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SATORI IN *STREAM AND SUN AT GLENDALOUGH*

I

"Stream and Sun at Glendalough" is a poem curiously ignored by the critics, perhaps because of its simplicity, but perhaps because, in its simplicity, it is so perplexing for a poem by Yeats. Water and sunlight were symbols present in every occult symbology known to him – be it that of the Cabbala, Rosicrucianism or Alchemy – and yet here Yeats was using them in an entirely natural way. This was something very rare in his work. In much of Yeats's poetry natural imagery is either – as in the early verses – part of a vaporous mental landscape of Irish folklore, where the elements evoke moods and mental states, or else, as in the middle period, juxtaposed against images of eternity. Although evidently about a point of spiritual insight, "Stream and Sun at Glendalough" involves an enjoyment of the phenomenal world for its own sake rarely seen outside *The Winding Stair* (1933). Nature's physical beauty is "all part of 'the splendour of the Divine Being'" rather than symbolic of Him.¹

Is "Stream and Sun at Glendalough" simply a rare affirmation of Yeats's love of nature, or is its meaning and significance alike more complex than that? The truth is that while it is a simple enough poem, it is also an extremely important one, being the conclusion to and resolution of the major themes discussed in *The Winding Stair* (1933). These are the end of the Dualism of spirit and matter, the faith in a physical heaven, and the acceptance of sin, all of which are necessary to the artist who wishes to perceive "ultimate reality" as immediately as the mystic (or "Saint"), yet without denying the passionate and sensual powers of the "Heart". It is also a poem directly influenced by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki's *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (First Series),² which was largely responsible for solving most

¹ W. B. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions* (London, New York: Macmillan, 1961), p. 431.

² D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series (London: Luzac & Co, 1927). A copy of this book was presented to Yeats in 1927 by Kazumi Yano. O'Shea catalogues it as number

of the major problems raised by Yeats's late reading of philosophy, including those aired in *The Winding Stair*.

Likewise influenced by Suzuki was the concluding passage to the essentially Neo-Platonic (and potentially "abstract") "The Completed Symbol" from *A Vision* (1937).³ Here, before quoting quatrains from Suzuki's chapter on "satori" (the sudden attainment of Enlightenment, usually in daily life), Yeats wrote:

My instructors identify consciousness with conflict, not with knowledge, substitute for subject and object and their logic a struggle towards harmony, towards Unity of Being. Logical and emotional conflict alike lead towards a reality which is concrete, sensuous, bodily. My imagination was for a time haunted by figures that, muttering "the Great Systems", held out to me the sun-dried skeletons of birds, and it seemed to me that this image was meant to turn my thoughts to the living bird.⁴

This passage itself implies the problems that philosophical sources like Plotinus, Plato, Coleridge and Berkeley had all caused Yeats in his rewriting of *A Vision*, and explains why "The Completed Symbol" and "The Soul in Judgement" are such confusing books: for Yeats sought therein to subvert the "abstract" ontological hierarchies of these men as much as to assert them, and to give the artist, the man who divines the soul of the world through images, the same status as the "Saint", who perceives God immediately, without intermediary.

It was in Suzuki's book that he found an excuse for seeing the material world as part of God's "splendour", since Suzuki explained that Zen, being a form of Mahayana Buddhism, believed all things, sentient and non-sentient, to contain the Buddha-nature, and thus to be capable of Enlightenment. More importantly, Zen taught that the split in our wills between the duality of subject and object, and the further Dualism of spirit and matter, were in fact forms of ignorance, and that true wisdom, or Prajna, depended upon our discovering "mirror-insight"⁵ – that is, the reflection of the fundamental unity of the universe, involving a return to the One. The Zen-quatrains which Yeats read in Suzuki's chapter on satori inspired him to believe that the metaphysical was not only imparted through the physical, but could become one with it, and ultimate reality "concrete, sensuous, bodily".

4024 in Yeats's library – E. O'Shea, *A Descriptive Catalog of W. B. Yeats's Library* (New York, London: Garland Publishing, 1985). Yeats marked heavily pp. 120–44 of his copy of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1st series), but clearly read all of it avidly.

³ W. B. Yeats, *A Vision* (London: Macmillan, 1937), pp. 187–215. The first edition, which employs much less philosophy and far more geometry, was first published in 1925 as *A Vision: An Explanation of Life Founded upon the Writings of Giraldus and upon certain Doctrines attributed to Kusta Ben Luka* (London: privately printed for subscribers only by T. Werner Laurie, Ltd., 1925). Throughout this article the references are to the 1937 edition alone.

⁴ W. B. Yeats, *Vision*, p. 214.

⁵ D. T. Suzuki, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

This desire for union between the spiritual and physical represents more than just a pious hope about the nature of ultimate reality, but a re-emergence of an idea important to the Yeats of the 1890s, that there could be incarnation: the homogenisation of soul and body in human life. In much of his work Yeats stuck to Michael Robartes's assertion in the poem "The Phases of the Moon" that we never know the supernatural phases 1 and 15 where this may happen,⁶ and yet still wrote of the dancing girl in *The Double Vision of Michael Robartes* (1919) and of the possibility of such a resolution of antinomies in many of his later poems and plays. More than the Attis and Dionysus cults which inspired *The Resurrection* (1931), and more than the Catholic mysticism of Von Hügel which Yeats addressed in "Vacillation", it was Zen which gave him this idea.

II

Passages written by Japanese monks on attaining Nirvana, and one by an Indian, run in my head. "I sit upon the side of a mountain and look at a little farm. I say to the old farmer, 'How many times have you mortgaged your farm and paid off the mortgage?' I take pleasure in the sound of the rushes." "No more does the young man come from behind the embroidered curtain amid the sweet clouds of incense; he goes among his friends, he goes among the flute-players; something very nice has happened to the young man, but he can only tell it to his sweetheart." "You ask me what is my religion and I hit you upon the mouth." "Ah! Ah! The lightning crosses the heavens, it passes from end to end of the heavens. Ah! Ah!"⁷

The half-remembered quotations of verses on satori from "Zazuki's 'Zen Buddhism'",⁸ which round off "The Completed Symbol", point to the source for "Stream and Sun at Glendalough". While Suzuki explained that Enlightenment depends upon the will's reunification to itself – subject and object considered as one, as in Plotinus's Second Hypostasis (Yeats's *Spirit and Celestial Body*⁹) – and its transcending the ignorance of dualistic

⁶ W. B. Yeats, *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, ed. by P. Allt and R. K. Alspach (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), p. 610, l. 22.

⁷ W. B. Yeats, *Vision*, pp. 214–15. See also M. Gibson, "What 'Empty Eyeballs Knew': Zen Buddhism in [Yeats's] 'The Statues' and the *Principles of A Vision*", in *Yeats Annual* 11, ed. by W. Gould (London: Macmillan 1994).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 194. A brief note of explanation is needed concerning Yeats's Sphere of the *Principles* and their relation to Plotinus's Hypostases.

In Plotinus's universe there are four major Hypostases. The First is the One, beyond knowledge or Being, which transcends all things, but emanates or "overflows" into the second, the Intellectual realm, or Spirit, which further overflows into the Third, the All-Soul or Soul of the World. The individual soul is an emanation from both the Second and Third Hypostases. All lower levels contemplate those immediately above them. The Second Hypostasis was the realm of the Authentic Existents (a term which Yeats took to mean "hypostasis" itself), or

cognition in order to find Prajna, or true wisdom, his later chapter on satori actually explains how this Enlightenment is often attained.

Suzuki gives many historical examples and fragments of literature celebrating satori's attainment. Satori often occurs in daily life, suddenly, through an act or through a movement in nature. It is a rebirth, or return to our origins, for, as Suzuki explains:

In fact, all the causes of satori are in the mind. That is why when the clock clicks, all that has been lying there bursts up like a volcanic eruption or flashes out like a bolt of lightning. Zen calls this "returning to one's own home"; for its followers will declare: "You have now found yourself; from the very beginning nothing has been kept away from you. It was yourself that closed the eye to the fact. In Zen

Platonic Ideas. For a fuller precis read the introduction of Mackenna's translation of *The Enneads* – Plotinus, *The Enneads*, trans. S. Mackenna, 6 vols (London: P. L. Warner for the Medici Society, 1917).

Those familiar with Yeats's *A Vision* will know that he believed man to be equipped with four *Faculties* during life, which rotate in order around the two intersecting and opposed primary and antithetical cones gyres of his symbolism, determining the disposition of a man, and his relative powers of reasoning and imagination. They were determined by the man's relation to his *Daimon* or anti-self, a mind from the soul of the world which was the complete opposite of the man's habitual self. These *Faculties* were the *Will* and *Mask*, the intuitive sense and its desired object, and *Creative Mind* and *Body of Fate*, abstract knowledge and the "series of events forced upon" man from without (*Vision*, pp. 82–3). In the phases 8 to 22 in Yeats's lunar symbolism, when the *antithetical* cone predominates *Will* is strongest, and the man is most likely to be strong, artistic, emotional, and to achieve the complete harmony with his *Daimon* and his *Faculties* which Yeats called "Unity of Being" (*Vision*, p. 141) and deemed to deliver the perfect *Mask*. In the phases 22 to 8 the primary cone predominates, the *Creative Mind* is strongest, and the man is most likely to be unimaginative, rational, involved in affairs of state, or, at the most *primary*, a *Saint*: a religious, mystical man who has direct communion with God.

The Wheel of the *Principles* contains the "innate grounds" (*Vision*, p. 187) of the *Faculties*, and rotates not merely during the life of the man, but in the life between lives as well. They inform the *Faculties*. The *Husk*, the memory of the *Daimon*'s past lives, is reflected as the *Will*, while the *Passionate Body* the incarnation of the man's *Daimon*, together with other "discarnate Daimons" from the soul of the world, reflects as the *Mask* (*Vision*, pp. 187–89). When the man dies the *Spirit* takes over from the *Husk* as the man's centre of consciousness (*Vision*, p. 188), and seeks to purify itself by finding and becoming one with the *Celestial Body*, before the man is reborn into the *Faculties* again or passes into the phaseless *Thirteenth Cone* (*Vision*, pp. 223–25).

Yeats drew upon Plotinus to make sense of the *Principles*. According to Rosemary Puglia Ritvo – "A Vision B: The Plotinian Metaphysical Basis", *The Review of English Studies*, 26 (1976), pp. 34–46 – Yeats matched the *Celestial Body* and the *Spirit* of his "unknown instructors" with Plotinus's Second Hypostasis or First and Second "Authentic Existents" (*Vision*, p. 194), as he confusingly divided it, in which reside the principles of Knowledge and Existence: Act and Being, the contemplator and the contemplated, are both essentially the same here, mutually determining each other, and yet contain the potential for separation into a world of duality, subjects and objects. When united they are "pure thought" (*Explorations*, p. 316) or "pure mind" (*Vision*, p. 189). The collective, discarnate Daimons Yeats believed to exist in the Third "Authentic Existent" (really "Hypostasis"), or Soul of the World, which is an emanation from the second, or Spirit, but also contemplates it in its moving circle

there is nothing to explain, nothing to teach, that will add to your knowledge. Unless it grows out of yourself, no knowledge is really of value, a borrowed plumage never grows."¹⁰

The bolt of lightning is, as Suzuki suggests in a footnote to this passage, a simile for "the bursting out of Enlightenment upon consciousness".¹¹ Yeats's own quotation of it in "The Completed Symbol" derives from a later footnote in the chapter. Here Suzuki wanted to compare a simile from the *Upanishads* with a stanza on satori by Bukko:

This lively utterance [Bukko's stanza] reminds one of a lightning simile in the Kena-Upanishad (IV.30):

"This is the way It [that is, Brahman] is to be illustrated:

When lightnings have been loosened, –

a-a-ah!

When that has made the eyes to be closed, –

a-a-ah!

So far concerning Deity [devata]."

Lightning flash is a favourite. It comes so suddenly and when it comes the world is at once illumined and revealed in its entirety and in its harmonious oneness; but when it vanishes everything falls back into its old darkness and confusion.¹²

This metaphor did not find its way into "Stream and Sun at Glendalough", but did inspire the idea of the "motion of the sun or stream ... / That pierced my body through".¹³

(*Vision*, p. 194). The discarnate *Daimons* cause the *Husk* and *Passionate Body*, or "sense ... and the objects of sense" (*Vision*, p. 188), which are reflected as *Will* and *Mask* in the living man, in conjunction with the incarnate *Daimon* of the man, which corresponds to Plotinus's individual logoi of the soul. Above and transcending all of these is Yeats's ultimate reality, or *Thirteenth Cone*, Plotinus's One, which for Yeats is "neither one nor many", and frees the souls who enter it from "the twelve cycles of time and space" (*Vision*, p. 210). In Yeats's terms, it is a "phaseless sphere" beyond antinomies (*Vision*, p. 210), with "all movement, all thought, all perception extinguished" – W. B. Yeats, *Explorations*, sel. Mrs W. B. Yeats (London: Macmillan, 1962; New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 307.

Yeats, therefore, managed to conflate the Second and Third Hypostases of Plotinus, Intellect and Soul, to the same level, thus subverting its ontological hierarchy.

¹⁰ D. T. Suzuki, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 241n–42n. Such a metaphor would have in any case appealed to Yeats's own Cabbalistic background. In *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* Yeats distinguished between the winding path of the serpent (nature) followed by the artist, the straight path of the bowman (from Yesod straight to Tiphareth), followed by the saint, and the zig-zag path of the Daimon, who illuminates suddenly – W. B. Yeats, *Mythologies* (London, New York: Macmillan, 1959), p. 361.

¹³ Yeats had referred to the stream at Glendalough some years earlier in the poem "Under the Round Tower" (1918), when the beggar Billy Byrne decides to lie down and sleep for the night:

Upon a grey old battered tombstone

In Glendalough beside the stream,

In fact, Suzuki's comments throughout the chapter inspired both the poem in its entirety, and in its separate parts. This does not necessarily mean that Yeats was consciously affirming Zen as the resolution to his spiritual and emotional conflicts throughout *The Winding Stair*, but rather that the influence of Zen, conscious or unconscious, did solve his own spiritual and intellectual crisis, and that its ideas governed this conclusion to one of his finest volumes of poetry.

To begin with the first stanza, Yeats wrote:

Through intricate motions ran
Stream and gliding sun
And all my heart seemed gay:
Some stupid thing that I had done
Made my attention stray.¹⁴

The colon at the end of the third line is at first beguiling. Does Yeats mean that his narrator's attention strayed because of the intricate motions of stream and gliding sun, or that he only felt gay from the stream and gliding sun once his attention strayed? The latter would seem to be the case, especially if we take into account a favourite passage of Yeats's in Suzuki. On the same page of Suzuki where the author quotes in footnote the lightning simile from the *Upanishads*, we also find a statement which was to prove useful to Yeats in his later poem, "The Statues":

When thus all mentation is temporarily suspended, even the consciousness of an effort to keep an idea focussed at the centre of attention is gone, that is, when, as the Zen followers say, the mind is so completely possessed or identified with its object of thought that even the consciousness of identity is lost as when one mirror reflects another, the subject feels as if living in a crystal palace, all transparent, refreshing, buoyant and royal. But the end has not been reached, this being merely the preliminary condition leading to the consummation called satori.¹⁵

Yeats forgot this when he wrote "The Statues" (1938), and saw the identification of subject and object in the two mirrors as bringing the emptiness he considered to be Enlightenment or Nirvana. However, at the time of writing "Stream and Sun at Glendalough" *Essays in Zen Buddhism* was probably more fresh in his memory, for he seems to have identified the end of mentation – the straying of attention – with necessary precondition for the happiness caused by sun and gliding stream.

Where the O'Byrnes and Byrne's are buried,
He stretched his bones and fell in a dream
Of sun and moon that a good hour

Bellowed and pranced in the round tower – W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, p. 331, ll. 7–12.

¹⁴ W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, pp. 506–7, ll. 1–5.

¹⁵ D. T. Suzuki, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

If such a straying of attention does not concord with what we might except of the identification of subject and object – the mind (or will, as Suzuki would say) as a “pure act” – then we should perhaps consider how Yeats himself defined the coalescence of *Spirit* and *Celestial Body*, or *Creative Mind* and *Body of Fate* in the darkest phases of the moon:

At death consciousness passes from *Husk* to *Spirit*; *Husk* and *Passionate Body* are said to disappear, which corresponds to the enforcing of *Will* and *Mask* after Phase 22, and *Spirit* turns from *Passionate Body* and clings to *Celestial Body* until they are one and there is only *Spirit*; pure mind, containing within itself pure truth, that which depends only upon itself: as in the primary phases, *Creative Mind* clings to *Body of Fate* until mind deprived of its obstacle can create no more and nothing is left but “the spirits at one”, unrelated facts and aimless mind, the burning out that awaits all voluntary effort.¹⁶

It is exactly this “aimless mind” which we find in the “stupid thing that I had done [which] / Made my attention stray”. This, for Yeats, was “the spirits at one”, or the mind as a “pure act”, however much it may contradict what Platonists understand by self-intuition.¹⁷

The second stanza is again influenced by both passages and ideas in Suzuki’s book:

Repentance keeps my heart impure;
But what am I that dare
Fancy that I can
Better conduct myself or have more
Sense than a common man?¹⁸

The first line is clearly a reference to the conclusion which Yeats came to in “Vacillation”, when his narrator refused to sanction Catholicism. As an artist Yeats could not accept repentance of sin and a renunciation of the passion of the “Heart” in favour of the Celestial Fire of the “Soul”. Thus repentance leaving the heart impure means that the renunciation of sin, and consequently of passion, is denial of the Heart, which is emotional

¹⁶ W. B. Yeats, *Vision*, pp. 188–89.

¹⁷ The divergences from Platonic apperception in both the passage in *A Vision* and this first stanza of “Stream and Sun at Glendalough” may well be influenced by a dialogue between the Zen master Baso and his pupil Hyakujo. The day after Baso had led Hyakujo to satori by twisting his nose they had the following short conversation: “Yesterday you twisted my nose,” replied Hyakujo, “and it was painful”. “Where,” said Baso, “was your thought wandering then?” “It is not painful any more to-day, master” (Suzuki, *op. cit.*, p. 233). While Suzuki takes this as evidence of Hyakujo’s new boldness after finding satori, it is likely that Yeats himself was influenced by it to see the “wandering” thought as the condition for satori’s attainment.

¹⁸ W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, p. 507, ll. 6–10.

and passionate. Those who repent their sin will become "Struck dumb in the simplicity of fire!";¹⁹ but they will not know God as the artist, or indeed, any man who follows the law of his heart, will know Him.

In this Suzuki's description of satori must have been an important influence on Yeats, since it is deliberately contrasted with Christian conversion:

In the psychology of religion this spiritual enhancement of one's whole life is called "conversion". But as the term is generally used by Christian converts, it cannot be applied in its strict sense to the Buddhist experience, especially to that of the Zen followers; the term has too affective or emotional a shade to take the place of satori, which is above all noetic. The general tendency of Buddhism is as we know more intellectual than emotional, and its doctrine of Enlightenment distinguishes it sharply from the Christian view of salvation; Zen as one of the Mahayana schools naturally shares a large amount of what we may call transcendental intellectualism which does not issue in logical dualism ... But according to the Zen masters the doctrine of non-achievement concerns itself with the subjective attitude of mind which goes beyond the limitations of thought. It does not deny ethical ideals, nor does it transcend them; it is simply an inner state of consciousness without reference to its objective consequence.²⁰

Yeats may have ignored the fact that satori is less emotional and more intellectual than Christian conversion, but would have delighted in the idea that it was purely a state of consciousness, neither denying a moral code nor dictating one. This would have given him the licence and encouragement to assert the primacy of "Heart" in intuiting the divine, and to eschew the repentance of sin.

The narrator's comparison between himself and a "common man" springs from an aspect of Zen teaching certainly to be found in the chapter on satori, but evident throughout the book: that cognitive knowledge and the intellect are in fact forms of ignorance caused by the split in our wills; that true wisdom, or *Prajna*, depends upon our healing this split and so taking ourselves beyond the limitations of dualistic existence. Yeats further took this to mean knowledge of moral codes. Since all of us possess the potential for Enlightenment, and intellectual and analytical knowledge are forms of defilement and ignorance, why should Yeats's poet-persona consider himself more capable than any other man of reaching Enlightenment? For all his reading, he has no more "sense" than any man is born with – and "sense" here is a richly ambiguous word.

The last stanza draws further from aspects of Suzuki's teaching, and may at first appear paradoxical:

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 502, l. 75.

²⁰ D. T. Suzuki, p. 217–18.

What motion of the sun or stream
 Or eyelid shot the gleam
 That pierced my body through?
 What made me live like these that seem
 Self-born, born anew?²¹

While Suzuki quoted from *Six Essays by Shositsu* to assert that satori is an escape from "the transmigration of birth-and-death" or Samsara,²² to which the ignorant are bound, he also calls it "the birth of a new man ..."²³ What he means by this latter statement is that we discover our true nature when we achieve satori, and so return to our origins before the split in our wills and the defilements of knowledge and individual ego-consciousness: we are "born anew". The shooting gleam which enlightens the narrator after the initial straying of attention (for it is this "shot" which makes him "gay") makes him also feel as though "self-born" – satori is discovered internally, as Suzuki first stated: the Zen master cannot teach it, only guide the student to its discovery within himself. Yeats's narrator is born anew because he has regained what he had at birth and has since lost.

However, the self-teaching, self-sufficiency emphasis of the last lines perhaps jars with Yeats's question as to what was the motion, what was it that made him like this. The fact that these are questions left hanging in the air without answer may be Yeats's ironic way of saying that the motion that "shot the gleam" was merely the incidence for the enlightenment: that it was in fact the narrator himself who did it, although he is unaware of his own agency; that the poet Yeats, unlike his persona in the poem, knows that really "all the causes of satori are in the mind".²⁴ However, such ignorance on the narrator's part would in any case necessarily contradict his achievement of Enlightenment, and the admission that he is "Self-born".

The truth is, that while accepting the "Self-born" aspect of satori, Yeats wanted to affirm the sensual, physical nature of ultimate reality in which there is no Dualism of spirit and matter. While the oneness involved in Enlightenment denies that either matter or spirit genuinely exist under separable conditions – the reason why we should transcend Dualism – this was not accepted by Yeats, for reasons which I have already explained. "Stream and Sun at Glendalough" is a Zen-inspired poem, but very much contains Yeats's own interpretation of Zen.

For Yeats, Zen provided the same re-created world and ultimate reality as the Attis cult and Von Hügel's "description" of Catholic sainthood, to which he referred at the end of "Vacillation":

²¹ W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, p. 507, ll. 11–5.

²² D. T. Suzuki, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

Must we part, Von Hügel, though much alike, for we
 Accept the miracles of the saints and honour sanctity?
 The body of Saint Teresa lies undecayed in tomb,
 Bathed in miraculous oil, sweet odours from it come,
 Healing from its lettered slab. Those self-same hands perchance
 Eternalised the body of a modern saint that once
 Had scooped out Pharoah's mummy.²⁵

Von Hügel offered Yeats (or so he thought) more than just the Celestial Fire and "Isaiah's coal" rejected in part VI of "Vacillation", but a vision of the "irrational", where the Dualism of spirit and body is ended and the physical world takes on the beauty and permanence of the spirit.²⁶ This is

²⁵ W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, p. 503, ll. 78–84.

²⁶ It is interesting that Yeats should have referred to the cultus of St Teresa, when Von Hügel himself writes explicitly about St Catherine of Genoa's in *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends*, 2 vols (London: J. M. Dent & Sons; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1923) I, pp. 300–6. Von Hügel only refers to St Teresa in the more philosophical, second volume of his work, when discussing various correlations between the work of Platonists and neo-Platonists, and the Christian Mystical tradition. Reading Von Hügel's paraphrases and quotes from St Teresa on finding oneness with God through the soul and the nous, it is understandable why Yeats should have lighted on St Teresa as he did:

"6. Immanence, not Pantheism"

St Teresa's teaching as to God's presence in the soul points plainly, I think, to the truth insisted on by the Catholic theologian Schwab, in his admirable monograph on Gerson. "Neither speculation nor feeling are satisfied with a Pure Transcendence of God; and hence the whole effort of true Mysticism is directed, whilst not abolishing His Transcendence, to embrace and experience God, His living presence, in the innermost soul, – that is, to insist, in some way or other, upon the Immanence of God" – Von Hügel, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

This passage, which helps to conclude a section entitled "Relations between God and the Human Soul", gives no details about the possibility of homogenising flesh and spirit in a kind of Joachimist age of the Holy Spirit, but does talk of the immediacy of apprehending God which Yeats was looking for in such a conception. While Von Hügel's book gave him insight into the possibility of a world of the spirit upon earth, Frazer's description of vegetation rites like the Attis and Adonis cults of Greece and the Middle East provided him with a possible model for invoking the "irrational" end of orderly Dualism and a unification of the "extremities [through which] ... Man runs his course":

A tree there is that from its topmost bough
 Is half all glittering flame and half all green
 Abounding foliage moistened with the dew;
 And half is half and yet is all the scene;
 And half and half consume what they renew,
 And he that Attis' image hangs between
 That staring fury and the blind lush leaf
 May know not what he knows, but knows not grief – W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, p. 500,
 ll. 11–18.

Certain scholars have related the hanging of Attis's image on the tree to the sacrifice of the devotees in his cult, who castrate themselves in worship and identification with the god. As

what the Attis devotee finds, who (like the Zen master) "know[s] not what he knows". However, there is a very good reason why Yeats cannot accept Von Hügel's vision:

I – though heart might find relief
 Did I become a Christian man and choose for my belief.
 What seems most welcome in the tomb – play a predestined part.
 Homer is my example and his unchristened heart.
 The lion and the honeycomb, what has scripture said?
 So get you gone, Von Hügel, though with blessings on your head.²⁷

The reason for Yeats's rejection of Von Hügel's brand of Christianity is that, as an artist, he not only desired an ultimate reality and re-created world which affirms the spiritual, but one which does not involve repentance

Richard Ellman writes: "... Attis is a god of a special sort, a vegetation god who castrates himself when Cybele, the earth mother, drives him to frenzy. Yeats identified the poet with the priest, himself castrated in honour of his god, because like Thomas Mann he conceived of the artist as forced to sacrifice his life for the sake of his art. For its sake he becomes one with Attis and in this union, which is also the union of body and soul, he experiences the ecstasy of seeing beyond the cross or gyres into the rose or sphere of things" – R. Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1954), p. 273. The sacrifice of castration, or the identification of priest with poet, is the union of spirit and flesh: the two opposing movements towards God or nature, represented by the tree and by the primary and antithetical gyres. Attis and his artist-worshippers resolve the antinomies of life, and bring ultimate reality to human contemplation. What is interesting is the reference to the initiate not "knowing" what he "knows". Most scholars, among them Ellmann, accept that this means that the initiate in the Attis ritual has a "knowledge not susceptible of intellectual formulation, but he knows the ecstatic state of not-grief, which may be called joy" – R. Ellmann, *op. cit.*, p. 273. However, the two types of knowledge of which Yeats writes may have been inspired by both the style and content of certain passages in Suzuki's book, in particular one which treats of the reality of Ignorance, and how to know reality is to eschew "knowledge" of an analytical nature: "Ignorance which is the antithesis of Enlightenment, therefore, acquires a much deeper sense here than that which has hitherto been ascribed to it. Ignorance is not merely not knowing or not being acquainted with a theory, system or law; it is not directly grasping the ultimate facts of life as expressive of the will. In Ignorance knowing is separated from acting, and the knower from that which is to be known; in Ignorance the world is asserted as distinct from the self, that is, there are always two elements standing in opposition. This is, however, the fundamental condition of cognition, which means that as soon as cognition takes place there is Ignorance clinging to its very act" (D. T. Suzuki, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–17). Cognitive knowledge is not true knowledge, but a defilement, a form of Ignorance. When one considers that Yeats had originally written the stanza as:

For ignorance and knowledge fills the scene
 But no not half for each is all the scene

What one consumes the other can renew – R. Ellmann, *op. cit.*, p. 272,

it is quite probable that Suzuki's definitions governed the portrayal of the Attis-ritual: although, as should be obvious, in the eventual stanza both parts of the Tree, the fleshly and the spiritual, are forms of Ignorance, "knowledge" being Attis's transcendence of the Dualism.

²⁷ W. B. Yeats, *Poetry*, p. 503, ll. 84–9.

of sin. Even if the saint of Von Hügel's Catholicism does enjoy a resurrection of the physical body, the moral aspects of the soul still preclude him from being an artist. That Yeats's part is "predestined" hints ironically at his acceptance of "original sin" (sin not committed on account of free will) as a condition for the artist. Such "original sin" precludes him from divining Von Hügel's heaven through Catholicism.

Zen, however, not only gives Yeats a re-created world which, like St Teresa in her tomb, is "concrete, sensuous, bodily",²⁸ but does not demand morality. This is why Yeats later wrote of "Repentance" keeping "my heart impure", since he found satori only when he could forget sin and the guilt which had earlier prevented him from enjoying nature in "Vacillation" part V. The "Heart" and the "Soul" become one and the same and have the same knowledge in this poem, and both partake in what is simultaneously a mystical and an aesthetic act.

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SATORI W WIERSZU *STREAM AND SUN AT GLENDALOUGH*

Autor artykułu stawia tezę, że książka D. T. Suzuki *Essays in Zen Buddhism* wpłynęła na wiersz *Stream and Sun at Glendalough* zamykający tom *The Winding Stair* W. B. Yeatsa, rozwiązując problemy wynikające z lektur filozoficznych i abstrakcji neoplatonizmu. Buddyzm zen stanowił dla Yeatsa „dowód”, że można zjednoczyć pierwiastek fizyczny z duchowym bez konieczności uciekania się do kwestii moralnych, co w istotny sposób ograniczałoby moc twórczą artysty.

²⁸ W. B. Yeats, *Vision*, p. 214.