psychic residua of innumerable experiences of the same type'.[26] These are Neumann's 'sleeping images of the future which can and must come forth from the night'. At the moment when the archetype has been activated, 'we suddenly feel an extraordinary sense of release, as though transported, or caught up by an overwhelming power' (the moment, as Yeats put it in *The Trembling of the Veil*, when 'some knowledge or power has come into his mind from beyond his mind'); and the impact of the archetype 'stirs us because it summons up a voice that is stronger than our own'. This power is in turn transmitted by the artist, who 'enthrals and overpowers' his audience (*SMAL* 82).

25 At such moments, the artist undergoes a transformation. 'On the one side he is a human being with a personal life, while on the other he is an impersonal creative process.... As a human being he may have moods and a will and personal aims, but as an artist he is "man" in a higher sense—he is "collective man", a vehicle and moulder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind' (*SMAL* 101). (Again, the parallel with Yeats's 'new species of man' is a close one). In order to 'give suitable expression' to primordial experience, such a writer will naturally 'turn to mythological figures' (*SMAL* 96). Among the examples Jung offers, several are suggestive of Yeats: 'Wagner needs the whole corpus of Nordic

myth... ; Nietzsche resorts to the hieratic style of the bard and legendary seer; Blake presses into his service the phantasmagoric world of India, the Old Testament, and the Apocalypse'... (*SMAL* 97). The potent unconscious material with the visionary artist works has a tendency to overpower his conscious artistic intentions, but still such an artist does elaborate and shape the archetypal image into the finished work (*SMAL* 82). By giving the archetype shape, the artist 'translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest springs of life. Therein lies the social significance of art: it is constantly at work educating the spirit of the age, conjuring up the forms in which the age is most lacking' (*SMAL* 82). This claim reflects Jung's central tenet of the *compensatory* relationship of the unconscious to the conscious mind: 'the one-sidedness of the individual's conscious attitude is corrected by reactions from the unconscious'; and similarly, 'art represents a process of self-regulation in the life of nations and epochs' (*SMAL* 83). The artist 'reaches back to the primordial image in the unconscious which is best fitted to compensate the inadequacy and one-sidedness of the present,... seizes on this image, and in raising it from deepest unconsciousness he brings it into relation with conscious values, thereby transforming it until it can be accepted by the minds of his contemporaries according to their powers' (*SMAL* 83).

26For Yeats, the turn of the century had provided a vivid illustration of the compensatory process: '[t]he close of the last century was full of a strange desire to get out of form to get to some kind of disembodied beauty and now it seems to me the contrary impulse has come. I feel about me and in me an impulse to create form, to carry the realization of beauty as far as possible' (*CL3* 369). The phrase 'about me and in me' acknowledges the historical and cultural as well as the personal reversal. Perhaps the most famous of his poetic embodiments of the concept of compensation would be ‘The Second Coming’, in which the operative word is ‘surely’—that is, the almost total one-sidedness of the present moment made it certain that a compensatory counter-dispensation was about to begin; the desert birds that ‘reel’ about the rough beast recall the ‘wheeling birds’ of Morris’s poem. Even the poem’s grimness has its parallel in Jung, who saw the process as occurring ‘whether this blind collective need results in good or evil, in the salvation of an epoch or its destruction’ (*SMAL* 98). More germane to ‘Her Triumph’ is the little lyric ‘The Realists’, published in 1912:

Hope that you may understand!
What can books of men that wive
In a dragon-guarded land,
Paintings of the dolphin-drawn
Sea-nymphs in their pearly wagons
Do, but awake a hope to live
That had gone
With the dragons? (*VP* 309)

27 Yeats’s brilliant use of syntax and word placement, enjambment and caesura points up the most important word in the poem, ‘Do’. To a realist, art devoted to heroic and romantic visions of experience seems remote from contemporary life, irrelevant. From Yeats’s very different perspective, however, books (such as Morris’s) of men that wive in a dragon-guarded land were important precisely because they *were* at odds with contemporary artistic and social values; and the artists who produced them would thereby be providing those sleeping images of the future that would dominate in the era to come. In ‘Her Triumph’ Yeats was to attempt precisely that.

- **27** This transition is reflected in ‘Aedh Laments the Loss of Love’, which Allen R. Grossman relates t (...)

28An index of the importance of ‘Her Triumph’ in Yeats’s career, and of its relation to the compensatory process and Yeats’s own aesthetic of artistic power, emerges when it is compared with a poem he wrote decades before, ‘The Song of Wandering Aengus’ (1897). In many ways that lyric offers a remarkable anticipation of the later poem. It had a personal level involving Yeats’s renewed romantic commitment to Maud Gonne following his affair with Olivia Shakespear;[27] and a political level involving his ongoing commitment to the national idea as embodied in a female figure, the *speirbean* of the *aisling* tradition, his own future Cathleen ni Houlihan; but the poem also had a psychological dimension closely congruent with the theories Jung would formulate after his break with Freud.

- **28** *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1968; rpt. Princeton (...)
- **29** *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 133; see also *VSR* 128-29.
- **30** *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1968; rpt. Pri (...)
- **31** *Psychology and Alchemy*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968 (...)

29The use of the Irish myth in the poem as vehicle for personal concerns reflects Yeats’s assertion that ‘emotions which seem vague or extravagant when expressed under the influence of modern literature, cease to be vague and extravagant when associated with ancient legend and mythology’ (*UP1* 423). Jung would later posit that ‘myths are first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of the soul’, projections into the conscious realm of unconscious psychological processes, so the narrative and imagery of Yeats’s poem could also serve as vehicles for embodying an experience involving individuation.[28] In a note, Yeats identified Aengus as the 'god of youth, beauty, and poetry', highlighting also the aesthetic dimension of the poem (*VP* 794). If for Freud, dreams were generally symbolic expressions of repressed contents, Jung came to believe that 'big dreams' constitute coded messages from the unconscious designed to give direction to the dreamer's future development. The poem has a dreamlike atmosphere and its action takes place at night, ending, like a dream, with the 'brightening air' of dawn. The 'fire' in Aengus's head represents an impulse from the unconscious that precipitates his encounter with the buried parts of his psyche and thus propels him towards selfrealization. ('The subconscious is always there', Yeats would later say, 'ready to leap out'.) His mage's wand becomes a fishing rod because as Jung was later to argue '[f]ishing is an intuitive attempt to catch unconscious contents'. Blowing his fire aflame, Aengus is like the alchemists in whose materials and processes Jung would detect an allegory of the individuation process.[29] The 'glimmering girl' corresponds to the anima. She calls Aengus by his name because she holds the key to his true identity. The imagery of the poem is organized around a pattern of red and white, gold and silver images because, as Jung would write in an analysis of a young woman's dream, '[s]ilver and gold, in alchemical language, signify feminine and masculine, the hermaphrodite aspect of the fish, indicating that it is a *complexio oppositorum*.[30] Sun and moon would have the same symbolic meaning. The path to individuation would not be a straight one, but rather would go 'in spirals', and even the most determined and courageous of questers might never reach the goal. Significantly, Jung would represent the soughtafter state as 'the union of opposites in the archetypal form of the *hierosgamos* or "chymical wedding"... [in which] the supreme opposites, male and female... are melted into a unity purified of all opposition and therefore incorruptable'.[31] (Neumann's use of this 'sacred marriage' image no doubt derived from Jung.) Thus the pattern of opposed images has both aesthetic and psychological aspects, which merge in the creative process behind the poem itself.

- **32** In 1931, Yeats referred to *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, an occult Chinese philosophical treati (...)

30 In both 'The Song of Wandering Aengus' and 'Her Triumph' Yeats used mythic stories as vehicles for, because projections of, psychological processes involving the encounter with the anima, individuation and the creative process. But the difference between the future prospect of 'I *will* find out where she has gone' and the present reality of 'And *now* we stare astonished at the sea' points to significant contrasts. In the earlier poem 'I' and 'she' remain separate, their union yet to come: in 'Her Triumph' that union has been achieved. The later poem both offers an heroic figure as one of the images that might inspire and shape a future cycle and reflects the author's confidence in the power of his art. Of course the coming years, with their losses, disappointments, and prospects of renewed world cataclysm, would frequently shake that faith; but it persisted to the end of his life, embodied even in the noble and defiant final works, 'The Black Tower' and *The Death of Cuchulain*: 'Who thought Cuchulain till it seemed | He stood where they had stood?'[32]

NOTES

1 Professor Roy Foster, personal communication, 13 February, 2004.

2 Ronald Schuchard, "'An Attendant Lord": H. W. Nevinson's Friendship with W. B. Yeats', *Yeats Annual No. 7* (1990), 283.

3 W. B. Yeats, *The Winding Stair: Manuscript Materials*, ed. David R. Clark (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 122–23; hereafter abbreviated *WS* and cited parenthetically in the text.

[4] This change is noted by Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, *Gender and History in Yeats's Love Poetry* (1993; rpt. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 213.

[5] Adrienne Auslander Munich, *Andromeda's Chains: Gender and Interpretation in Victorian Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Christopher Wood, *Burne-Jones* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1998), 10506; William Morris, *The Doom of King Acrisius* (New York: R. H. Russell, 1902); Joseph R. Dunlap, *The Book That Never Was* (New York: Oriole Editions, 1971). Of special importance on Yeats's visual sources for the poem is the study by David R. Clark in *Yeats at Songs and Choruses* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983), 90-136. Although my own approach and interpretation are very different, I am indebted to Professor Clark's work throughout my own study.

[6] Two other relevant studies are Joseph A. Kestner, *Mythology and Misogyny: The Social Discourse of Nineteenth-Century British Classical-Subject Painting* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989) and Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siecle Culture* (1986; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[7] See Phillip L. Marcus, *Yeats and Artistic Power*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001), xviii-xix and xxvii, n. 9.

[8] C. G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1967; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), xxiii; hereafter abbreviated as *ST* and cited parenthetically in the text.

[9] Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, trans. David M. Weeks (German edition 1985; New York: Shambala Publications, 1987), 127-28.

[10] See also *The Freud-Jung Letters*, ed. William McGuire, trans. Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 450: 'The so-called "early memories of childhood" are not individual memories at all but phylogenetic ones'; and Wehr, 144: 'From here it

was no longer a great step from Freud's personal unconscious to the "collective unconscious"'.

11 *ST* xxiv. The conflict between Freud and Jung involved many other issues, of course; see C. G. Jung, 'Freud and Jung: Contrasts' in *Freud and Psychoanalysis*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1961; rpt. with corrections 1970), 333–40; C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, revised ed. (New York: Putnam Books, 1973), 146–69; George B. Hogenson, *Jung's Struggle with Freud*, revised ed. (Wilmette, Illinois: Chiron Publications, 1994), 36–42 *et passim*; Phyllis Grosskurth, *The Secret Ring* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1991), 36–52; Paul Roazen, *Freud and His Followers* (1975; rpt. New York: Da Capo Press, 1992), 224–96; Deirdre Bair, *Jung* (Boston: Little Brown, 2003), especially 201–40; and Wehr, 127–60.

12 C. G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious*, trans. Beatrice M. Hinkle (1916; rpt. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1949), 283.

13 See James M. Olney, *The Rhizome and the Flower: The Perennial Philosophy— Yeats and Jung* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 6; Olney is certain that Yeats was referring to Jung but also that 'he only half understood what he was talking about and that [his] information came from what someone told him rather than from a reading of Jung'. My own view is that Yeats's comments in the passage in question do show a clear understanding of Jung's approach.

14 Erich Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, with a Foreword by C. G. Jung, trans. R. F. C. Hull (originally published in German in 1949; English edition 1954; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), xiv; hereafter abbreviated as *OHC* and cited parenthetically in the text.

15 *The Freud–Jung Letters*, 269.

16 Jung offered an early version of this paradigm in a lecture given in 1916 and available in English translation in 1917: 'It is precisely the

strongest and best among men, the heroes, who give way to their regressive longing and purposely expose themselves to the danger of being devoured by the monster of the maternal abyss. But if a man is a hero, he is a hero because, in the final reckoning, he did not let the monster devour him, but subdued it, not once but many times. Victory over the collective psyche alone yields the true value—the capture of the hoard, the invincible weapon, the magic talisman, or whatever it be that the myth deems most desirable'. See *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1966; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 287.

17 Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 2nd ed., trans. Ralph Manheim (1963; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 21. See also 12.

18 The goal, as Neumann makes clear in his companion study *The Great Mother*, is a *balance* of male and female elements: 'the peril of present-day mankind springs in large part from the one-sidedly patriarchal development of the male intellectual consciousness, which is no longer held in balance by the matriarchal world of the psyche. In this sense the exposition of the archetypal-psychical world of the Feminine that we have attempted in our work is also a contribution to a future therapy of culture' (xlii–xliii).

19 Julia Briggs, *Virginia Woolf: An Inner Life* (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2005), 166.

20 Clark, *Yeats at Songs and Choruses*, 98.

21 Helen Hennessy Vendler, *Yeats's 'Vision' and the Later Plays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

22 Joseph Henderson, 'Ancient Myths and Modern Man', in *Man and His Symbols*, ed. Carl G. Jung (1964; rpt. New York: Dell, 1968), 117.

23 *Gender and History*, 214. Elsewhere in her discussion of the poem Cullingford notes that '[p]sychoanalytic critics… celebrate literary

cross-dressing… and Jung exhorts men to discover and liberate the *anima*' (203), but she does not apply that approach herself.

24 The painting is reproduced in Gilles Néret, *Tamara de Lempicka 1898–1980* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen, 1993), 27.

25 *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 547–55.

26 *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 81–82; hereafter abbreviated *SMAL* and cited parenthetically in the text. I have discussed this material in a different context in *Yeats and Artistic Power*, xvi–xxiii.

27 This transition is reflected in 'Aedh Laments the Loss of Love', which Allen R. Grossman relates to another of Burne-Jones's paintings in the Perseus Series, 'The Baleful Head'; see his *Poetic Knowledge in the Early Yeats: A Study of 'The Wind among the Reeds*' (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969), 157.

28 *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1968; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 6.

29 *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 133; see also *VSR* 128–29.

30 *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (1968; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 151–53.

31 *Psychology and Alchemy*, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 28, 37.

32 In 1931, Yeats referred to *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, an occult Chinese philosophical treatise, published that year in English with a commentary by Jung (*L 788*). He called the book 'invaluable'. If he read Jung's commentary he would have much material relevant to

‘Her Triumph’, including a discussion of the visionary moment that ‘brings about a solution of psychic complications and frees the inner personality from emotional and intellectual entanglements, thus creating a unity of being which is universally felt as “liberation”. Such a symbolic unity cannot be obtained by the conscious will because consciousness is always partisan. Its opponent is the collective unconscious, which does not understand the language of the conscious mind. Therefore it is necessary to have the magic of the symbol which contains those primitive analogies that speak to the unconscious. The unconscious can be reached and expressed only by symbols, and for this reason the process of individuation can never do without the symbol. The symbol is the primitive exponent of the unconscious, but at the same time an idea that corresponds to the highest intuitions of the conscious mind’; and ‘As we know, the poets have often sung the anima’s praises’; *Alchemical Studies*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1967; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 28, 40.

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