Miscellaneous Studies in English Literature

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By

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INTRODUCTION

This book is a collection of selected papers which have been delivered at numerous international conferences over the last fifteen years. The papers are classified into two main categories, namely, poetry and prose. However, drama is placed with poetry wherever it is needed for comparison or consultation. The poetry papers are not concerned with one certain era, but they are selected as relevant to Pre-Romantic, Romantic, modern, and contemporary eras. The papers regarding prose are about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels.

During the course of my academic career, since 2006, I have attended twenty conferences in many countries, namely, Iraq, Jordan, the UK (Wales, England, and Scotland), Ireland, Austria, and Portugal. Some papers are excluded from this book for such reasons: the feedback on the paper was not encouraging, the paper has not yet been completed, or the paper was not written but was presented as a PowerPoint. I have attended four conferences without delivering papers and six papers have been added: one of them relates to a conference paper and was extended later, two others are to be delivered at two conferences in Iraq and Turkey this year, and the other three papers were written during the last few years without them being delivered at conferences or published, except one in a journal. The rest of the fourteen papers form the major part of this book. Three additional articles complete the book.

The Author

ABBREVIATIONS

AV A	W. B. Yeats, *A Vision (1925)*
AV B	W. B. Yeats, *A Vision (1937)*
CP	*The Collected Poems by William Butler Yeats, 1889-1939*
FY	Edward Larrissy, *The First Yeats: Poems by W.B. Yeats, 1889 -99*
L & S	Vern B. Lentz & Douglas D. Short, "Hardy's Aesthetics of Disjunction and the Literary Antecedents of 'The Moth-Signal'"
OII	William Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality"
RN	Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*
TA	William Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*

PART I:

POETRY

CHAPTER ONE

MEMORY, NATURE AND MORTALITY IN WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S *TINTERN ABBEY*

Abstract

Human civilisation is so complex and varied that it needs a type of poetry which is capable of representing it. Metaphysical poetry with its complexity, heterogeneity, and difficult imagery is suitable for meeting this need. In the words of Samuel Johnson, who attacked this kind of poetry, metaphysical imagery is formed when "the most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together." The flat imagery of the Romantics is an escape from the complexity and concreteness of the imagery of metaphysical poetry. The sentimentality of Romantic poetry, the simplicity of its language, and its direct discourse emerge from its deeply held doctrine of refusing any artificiality either in life or in style.

Though Wordsworth's imagery is simple, it holds ambiguous and complicated meanings because of his interest in philosophy and mysticism. His poem *Tintern Abbey* reveals his vernacular style; however, it tackles profound themes of existence and human relationships. The sense of the progression of age dominates the poem and is depicted through the relationship between memory and nature. This paper tries to reveal the images of nature which are pivotal to Wordsworth's memory. The interlacing of the images of nature and memory is a characteristic element of this poem.

Wordsworth tries to make a comparison between mortals and immortals, considering the elements of nature as immortals to which the mortals appeal. The River Wye is one of these immortals which is personified as the place where the poet's soul resides. The river contains and absorbs the poet's experiences during his childhood. It becomes a kind of self-defence against the current progressing of age.*

Memory, Nature, and Mortality in William Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*

The poem is a philosophical and autobiographical epic. Although Wordsworth wrote this poem in 1798, he informs us that it had been five years since he had last visited the Abbey. The Romantic era witnessed a kind of religious appeal to nature where people felt a divine presence. Wordsworth's poem describes how the place "Tintern Abbey" yields peace, rest and spiritual comfort. Consequently, he considers it as a healer treating the tortures of his life. The poet shared his experiences and happiness during the Romantic era with his sister Dorothy. People began to see and feel a divine presence within nature and the role of the Romantic poet arose from this idea. Following this "ideal," Wordsworth's poem describes how the Abbey is a healer; it makes him feel better, peaceful and it teaches him about life. Additionally, he wants to share "his place" with others, which is why he is so happy to show "his abbey" to his sister Dorothy. He is ecstatic to be able to share his experiences with her.

The modern critics, T. S. Eliot, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, F. R. Leavis, Cleanth Brooks, T. E. Hulme and I. A. Richards, have attacked Romanticism for different reasons, such as excessive emotions, the lack of wit, and the direct discourse.[1] They think that Romantic poetry is incapable of achieving a height of experience because of its simple devices. Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* seems to be one of the exceptions to this theory. The imagery of the poem is uncomplicated. However, although most of the lines are written as direct statements, the discourse is highly splendid and sometimes ambiguous due to the depth of the subject matter.

The first section provides the full imagery of nature. The natural literal objects are water, mountain springs, cliffs, the sky, a sycamore tree, woods, copses, hedgerows, trees and a cave. Some vagrants and the hermit are the complementary elements of this natural scene. They are interwoven to describe the background of the scene which is pivotal in its relationship to the speaker.

In the first section, the speaker is uncertain as to whether, as he has grown old, he sees the same images of nature with the same feelings, "Do I behold…," "with some uncertain notice, as might seem." This uncertainty reflects the change in his age, even though the period between his first visit and the second is not that long. His memory is not working

spontaneously and the images of nature do not permeate his mind as they did in the past (five years earlier). He feels that he sees the landscape with a different view because of the changing state of his age:

> Five years have past; five summers, with the length
>
> Of five long winters! And again I hear
>
> These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
>
> With a sweet inland murmur. Once again
>
> Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
>
> That on a wild secluded scene impress
>
> Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
>
> The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
>
> (TA ll. 1-8)

The words "wild" and "wood" recur in this section to emphasise the wildness of the scene, even though the active imagination of the speaker reconciles this wildness with the quietness of the sky. The images of the "vagrant dwellers" and the "hermit" deepen the impression of the wildness and seclusion of the scene as they contribute to the wildness of nature and generate the impression of loneliness. Romanticism is a reaction against the industrial world and it finds a sanctuary in nature, emphasising the idea that it ceases to live in the recognised world but rather dies and returns to the original elements of life. The primitive code of nature represented by the hermit and preferred by the romantics seems to absorb these elements. The image of the "hermit" is typically used to reflect the retreat of the romantics from life into nature:

> ….. Once again I see
>
> These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
>
> Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
>
> Green to the very door; and wreathes of smoke
>
> Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
>
> With some uncertain notice, as might seem,

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,

Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire

The hermit sits alone.

(TA ll. 14-22)

The speaker feels familiarity and unity with this scene in harmony with the human beings mentioned who are not intruders but an integral part of the scene. The image of the "unripe fruits" stands for his youth which does not disturb "the wild green landscape"[2] as the memory of his youth does not disturb his maturity:

The day is come when I again repose

Here, under this dark sycamore, and view

These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,

Which at this season with their unripe fruits,

Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves

Mid groves and copses.

(TA ll. 9-14)

This image foreshadows the images of loss and gain in the fourth section:

That time is past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,

And all its dizzy rapture. Not for this

Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts

Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,

Abundant recompense.

(TA ll. 83-88)

The "blessed mood," in the second section, constitutes one of the gifts which recompense the speaker for the loss of his youthful raptures. The second section is strongly related to the images of memory integrated with the images of nature in the first section. Feeling the beauty of nature,

the speaker asserts that these beauteous forms are still living in his memory despite his long absence from his place:

> These beauteous forms
>
> Through a long absence, have not been to me
>
> As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
>
> But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din
>
> Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
>
> In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
>
> Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,
>
> And passing even into my purer mind
>
> With tranquil restoration.
>
> (TA ll. 23-30)

These beauteous images of nature were feeding his memory especially when he was "in the lonely rooms, and mid the din of towns and cities," and in "hours of weariness." These images of nature, which provide the speaker with "the blessed mood," help him to bear "the weary weight of all this unintelligible world":

> …… Nor less, I trust,
>
> To them I may have owed another gift,
>
> Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
>
> In which the burthen of the mystery,
>
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
>
> Of all this unintelligible world
>
> Is lightened.
>
> A ll. 35-41)

His feelings of unremembered pleasure have an effect on his moral and emotional state:

…. Feelings too

Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,

As may have had no trivial influence

On that best portion of a good man's life;

His little, nameless, unremembered acts

Of kindness and of love.

(TA ll. 30-35)

As the speaker turns "from an objective symbolical description of external nature" in the first section, "to an analysis of his inner self" in the second section, "nature appears as the main causal factor in his moral evolution."[3] The affections, produced with the help of the blessed mood, lead the body "to the highest kind of naturalistic contemplation."[4]

.. that serene and blessed mood

Which the affections gently lead us on,

And even the motion of our human blood

Almost suspended, we are laid asleep

In body, and become a living soul:

While with an eye made quiet by the power

Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,

We see into the life of things.

(TA ll. 41-49)

There is no departure of the soul from the body, "we are laid asleep in body," and this process leads to the creation of a living soul. The image of the "living soul" is formed by the influence of the affections, which modify the effect of the body "while with an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things."

Harold Bloom and Lionel Trilling do not believe that this section is "a mystical reverie, but an aesthetic state of contemplation."[5] Others,

like Albert S. Gerard, believe that the poet "first analyses the influence which the memory of the Wye landscape has exerted upon his mind; he thus reaches the idea of a glorious mystical insight, the truth of which, however, remains doubtful in his own eyes."[6] The cosmic unity or the union between man and nature is exemplified by the image that the poet sees "into the life of things" where "man is included in his vision and the life of things is seen to reside in all-pervading presence, which is described in grandiose terms with an animistic or pantheistic slant."[7]

As in William Lisle Bowles's sonnet "To the River Itchin" (1789) and Samuel Coleridge's "To the River Otter" (1796), Wordsworth addresses the River Wye to seek consolation and to restore recollections of his previous boyish period when he enjoyed being in this place. Also, as in Wordsworth's ode "Intimations of Immortality" where the soul turns back to the "immortal sea," his spirit turns to the River Wye in the third section of the poem:

> If this
>
> Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft--
>
> In darkness and amid the many shapes
>
> Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
>
> Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
>
> Have hung upon the beatings of my heart--
>
> How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
>
> O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
>
> How often has my spirit turned to thee!
>
> (TA ll. 50-57)

Wordsworth sees himself cavorting in the woods by the river as the travellers in the image of the ode see "children sport upon the shore":[8]

> Hence, in a season of calm weather,
>
> Though inland far we be,
>
> Our souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither;

Can in a moment travel thither

And see the children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

(OII ll. 161-167)

The image of the spirit turning towards the River Wye in section III of *Tintern Abbey* recalls the image in the Immortality Ode, "our souls have sight of that immortal sea," to denote the idea of immortality. Two opinions can be concluded from this. The first is that the spirit turns to the immortal elements of nature (river, sea…etc.) to make a union with them because the spirit is immortal. The second is that the poet makes a comparison between the mortals (the human beings) and the immortals (the river, sea…etc.) as a lament to the fact that he himself is mortal. Similarly, in the ode, the opposite image is used when one of the immortal elements of nature (the clouds) is watching the mortals:

The clouds that gather round the setting sun

Do take a sober colouring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality.

(OII ll. 196-198)

In section III of *Tintern Abbey*, the image of the River Wye, which is wandering through the wood (O Sylvan Wye: Thou wanderer through the wood) suggests that the poet is remembering the time when he himself was cavorting there. Norman Lacey interprets this section as the mystical experience of the poet who "is not certain what kind of connection there is, if any, between nature and his mystical experience, and he returns to what he knows for certain, that in the fret and fever of the world he has often turned for relief to his memory of the beautiful scene in the Wye Valley."[9]

The dominant theme is the sense of the progression of age which is embodied in various images throughout the poem; in section I, the image of early youth as "unripe fruits"; in section II, the image of breath and the motion of human blood "until the breath of this corporeal frame, and even the motion of our human blood almost suspended"; in section III,

the idea of mortality and immortality; in section IV, the idea of approaching death as "the light of the setting suns"; and in section V, the decay of spirits, "should I the more suffer my genial spirits to decay." The theme of ageing is translated by images of early youth or boyhood progressing to those of old age. The fourth section is highly focused on this theme. The function of memory is key to the effects of this theme on the poet, while the natural imagery works as a catalyst in the formulation of the theme. Section IV starts with the poet's fear of fading memories:

> And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
>
> With many recognitions dim and faint,
>
> And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
>
> The picture of the mind revives again.
>
> (TA ll. 58-61)

These lines recall the questions in the Immortality Ode: "Whither is fled the visionary gleam? / Where is it now, the glory and the dream?" (OII ll. 56-57). The poet feels that, after five years, his recognitions and sensations have become gradually "dim and faint." He feels that there is a definite change which has occurred in the interval between the two visits to the place: "… And so I dare to hope / Though changed, no doubt, from what I was…" (TA ll. 65-66).

The poet compares his present state with the previous stages of his life without forgetting the future. He feels that there is a detachment between himself, as a mature man, and nature; he did not feel this detachment in the previous stages of his life. This comparison alarms him. He is so alarmed by the passage of time that he consoles himself: "That in this moment there is life and food / For future years…" (TA ll. 64-65).

The poet bids farewell to the "coarser pleasures," "aching joys," and "dizzy raptures" of his boyhood. He describes them as "glad animal movements" to denote the sensuality of this stage. These images, especially the paradox of "aching joys," represent the deep indulgence in pleasure, which is the major characteristic of this period. The boy's sensations—as the child's—are alert to the variety of influences nature gives him, compared with the mature man who feels that his thought is "half-extinguished." His perplexity emerges from his anxiety that he will

lose his "recognitions." Again, he consoles himself that there is a recompense for this loss:

> …. For I have learned
>
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
>
> Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
>
> The still, sad music of humanity.
>
> (TA ll. 88-91)

The recompense occurs through the transition from phase to phase—from thoughtless youth to maturity. The acquisition of the pleasure of wisdom, nevertheless, offers the hearing of the "still, sad music of humanity." Though his statement is plain and devoid of any image, it reflects the deep meaning of his attitude towards nature. In early youth, the instinct drives the union with nature; in maturity, the mind comprehends the relationships with other human beings and with nature. The thoughtless youth is rewarded with high sensitivity towards nature but this is reversed at the stage of maturity; the low sensitivity towards nature is compensated for by thoughtful maturity. Though the speaker cannot maintain this intimate relationship with nature, he finds a substitute through "hearing oftentimes / the still, sad music of humanity." This substitution is not a consolation but an elegy for the passing of time and the gradual nearing of the mortal end. The mind and thoughts do not lead to "reason" and they are not in contradiction with the "heart," but the poet depicts them as "elevated thoughts" to distinguish them from the strict meaning of "reason":

> …And I have felt
>
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
>
> Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
>
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
>
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
>
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
>
> And the blue sky, and in the mind.
>
> (TA ll. 93-99)

H. J. C. Grierson describes this state as "a conscious transcendence of reason in Wordsworth."[10] The "elevated thoughts" and "the light of setting suns" recall the concept of Transcendentalism which is very much related to mystical experience. The image of the "setting suns" and the word "sad" in "sad perplexity" and "sad music of humanity" suggest the poet's consciousness of mortality. The poet thinks that we participate in creating nature through our senses, especially through sight and hearing:[11]

> …… Therefore am I still
>
> A lover of the meadows and the woods,
>
> And mountains; and of all the mighty world
>
> Of eye and ear, both what they half-create,
>
> And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
>
> In nature and the language of the sense,
>
> The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
>
> The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
>
> Of all my moral being.
>
> (TA ll. 102-111)

If the word "mysticism" is avoided, reflecting the poet's preference, the images of the "purest thoughts" and the "elevated thoughts" in this section may be related to "natural piety," as the poet calls it, in another poem entitled "My heart leaps up."[12] Bloom interprets this by relating it to "a laziness of our imaginations that tempts us to call this vision mystical, for the mystical is finally incommunicable and Wordsworth desires to be a man talking to men about matters of common experience."[13] Bloom also interprets "half-create" as the selective feature of our senses regarding the elements of nature and he denies the "total absorption" of nature into the mature man.[14] At the beginning of section V, the word "decay" suggests this absorption but it may happen in the later phase of the poet's age:

Nor perchance,

If I were not thus taught, should I the more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:

(TA ll. 111-113)

The poet's fear of mortality is reflected in these lines in a way "that he might become completely cut off from nature, that he might no longer be taught by nature and the language of the sense."[15] Nature teaches the poet human love and this love prevents his "genial spirits" from decay; and so, he turns back to his sister as a substitute for dealing with nature directly:

…and in thy voice I catch

The language of my former heart, and read

My TB pleasures in the shooting lights

Of thy wild eyes.

(TA ll. 116-119)

The poet takes refuge in his sister's voice and eyes. He addresses his sister Dorothy indirectly "to turn back to his own self" and she is "presented as a sort of duplication of her brother, and the close correspondence of their characters and interests and sensibilities may do much to account for the feeling that existed between them." [16] His sister represents his former state of pre-maturity. The poet works on two levels: the first is "the language of sense" which is closely related to his phase of pre-maturity; the second is the language of faith which is "full of blessing" and closely related to maturity:

…and this prayer I make,

Knowing that Nature never did betray

The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,

Through all the years of this our life, to lead

From joy to joy: for she can so inform

The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings.

(TA ll. 121-134)

The change from the first level to the second one is made through memory, which plays the healing and consoling role in the poet's ageing:

… and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me.

(TA ll. 137-145)

Nature is identified as a woman who "never did betray the heart that loved her."[17] The marriage between the poet and nature or the organic relationship between them is elevated to a spiritual or religious level, "displaced into a naturalistic mode":[18]

… Nor, perchance--

If I should be where I no more can hear

Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams

Of past existence—wilt thou then forget

That on the banks of this delightful stream

We stood together; and that I, so long

A worshipper of Nature, hither came

Unwearied in that service: rather say

With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal

Of holier love.

(TA ll. 146-155)

The gleam of life, which is seen in the wild eyes of the poet's sister and is related to the period of pre-maturity, is the real and delightful light. This special image of light is lost now in this period of maturity and the poet is sadly perplexed by this loss. The concluding section is dedicated to the poet's sister which reflects the autobiographical theme of the poem. The last lines of the poem conclude in direct discourse, and Bloom's view is that "the closing lines, with their immense music, are not complete":[19]

Nor wilt thou then forget,

That after many wanderings, many years

Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were to me

More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

(TA ll. 155-159)

Bloom concludes that *Tintern Abbey* is "a personal myth of memory as salvation."[20] It can also be added that the poet is always searching for consolation in specific ways.

Conclusion

Some critics attacked Romantic poetry for its simplicity, lack of complex imagery, and its direct statements. They thought that it did not meet the needs of our complex lives. Although the imagery of Wordsworth is not complex, his poem, *Tintern Abbey* is different because of its elevated style, the depth of its subject matter, and some ambiguous statements. The guiding images, which are derived from the dialectical relationship between memory and nature, are paralleled by the dominant theme of the progression of age and fear of mortality. The poet feels the need to compare his present state with his past according to his relationship with nature, and in doing so, thinks about his future. Sometimes, the implicit theme of immortality floats over the surface of the poem through a union with nature, but the theme of mortality is deeply established and overwhelms the whole poem. The natural images are precisely interwoven to reflect these themes. Nature, for Wordsworth, is playing a double role in healing and consolation. Memory is working as a device to perform these functions.

Though spirituality is denied by the poet himself, it pervades some sections of the poem. It reflects one side of the poet's personality which tends to idealism; the other side inclines to realism because he is dealing with tangible elements of nature. There is an authenticity to the autobiographical quality of the poem throughout and especially in the last section which addresses the poet's sister.

As a critique, the poet's direct statements, such as: "sad music of humanity," "language of sense," and "blessed mood" diminish the strength of the poetic imagery of the poem. Nevertheless, its imagery perfectly interprets the poet's intention.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ISLAND OF STATUES: MAGIC AND ALCHEMY IN YEATS'S POETIC DRAMA

Abstract

Pastoral poetry was one of the strongest elements that contributed to the foundations of Romantic poetry. Both shared a love of nature and distance from city life, and both supported the political satire of the urban style of life and civilisation. Both were relevant to the early Yeatsian mood reflecting his reactions to emotional, cultural, aesthetical, mystical and political problems. He created an Arcadian setting for some of his early poems: "The Song of the Happy Shepherd," "The Sad Shepherd" and also his poetic drama, *The Island of Statues.* This paper sheds new light on the use of magic and alchemy in Yeats's *The Island of Statues*, and explores other examples that contribute to the dramatic fabric of poetic drama, for example, *The Arabian Nights* and Greek mythology.*

Keywords: Magic, alchemy, Rosicrucianism, mysticism, the art of sculpture, red rose.

"The Tale of the Young Man and the Fishes" in *The Arabian Nights*[1] is one of the essential sources for Yeats's poetic drama, *The Island of Statues*. In the tale and the poem, two lovers are fighting to gain the favour of a girl; one remains her lover, but the other becomes her husband. The girl in the tale is a witch, while the girl in the poem, disguised as a man, is loved by a witch. The transformation of these humans into stone by magic is a detail found in both the poem and the tale. In the poem, humans are completely transformed into statues or stones, whereas in the tale, humans become half human and half stone, like a statue, because the lower part of the body is calcified into stone. The island is enchanted in the poem, while the four isles, the lake and the whole city are enchanted in the tale. The enchanted coloured fishes in the tale, which are swimming in the enchanted lake, are substituted by "Flowers of manifold colour"[2] in the

poem. The superiority of love over magic, however, is the common theme in the poem and also in the tale. The lake is also part of the setting in the poem but it is not enchanted. Both girls are dressed as men, or have some part of a man's attire, such as the sword in the case of the girl in the tale, and in one of the episodes of the poem.

Principally, the statue, as a type of sculptural art, becomes a fixation for human beings at a certain moment in time. It is similar to the myth of Tir Na nOg in Yeats's "The Wanderings of Oisin" where people are fixed in a youthful age. Magic and art offer this opportunity for immortality; however, Oisin's return from the land of the immortals and Almintor's transformation from being a statue to being mortal again undermines this opportunity. The enchanted flower of joy seems to be eternal compared to the withered flowers held by the hands of the statues. Nevertheless, the Enchantress connects her life to that flower:

> And in her eyes a lightless stare;
>
> For, if severed from the root
>
> The enchanted flower were;
>
> From my wizard island lair,
>
> And the happy winged day,
>
> I, as music that grows mute
>
> On a girl's forgotten lute,
>
> Pass away—
>
> (FY 94, III, ll. 62-69)

The root of such magic extends to ancient Ireland and old civilisations. The poet uses the voice of the Enchantress to express his fears that modern civilisation may sever that flower. The symbol of the flower of joy might have been taken from Martin Luther's emblem, and "the emblem of Luther itself consisted of a white rose, the insignia of joy and peace, surrounded by a golden ring symbolising eternal life."[3]

The red colour of the flower might have been borrowed from the four red roses in the hat of Christian Rosenkreutz in the story of *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz* by Johann Valentin Andreae,[4] which can be considered yet another source of inspiration for *The Island of*

Statues. In turn, this story can be considered a "model for Goethe's Faust."[5] In his *Autobiographies*, Yeats mentions that the "Red Rose" stands for "Intellectual Beauty."[6] In Rosicrucianism, the colour red is extended to include the cross as well:

> Christian Rosenkreutz is not only a knight of the Golden Fleece and of the Golden Stone; he is also a Red Cross knight. Allusions to the Garter are behind the composite allusions to chivalrous feasts and ceremonies of initiation in Andreae's work; the Red Cross of the Order of Garter, the Red Cross of St George of England have been absorbed into the German world, to reappear as "Christian Rosenkreutz," with his red roses and his Red Cross ensign.[7]

Christian Rosenkreutz is the story's narrator. He attends the wedding of the King and the Queen in a castle. Six Royal Persons, and a Moorish character who has executed them, are decapitated and put on seven ships that sail to an island. They suffer alchemical dealings in an althanor (furnace) which is placed in a castle tower on that island.[8] The result is the arrival of the King and the Queen who then return to the castle and reward their guests with the Order of the Golden Stone.[9] In Yeats's *The Island of Statues*, the death of the queen, the Enchantress, causes the arrival of a queen (Naschina) and a king (Almintor). The decapitated persons who return to life after their deaths in the *Chymical Wedding* can be identified with those persons of stone who return to life after solving the magic spell cast by the enchanted flower of joy. There are seven characters in the story, which is nearly the same number as in the poem—five sleepers, two shepherds, Naschina and the Enchantress. Originally, the number of characters who suffered death in the poem was seven, followed by the death of the Enchantress. The Order of the Golden Stone granted by the Queen (not the King) to the guests in the story can be compared to the enchanted flower of joy, employed by Naschina, the new Queen, to revive those made into stone by passing the flower between

their lips. The image of the "Golden Stone" in The Order of the Golden Stone is suggestive of the entire works of Yeats.

The superiority of the female, as represented by Naschina, over men, as represented by the shepherds, suggests the Yeatsian approach where Maud Gonne practises her authority over her suitors in order to make them submit. The final victory of Naschina by solving the spell is not simply to overcome the Enchantress of the Island but rather to confirm female superiority. The inferiority of the masculine element, as opposed to the feminine element in *The Island of Statues,* emanates from the influence of the Troubadour tradition in Yeats's early efforts.

Furthermore, the solving of the magic spell by a female expresses Yeats's belief in the feminine capacity to control the world or at least to herald the danger behind that capacity. Naschina's behaviour is dangerous—encouraging a fight between the two shepherds—but although she is going to save her lover, Almintor, who has been turned into stone, she is also happy that other men are fighting to gain her love. Here then, she is not completely faithful to her supposed lover, Almintor. Naschina's behaviour recalls the girl's behaviour in the tale of *The Arabian Nights*, who is playing a game of love with her husband and her lover. This situation might also have been influenced by the image of the woman depicted in *The Arabian Nights*, and it also recalls Helen of Troy, who caused the Trojan War:

> The Sleeper. Ah! While I slumbered,
>
> How have the years in Troia flown away?
>
> Are still the Achaians' tented chiefs at bay?
>
> Where rise the walls majestical above,
>
> There dwells a little fair-haired maid I love.
>
> (FY 101, III, ll. 291-95)

The second sleeper makes reference to Dido being unfaithful to the memory of her husband and also mentions the dangerous love that causes tragedies:

> The Sleeper. With hungry heart
>
> Doth still the wanderer rove? With all his ships