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The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in the Philosophical Poems of W. B. Yeats's *the Wild Swans at Coole*

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Abstract

This paper studies the unification of phantasmagoria and memory in the philosophical poems included in *The Wild Swans at Coole*. The multiple facets of Yeats's phantasmagoria can be traced in various forms in different poems due to its being extensive. Its vivid presence can well be noticed in the elegies, personal love lyrics, and philosophical poems of *The Wild Swans at Coole*. Yeats speaks of the significant role of phantasmagoria in the preface to this collection of poems, for the poet, according to him, never speaks directly and there is always a phantasmagoria involved. The term phantasmagoria can be regarded as a key concept in Yeats's *The Wild Swans at Coole* the theme of questing truth and discarding persona after persona finds expression in the selected philosophical poems of this study. Consequently, a deep interpretation of the philosophical poems of this collection necessitates a close study of the images and symbols embedded in the involved phantasmagoria.

Keywords: *Phantasmagoria; Memory; Unification; W.B. Yeats; Philosophical Poems; The Wild Swans at Coole*

1. *Introduction*

In the preface to *The Wild Swans at Coole*, W.B.Yeats speaks of the significant role of phantasmagoria in his poetry by introducing "the phantasmagoria through which alone I can express my convictions about the world" (qtd. in Murry 1920, p.39). His statement is direct and clear. Right at the beginning, the essential plan and the constructive basis of the whole collection are given. Yeats's statement is suggestive of his angle of vision which can even include the direct transcription of common reality whether found in the sensible world or in the emotion and picture of the mind. According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "phantasmagoria" is a "shifting series of phantasms, illusions, or deceptive appearances, as in a dream or as created by the magination". It is derived from the word "phantasm which is a fleeting moment, a phantom, and apparition. Phantasmagoria is said to be a multiplicity of phantasms; it introduces the realm of magical vision and heightened perception, of fantasy and dream imagery, of hallucination. Most psychiatrists believe that all human perception is, in fact,

hallucinatory in nature and that we synthesize all we hallucinate and call it life. According to Carl Jung, phantasmagoria are archetypal forms, patterns, images and symbols which "codify our perceptual experience and, as art, render it permanent, since the mind2 organizes impressions into archetypal forms that recur in human societies worldwide as they develop over centuries" (qtd. in Coleman 2006).

2. *Objective and Scope of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to delineate the unification of memory and phantasmagoria in some philosophical poems included in W.B. Yeats's *The Wild Swans at Coole*, on the basis of the images and symbols constructing Yeats's personal phantasmagoria, for As Catherine Cook Smith states, "the idea of the symbol is central in understanding Yeats's poetry" (Smith 1930, p.58). Writers and poets, who are also talented in criticism, usually try to practice the philosophy and ideas they put forth in their critical essays. Accordingly, this study tries to illustrate how Yeats attempts to express his ideas and emotions in the philosophical poems of *The Wild Swans at Coole* through the applied phantasmagoria.

3. Significance of the Study

The significance of the unification of memory and phantasmagoria deployed in the philosophical poems of *The Wild Swans at Coole* has not yet been discussed in detail by critics while it is indispensable. Yeats himself believes that a poet always talks about his personal life and that there is always a phantasmagoria involved. A study of Yeats's phantasmagoria and the elements that have constructed it, i.e. images, icons and symbols are indispensable in the reader's attempt to get insight into his poetry.

4. Review of Literature

Yeats's collection *The Wild Swans at Coole*, published in 1919, marks a turning point in the trajectory of his poetic career. At the time of its publication, Yeats was already well-known and, as C.K. Stead states, was "widely regarded as the most important living poet writing in English" (Stead 1986, p.13). Richard Ellmann, a great critic of Yeats's poetry and plays, in his prominent book *The Identity of Yeats* discusses the phantasmagoric and symbolic structures found in his works. As he states, phantasmagoria designated for Yeats that structure of related images through which he expressed himself and through which as he himself once said, "the dream and the reality face one another in visible array" (Ellman 1954, p.62). He also goes on to trace two symbolic and phantasmagoric structures in his works: the first built up from his boyhood and is retained until after 1900, the other appearing mainly from 1915 to 1929. As Ellmann believes, a clearly articulated structure is missing in the poems composed from about 1903 to about1914. The power of the second symbolic structure is noticeably abated from about 1935 to his death in 1939.

The years before and during the composition of the poems of *The Wild Swans at Coole* were hard times for Yeats; a series of catastrophic personal, national and international events took place, all of which had a role in forming the framework of the poems ultimately arranged in this collection. The first world war, the death of Hugh Lane, the violent outbreak of Easter 1916, the dismemberment of Lady Gregory's estate, the death of Maud Gonne's husband, Maud Gonne's and her daughter's rejection of him, his marriage and the death of Robert Gregory left a great impact on Yeats's life and poetry. He started to view the real world as a complicated drama in which he was assigned no prominent role, for recourse he turned to his imaginative world of images and symbols, i.e., phantasmagoria. As John Unterecker, another great critic of Yeats's poetry, in his *A Reader's Guide to William Butler Yeats* observes, the design of the poems of *The Wild swans at Coole* is "Death, life, and the patterns of Life and Death" (Unterecker 1967, p.131).Yeats's masks transferred from his phantasmagoria into the poems of this collection are also

introduced as "survivor, Defeated Lover, and Scholar. The progression is from uncomplicated personal statement to an elaborate presentation of the intricate image on which *A Vision* is founded" (131).

Graham Martin's criticism of Murry's understatement of Yeats's poetry in his *Countries of the Mind* is also noticeable. In his essay "The Wild Swans at Coole", he proves it being mere misjudgments by referring to some quite helpful facts from both Yeats's life and his poetry. He focuses primarily on Murry's description of Yeats's state of mind while composing the poems of the collection, i.e. on the statement that he "has the apparatus, but no potency in his soul" (qtd. in Martin 54). Martin believes that though it is generally admitted that some of the poems of *The Wild swans at Coole* express exhaustion or defeat, and one or two others complain of the sacrifices which the artist had to demand of the man, "Murry's sweeping diagnosis rests on more than these poems" (54); he considers the whole collection. He goes on to comment on Murry's statement that "He is empty now" (Murry 1920, p.45) by claiming that "in the case of *The Wild swans* [*at Coole*] it quickly becomes evident that the poems Murry reviewed are much too various to express anything simple or definite about Yeats in1918-19 without, at least, certain preliminaries" (54).

In defense of *The Wild Swans at Coole'*s structure, Martin first distinguishes between two editions of the poems: a Cuala edition of twenty-nine poems and the play "At the Hawk's Well", published in1917; and a Macmillan edition of forty-six poems, published in 1919. He states that the omission of "Easter 1916" from both volumes and the intentional delay in publishing some personal poems written before 1917 bespeaks of the fact that "Yeats's book-making was no casual affair" (Martin 1966, p.55). Pursuing this approach, John Unterecker's commentary on the volume also assumes that "the order of the poems expresses a meaningful design--'Death, Life, and the patterns of Life and Death' " (qtd. in Martin 1966, p. 55). Graham Martin also observes that the forty-six poems of the Macmillan volumes are written over seven years from January 2to January-February 1919. Not only is this the longest span covered by a single collection, but also it comes from a period when Yeats's poetry was blossoming amidst its most radical developments. Taking all the afore-mentioned preliminaries into consideration, Murry's statement, i.e., "He is empty now" (45) seems to flicker away.

A. Norman Jeffares, a truly eminent critic of Yeats's poetry, in his comprehensive *A New Commentary on the Poems of W.B.Yeats,* states that the main intellectual interest of *The Wild Swans at Coole* lies in the poems it includes which occasionally deal with the system of *A*

Vision. As he believes, Yeats, in part, "regained his poetic energy (whose loss he had lamented in *The Green Helmet*) by using poetry as a vehicle for his strange thoughts [i.e., his personal phantasmagoria] and for his own personal life" (Jeffares 1984, p.129). He goes on to give a description of some of the features of the poems in *The Wild Swans at Coole.* He believes that beside the innovations in subject matter, they reveal Yeats's developing use of ancestors and friends as subjects for poetry: "he is now more prepared to delineate details of personality just as he is to use personal names" (130).

Balachandra Rajan's opinion of *The Wild Swans at Cool*, which is expressed in his *W.B. Yeats: A Critical Introduction*, is no less significant than others'. As he believes, the collection stands judiciously balanced between the sense of withering away and its growing knowledge of the truth. *The Wild Swans at Coole* begins with"the muted melancholy of the title poem and ends with the bleak ambivalences of the "Double Vision of Michael Robartes. . .it moves through the deaths of friends and the persistence of love to a harsher world which the light of the vision dominates" (Rajan 1965, p.107).

According to Jahan Ramazani, death was W. B. Yeats's muse, and his best poems are his meditations on loss and decay. In his immensely learned book, *Yeats and the Poetry of Death: Elegy, Self-elegy, and the Sublime,* Ramazani reviews Yeats's elegies, self-elegies in the sublime mode. He also analyses Yeats's love lyrics with close revisionist readings of his individual poems, and traces interrelations between the lyrics and the traditions that inspired them.

4. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Phantasmagoria, originating from the poet's visionary imagination, is a key concept in Yeats's *The Wild swans at Coole*. Therefore, a study of this concept and the related images and symbols as its components can lead to a deeper interpretation of the philosophical poems of this collection. The poems "Ego Dominus Tuus", "The Phases of the Moon", "The Cat and the Moon" and "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" will be analyzed in the light of the unification of memory and phantasmagoria. The analysis of the phantasmagoric images and symbols of the poems, reveals both the poet's mind and its development. Applying eclectic approach to this study is quite helpful, since it makes room for analyzing the poems from different angles and scopes.

5. *Discussion*

5.1. The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in "The Wild Swans at Coole"

As the reader moves from the beginning of the collection *The Wild Swans at Cool,* that is, from the wild swans in the title poem to the emblematic Sphinx and Buddha in the last poem, the theme of memory moves closer to the theme of imagination. The collection begins with the first two poems passing from memory into phantasmagoria, but it concludes with the two coming together in Michael Robartes's vision. The setting of the first poem of the collection, i.e., "The Wild Swans at Coole", is revisited in its last one, i.e., "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes". The title poem passes from memory into phantasmagoria, but the poet, however, seems to fail to give presence to the memory on which the poem is based. This poem, according to Ronald Schuchard, depicts Yeats's fear of a "permanent loss of his visionary imagination and creative power" (Schuchard 1993, p.112). In the absence of the memory, the speaker of the poem lets the swans move into a phantasmagoric setting. At the end of the poem, we find him asking whether the swans will resettle when they fly away:

Among what rushes will they build,

By what lake's edge or pool

Delight men's eyes when I awake some day

To find that they have flown away? (Yeats 1994, p.107)

The answer to the question can be found in "The Phases of the Moon", a poem in which the swans will not literally resettle, but find their place in the realm of phantasmagoria. At the beginning of the poem "The Wild Swans at Coole", Yeats presents the reader with the expectation of a return to Coole Park in which he will not react as he once had done. He compares his young and old selves with each other and reacts to the difference between them. To him, swans possess passion, but he cannot drive it from them, for he keeps wavering between the young and the old selves. Although the first three stanzas of the poem seem to imply a comparison, it is soon shifted to a venture into the realm of phantasmagoria. Thus, the poet tries to construct a distance between himself and the swans, but since he cannot be content with keeping the distance, it is not completely attained.

The process of recovering the swans appears in "The Wild Swans at Coole", when Yeats desires to be the man of the phantasmagoric lake's side, where the swans have resettled. Such a process signifies a symbolic retrieval of the swans that have eluded him. The fact that the passion within the symbolic swans is there for his once-young self initiates a comparison between his old and young selves. The moment the poet comes to realize the fact that he can no longer recreate a memory of his earlier visits to Coole Park, he starts to create a phantasmagoric world in which the swans do perform their symbolic function, to "Delight men's eyes" (Yeats 107). Even in the realm of phantasmagoria, however, the swans

do not delight his eyes, and it is he himself who must try to find delight in his symbols, for "soreness, the product of having looked, is the professed result of the scattered swans" (Weitzel 2000, p.24). The images of the swans and Michael Robartes's dancer, act as visionary symbols for Yeats.

The fact that swans delight other men's eyes or that the vision of the dancer can only be seen by Michael Robartes might appear as a kind of failure on the part of the poet. What should not, however, be overlooked is that even if it be a failure, it is not because he cannot re-create memory convincingly as he is not satisfied by such an enterprise, for what he seeks in memory is the visionary nature of phantasmagoria. A very significant aspect of the collection *The Wild Swans at Coole* is that the first two-thirds of the collection reveals Yeats's quest for a poetic self-identity, a process in which he discards persona after persona, ending with a visionary poetics. In "Ego Dominus Tuus", Yeats takes up the role of the visionary poet whose poetic aim is to reconcile and unify memory and phantasmagoria in creating a vision in his poetry. From the early poems of the collection, we find Yeats discarding his poetic persona in order to attain his poetic aim. In "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory", Yeats elegizes Gregory, not because he was a scholar, a horseman and a soldier, but because for Yeats Gregory's primary occupation as an artist is strong enough to consume him in his quest to achieve unity of being as an artist. Gregory's discarding vocations for attaining unity, even at the cost of his life, explains Yeats's elegizing impulse further. Through depicting Gregory's various accomplishments and callings to have held him back in his peculiar vocation of art, Yeats is deconstructing his own poetic project in order to achieve his chief aim, i.e., unity of being. The poet, consequently, chases his phantasmagoric swans throughout the poems of the collection in order to create a memory of his phantasmagoria.

In the first poem of the collection, i.e., "The Wild Swans at Coole", neither memory nor phantasmagoria seems to represent what Yeats seeks, i.e., the kind of vision which is achieved through unity of being. The recollections of Johnson, Synge, and Pollexfen in "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory", fail to evoke in Yeats's phantasmagoria what recalling Gregory to memory does, namely the ability to bring life to the tower which creates a presence from his friend's absence from the tower. It might appear as a failure of the collection that Yeats's achievement of unity of being is fleeting, and that the preoccupations he has banished reemerge, but in fact, it is not so, for it is rather a necessary conclusion lest he should choose Gregory's path. Yeats's poetic aim is not, however, to exchange his life for unity of being, even if it were possible. He seeks to bring such unity into being through narrative layers in poetry. In the poem "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory", Yeats's recollections of Gregory, loses its rootedness in memory and becomes an envisioning of Gregory's momentary vision as he dies. The envisioning of Gregory's death brings life to the tower through the poem's movement into phantasmagoria which results in creating a presence. This very achieving unity of being from living to ceasing to live but in memory and phantasmagoria, determines the trajectory of the whole collection of *The Wild Swans at Coole*. It is, however, Gregory's visionary act which gives Yeats what he aims at, i.e., creating a vision in the poetry.

5.2. The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory"

Yeats does not intend to achieve an all-consuming vision as Robert Gregory does, because it is not his aim to attain a vision as the characters of his poems do. His chief aim is to create a vision in the phantasmagoria constructing his poems. As Frank Kermode states in his *The Romantic Image:*

The impulse is from within; it is an impulse to resolve the tension between the growing absorption of the dream and the desire for society and the pleasures of action. For a moment an equilibrium is achieved; the tensions resolved, there is life of extraordinary fullness; but at the cost, the world being what it is, of immediate extinction. This unifying and destructive delight, the singular achievement of life itself, is [also] a leading motive in ["In Memory of Major Robert Gregory"]. (Kermode 1970, p.56)

Gregory's death is not an act; it is an inevitable result of his being. According to Yeats, Gregory is of the kind that "may consume/The entire combustible world" (Yeats 1994, p.107). Gregory's artistic talents prevent him from living on, something which makes Yeats ask rhetorically, "What made us dream that he could comb grey hair" (128). According to Gregory elegy, Gregory dies because what he can, and indeed must achieve, can only come, as Kermode argues, at the expense of life. Although the poem does not speak of Gregory's inclination towards self-destruction, it is suggested that the actions of an artist of such talent, are so intense that they, unintentionally but somewhat necessarily, turn to be self-destructive. The comparison made in this elegy between Gregory and Johnson, is then, that of the intensity of their respective acts, as Johnson's scholarship can also be regarded as action. Both of them act in pursuit of Yeats's vision, i.e. a transcendence of the world. Gregory's action is more intense than that of Johnson due to his immense artistic talent. The imagined figure of Yeats, then, is not like Gregory in this respect, for he seeks to create a vision.

In the poem "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory", Yeats points to the vision of which Gregory is capable, i.e., the intensity of his talent that may consume the world. The poem itself implies what Gregory has done, that is, he dies because the intensity with which he lived his life is too passionate to sustain in the living world. The poem "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" fails to achieve Yeats's poetic aim, because this poem like "The Wild Swans at Coole", passes from memory into phantasmagoria, but does not find rootedness in the phantasmagoric world created in the poet's mind. In the poem "The Wild Swans at Coole", a question opens up the phantasmagoric world in which the swans delight their beholder:

Among what rushes will they build

By what lake's edge or pool

Delight men's eyes when I awake some day

To find they have flown away? (Yeats 1994, p. 107)

In the same way, the rhetorical question "What made us dream he would comb grey hair?" (Yeats 108) opens up a world that immediately closes on the poet.

The poet cannot portray the vision without the necessary concentration within the fiction of the collection that he presents. According to George Bornstein,

The student in the tower of "Ego Dominus Tuus" and "The Phases of the Moon" represents Yeats's antiself in being, constant, and devoted to one activity. He is one of those images of passionate intensity and (because wholly devoted to one object) simplicity through which Yeats's many-faceted self sought Unity of Being. (58)

The phantasmagoric world cannot merely be created and discarded; the poet must inhabit the world rooted in memory and retell it to the reader. Yeats's poetic aim in "The Wild Swans at Coole" seems to have failed, since the phantasmagoria on which the poem is based, is not all that successful in retelling what is rooted in memory. The Robartes of the poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", dreams of the dancer who is the same dancer that inhabits his "dreams that fly" (Yeats 1994, p. 146), but to envision the dancer is to form a lasting memory of it, one that Yeats can recount an account in which memory and phantasmagoria are unified. Robartes's double vision is at once of seeing "That girl my unremembering nights hold fast" (146). Having finally envisioned her rather than merely dreaming of her existence, he finds himself rewarded in and with the long dilapidated castle of Cormac Mac Art, since recounting such a dream can hardly create a palpable presence. Cormac's castle represents history's inheritance and somewhat rootedness in memory. The fact that the collection *The Wild Swans at Coole* ends with "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", that is, with the "Cormac's ruined house" (146)

right after Robartes' achievement of unity of being, acknowledges the interplay of memory and phantasmagoria.

Hic and Ille in "Ego Dominus Tuus", stand for the two opposite aspects of the poet's personality. Both Hic and Ille seek the truth, but in a different manner. The truth for Hic, who is a rational skeptic, is abstract and can be found in a book. Ille, on the other hand, is an image-seeker, who thinks he can attain it through the act of poetic creation:

By the help of an image

I call to my own opposite, summon all

That I have handled least, least looked upon. (Yeats 1994, p.134)

Hic, in his search for abstraction, finds himself, whereas Ille in his search for the image, creates his anti-self, i.e., the opposite of all that he is, something that would contain everything but himself. What Ille suggests is "the creation of the dramatic mask, where the spontaneity of action is not separated from the self, but reaches out from it to another being" (Kallaus 2000, p.74). Thus, poetry can be regarded as a constant struggle between self and the anti-self. The concept of the inner struggle between self and anti-self is founded upon the doctrine of the mask which is put forward in Yeats's essay "Per Amica a Silentia Lunae" and later developed in *A Vision*.

In *A Vision*, Yeats creates a system of opposing and interlocking gyres in which one stands for objectivity, i.e., the dark, the sphinx and the first phase of the moon, while the other, i.e., the full moon, the Buddha and the twenty eighth phases, signifies subjectivity. The cycle begins with a phase of pure objectivity in which human life does not exist. The subjective gyre grows larger as the objective gyre grows smaller. In the fifteenth phase, in which objectivity and subjectivity are balanced, Michael Robartes's vision steps in. Robartes's vision is achieved when the forces that influence him are in balance. Although the vision seems to be emancipated from time, it is brief. When the fifteenth phase has passed, the two forces face imbalance again; the vision is over and Michael Robartes is pulled away from the unity of being he has achieved in his vision of transcendence. After the vision, the poetic mask of Robartes disappears and we find the speaker, Yeats, speaking from "Cormac's ruined house" (Yeats 1994, p.146). At the end of "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", the reader no longer observes the phantasmagoric world through Robartes's eyes, for one finds Yeats looking at himself in the tower. The "tower", which has earlier been introduced in the poem "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory", serves as the collection's final image. At the end of the collection, the cycle in Yeats's system, ends where it has began. The symbolic role of the "Cormac Castle" adds the needed depth to the poem, and the whole collection. Since it signifies the abandonment of Yeats's own solitary tower, it can be suggestive of Ireland's being ignored by Yeats since his being "ignorant for so long" (146) when pursuing his vision of transcendence. In "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", Yeats appears to be recollecting the isolation felt in the poem "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory".

5.3. The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in "Ego Dominus Tuus"

Yeats, in "Ego Dominus Tuus", presents a dramatic dialog between Hic and Ille who stand for the objective and subjective voices respectively: Hic and Ille were once called "Hic and Willie" (qtd. in Ellmann 201) by Ezra Pound. In this poem, Yeats's ultimate poetic aim of the collection, i.e., achieving the visionary transcendence, is depicted. According to Bloom, "Ego Dominus Tuus" is "a touch . . . the expositional tent Yeats had been working to achieve expands itself, as though the poet had become his own academy, his future critics" (197) to which he has only, thus far in the collection, pointed. The poems "Ego Dominus Tuus", "The Phases of the Moon" and "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" are based on the historical ideas that have established the theoretical background of Yeats's *A Vision*. There is a system in *A Vision* which equates personality profiles with the twenty-eight phases of the moon.

According to this system, humanity is caught between the opposing forces of subjectivity, symbolized by the first phase of the moon, and objectivity, which is symbolized by the twenty-eighth. The ideal phase in *A Vision* is the fifteenth phase which can be regarded as "the consummation of a slow process . . . [and] a phase of complete beauty" (Yeats 1899, p.43). It is in the fifteenth phase that the unity of being can be achieved, for in this phase the poles of subjectivity and objectivity are balanced. Yeats spends the entire collection seeking visionary transcendence which is symbolized by the symbolic recovery of the swans that are lost in the collection's title poem. The last poem of the collection, "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", contains the sought visionary transcendence and thus concludes the collection.

"Ego Dominus Tuus" begins with the image of Hic and Ille attempting beside the tower to use the teachings of Michael Robartes's book, which, as Hic states, open beside a still-burning lamp in the tower. Ille's tracing of characters from his book in the sand, stands for Yeats's creation of emblems as opposed to images that have their own power. In order to put theory into practice, Ille must descend from the tower, which stands for the mind, back into the real world. The image of the tower is first mentioned in "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" in this collection. Through the image of the tower, Yeats symbolically depicts a distancing of the poet from the characters of his poetry. In the early poems of the collection, the tower is introduced as a symbol for the mind, whereas later in the collection, it comes to stand for Yeats's position outside the real world, i.e., his personal phantasmagoria.

Both "Ego Dominus Tuus" and "The Phases of the Moon" are strongly related to Yeats's system in *A Vision*, but they do not explain the complex system as *A Vision* does; they rather depict the poet's relationship to the system. Yeats in *A Vision* regrets being "fool enough to write half a dozen poems that are unintelligible without it" (Yeats 1899, p.50), while the two poems imply the fact that what is found in book about mythical systems lead the reader or even the poet to the visionary experience which ultimately results in the unity of being. In "Ego Doiminus Tuus", it is depicted as "I seek an image not a book" (Yeats 1994, p.136) and in "The Phases of the Moon", it is suggested in "And now he seeks in book or manuscript/What he shall never find" (138). As Paul De Man says, the emblems that Yeats presents are "disguised as natural images on the other hand, when the poems are more openly emblematic in imagery, this is often counter-balanced by a thematic insistence on the value of incarnate beauty" (De Man 51). Yeats does not intend to achieve visionary transcendence of the completed image through mere representing his symbols, for he seeks to find a balance between self-sufficiency of the image and the visionary power of the emblem.

Although Hic in "Ego Dominus Tuus" inherits Michael Robartes's book, there are no such things as visionary inheritance included. Knowledge is passed on in the form of Robartes's book whears visionary power is not. According to Norman A. Jeffares, Robartes's claim that he "had been undone/By Holmer's paragon", is a reference to Maud Gonne" (216). The fact that she "had never gave the burning town a thought" (Yeats 146) at once refers to her marrying John MacBride; it also reflects Yeats's suppression of some political or literary impulses. Robartes's being "undone" (146) by "Homer's paragon" (146), represents a double meaning, i.e., Yeats is at once reminded of the Irish cause that he suppressed while Maud Gonne embraced it and also of his own feelings for Maud Gonne. The poem might not sustain the memory of the vision as long as other themes overshadow other entities, but Robartes's memory gets along with the poet's phantasmagoria and also gets dissolved in the vision of the poet. In his vision, Robartes is left "undone" (Yeats 1994, p. 146), "caught between the pull/Of the dark moon and the full" (146). His vision of the dancer is a vision of transcendence in which time is "overthrown". This transcendence originates from the balancing of the opposing forces of the dark and full moon, which are allegorized as the figures of the Sphinx and Buddha. The symbol of the dancer which represents Yeats's poetic ideal of resolving the conflict between memory and phantasmagoria, aids him in bringing together the body and the mind. The resolution found between the two poles of memory and phantasmagoria is presented in "The Phases of the Moon": "before the full/ [The soul] sought itself and afterwards the world" (140). The unity that one achieves at the fifteenth phase is, as Yeats believes, humanity at its most transcendent:

Although't becomes an image and the soul

Becomes a body: that body and that soul

Too perfect at the full to lie in a cradle". (139)

In Yeats's system, the two poles that govern human existence, i.e. the objective and the subjective are symbolized by the first and last phases of the moon, for they cannot exist in human form when they are in their absolute form. Thus, one must achieve a perfect balance of the two to transcend the living world. In the poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", the dancer becomes an intersection of image and emblem, of the phantasmagoric and the real, the moving and the still, of the natural and the transcendental.

Yeats at times, does not seem to differentiate between reality and the reality conceived of through memory, which sometimes brings about a conflict between the real and the phantasmagoric. Although Yeats figures out the conflict in "Ego Dominus Tuus" and the poems that follow, the resolution found in "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" does not appear satisfactory. In the poem "Ego Dominus Tuus", Yeats points to the visionary moment that he seeks but does not achieve it in the poem. The character Ille traces in the sand but, does not conjure the vision he seeks, since mere creating emblems is not wise enough. In "Ego Dominus Tuus", the reader is presented with the world in which one cannot achieve he vision:

Hic. Yet surely there are men who have made their art

Out of no tragic war, lovers of life,

Impulsive men that look for happiness

And sing when they have found it.

Ille. No, not sing,

For those that love the world serve it in action.

Grow rich, popular and full of influence,

And should they paint or write, still it is action:

The struggle of the fly in the marmalade.

The rhetorician would deceive his neighbours,

The sentimentalist himself; while art

Is but a vision of reality. (Yeats 1994, p. 135)

In this poem, Ille, ironically enough, stands for the poet who attempts to write the poem, i.e., to "sing" and not "act". The poem does not transcend reality to attain the vision that both Yeats and Ille seek. "The Phases of the Moon" like "Ego Dominus Tuus" fails to produce the vision Yeats seeks. Michael Robartes, whose book Ille inherits, possesses the insight of which Ille is bereft. Robartes is, however, capable of envisioning, but he does not do so and withholds his visionary practice from the second character of the poet in the tower. Robartes mocks the poet who represents Yeats. The poet, at the same time, compares the mockery within the poem and speaks through Michael Robartes. Although Robartes understands the system and can relate it to Aherne, he cannot attain the visionary transcendence Yeats seeks. The poet is unable to produce the vision when watching Robartes's performance: "And now

he seeks in book or manuscript/What he shall never find" (Yeats 138), for he cannot imagine what Robartes sees. For both Yeats and the poet, "The Phases of the Moon" represents a failed attempt to produce a vision. Robartes and Aherne's mocking statement about the poet is, in fact, directed to Yeats himself: "He'd crack his wits/Day after day, yet never find the meaning" (Yeats 1994, p. 141). Here, "never find the meaning" hints at Yeats's self-assumed failure to achieve the elusive visionary transcendence in his poems in spite of his diligent attempts. The collection *The Wild Swans at Coole*, concludes with poems like "The Phases of the Moon" and "The Double Vison of Michael Robartes" which are closely linked to the system explained in Yeats's *A Vision*. The poem "The Phases of the Moon", which prefaces the main body of *A Vision,* is probably the most schematic and direct treatment of Yeatsian system in poetry.

5.4. The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in "The Phases of the Moon"

The subject of the poem "The Phases of the Moon" is, in fact, the transformation of the self in the searching for its opposite. The whole quest for identity takes place in the sphere of the ideal and the characters of the poem, i.e., Owen Atherne and Michael Robartes are often pointed to as ideal projections of the poet's personality. According to Yeats's *A Vision,* Michael Robartes is a visionary who, between sleeping and waking, sees what is going to happen, and Aherne is . . . a pious Catholic thinks it pagan . . . and hates it, but he has to do what Robartes" tells him. In the realm of the phantasmagoria, Michael Robartes supports Ille in his visionary quest, while Aherne, who is an interpreter, follows Hic in his tendency towards abstraction. The fact that they both are on the bridge over the stream is strongly suggestive of the reconciliation and unity of assumed contraries in the sphere of the ideal. Both Hic and Ille embody an antithesis to Yeats. Their quest for truth appears quite insufficient on both phantasmagoric and rational levels. Ille's visionary quest turns out to be an illusion: "He has found after the manner of his kind/Mere images; chosen this place to live in" (Yeats 1994, p. 137). Hic's search for truth is not much different, for it proves unfruitful as well: "And now he seeks in book or manuscript/What he shall never find" (138).

The phases of the moon in Yeats's system, offer one of the most impressive manifestations of a cycle of light and dark, with the moon's waxing from new moon to full moon. In *A Vision*, Yeats introduces the diagram of lunar phases and states that "Their number is that of the Arabic Mansions of the moon but they are used merely as a method of classification. For simplicity of classification, the symbols are composed in an entirely arbitrary way" (Yeats 1899, p.12). The moon has had a strong symbolic presence in Yeats's phantasmagoria for many years. Both Yeats and his wife dealt somewhat comfortably with the symbolism of the sun and the moon. Although the symbolism of Yeats's system is linked to astrology, the sun and the moon are basically regarded as symbols rather than actual entities of the phase. In 1921, Yeats told Frank Pearce Saturn, a fellow enthusiast for occult matters, that "phases of the moon in the symbolism I told you of have nothing to do with the horoscope, but with the incarnation only" (qtd. in Taylor). After the publication of the first version of *A Vision* in 1982, Yeats wrote "You will get all mixed up if you think of my symbolism as astrological or even astronomical in any literal way . . . [Sun] is a symbol of one state of being, [Moon] is another, that is all" (88).

In Yeats's poetry, the symbol of the moon and its phases is quite significant. The moon is associated with water, especially with the sea, with change and growth and with the feminine principle. Madam Balvatusky taught him that the powers associated with the moon were responsible for the division of the sexes, for generation and for emotion, while the solar powers were in conflict with them, and were responsible for spirit and intellect. In his *A Vision*, Yeats states that since "'Solar' according to all that I learnt from Mathers, meant elaborate, full of artifice, rich, all that resembles the work of a goldsmith. . . and 'lunar' all that is simple, popular, traditional, emotional" (Yeats 1899, p. 311).

According to Bloom, the failure of the poem "The Phases of the Moon" has its roots in the poem's being merely a system, for the poem is composed in a way as to suggest that Yeats can "never

find anything but endless cycles" (52). It should not, however, be overlooked that Bloom labels the poem as a failure when he compares it to what for Yeats a successful poem could be, when considered in isolation. But the poem "The Phases of the Moon" would no longer be labeled as a failure if it be regarded as part of a progression which eventually leads to "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes". "The Phases of the Moon", builds to the end and when the light in the tower goes out, it does not pick at the fifteenth phase. The light going out in the tower implies Yeats's metaphorical transcendence of the tower. The poet in the poem, overhears Robartes's song, masters the system and can put it into practice through Michael Robartes's double vision. It is, in fact, Yeats himself who has eventually made it to take the reader through the system to conceive the vision he has conceived in poetry. In order to engage with the vision Robartes achieves in "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", both Yeats and the poet leave the tower. The poet in "The Phases of the Moon" stands for both the real and the phantasmagoric poet; he creates the phantasmagoric Robartes and inserts it with the imaginative faculties which he lacks. Although to Aherne it seems ridiculous "to think that what seemed so hard / Should be so simple" (Yeats 1994, p. 141), the cryptic knowledge behind the lunar system is not that simple for him, because neither he nor Robartes produce a vision.

5.5. The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in "The Cat and the Moon"

The phases of the moon are also embedded in the poem succeeding "The Phases of the Moon", i.e., "The Cat and the Moon" in which a cat is apostrophized by the poet. In his asking the cat about its relationship to the moon, Yeats is, in fact, exposing the symbolism of his esoteric system once more. This poem, as John Unterecker believes, is "designed to remind us that the moon's phases govern not only a man's incarnations but as well the phases of his own life" (Unterecker 1967, p.153). The cat referred to in this poem is both real and phantasmagoric; this cat is actually Maud Gonne's Persian cat, i.e., Minaloushe. Attributing being the moon's "nearest kin" (Yeats 141) to the cat is rooted in some Egyptian beliefs. The ancient Egyptians used to associate cat with the moon. They also believed that "it was sacred to the goddesses Isis and Bast, the latter being the guardian of marriage" (Cirlot 1962, p.88). The cat's being black in color is also very suggestive, for the black cat is "associated with darkness and death" (38). Interestingly enough, the moon is also associated with death, for in mythology, one can trace "traditional themes of the moon as the land of the dead" (205). Yeats draws the affinity between the cat and the moon closer by likening the cat's "changing eyes" (Yeats 1994, p.142) to the moon's passing from "round to crescent" (142) and vise versa. The image of dance in this poem is primarily there to bring the cat closer to the moon. The poet appears to be imposing the image of "dance" on Minaloushe, for the cat does not dance; he just "runs in the grass/Lifting his delicate feet" (141). The question Yeas asks from the cat is mainly there to strengthen the idea, but even he himself seems to doubt the whole idea: "Do you dance, Minaloushe, do you dance?" (141). The idea of inserting the image of dance seems to be indispensable as long as it acts as a mediator between the two seemingly disparate entities as the cat and the moon. According to Richard Ellmann, the moon is "immutable perfection in 'Blood and the Moon' but mutable illusion in 'The Crazed Moon' and perhaps 'The Cat and the Moon'" (Ellman 1954, p.189).

The feminine moon in the poem "The Cat and the Moon" is a mutable symbol, for in contrast to the cat who is "important and wise" (Yeats 1994, p.142), the moon is "Tired of that courtly fashion" (142). In this poem, the cat is the masculine immutable symbol; hence Minaloushe knows how to dance. Although the moon is a mutable symbol, it is not fixed and goes through different phases. The moon's changing from one phase to another affects the cat's eyes in its turn, for Minaloushe's "changing eyes" (142), "lifts to the changing moon" (142). The image of the dance thus brings these two related entities close to each other, for the dance can be conceived of as "the union of heaven and earth-the chain symbol" (Cirlot 1962, p.73). If the moon be regarded as a symbol for memory, the lively cat can also be considered as phantasmagoria. In this way, the dance, which acts as a mediator between the two, can be regarded as an illustration of the unification of memory and phantasmagoria.

5.6. The Unification of Memory and Phantasmagoria in "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes"

The poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" begins at the first phase of the moon and between the first and the second movements of the poem, one jumps from the first to the fifteenth phase and Robartes Suddenly sees the Sphinx, Buddha, and the dancer. Unlike "The Phases of the Moon", "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" ends at the beginning of the unity's undoing, that is, the sixteenth phase which does not complete the cycle. This is the precise moment during which memory steps in. Although Robartes's vision is, in his own words, "solid" (Yeats 1994, p. 145), it is quite phantasmagoric "in the mind's eye" (145). Robartes cannot think of anything but his vision, because in the fifteenth phase of the moon, "All thought becomes an image and the soul/Becomes a body" (139). In "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", Yeats puts theory into practice in portraying the dancer's overwhelming thought and achieving bodily perfection. Michael Robartes's vision does not come to a stop as he temporarily moans at the end of the poem, since for Yeats, the idea of cycle is quite significant. Unlike the poem "The Phases of the Moon", which appears to be a closed system, the poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" is implied to be in constant motion.

Yeats appears to regard memory as a fixed account of an actual event in his poems. Bringing memory rootedness into phantasmagoria necessitates creating a phantasmagoric world which can be inhabitable for the reader. "The Phases of the Moon", merely points to the vision, and does not reproduce the intensity of unity of being; it only explains how such a unity can theoretically come about. The Robartes of "The Phases of the Moon", exists as the second character of the poet in the tower to overhear, so that he might understand the open book before him in the tower. At the end of the poem, the light in the tower goes out and the poet ends Robartes and Aherne's dialogue to begin composing the poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" without their presence. This poem moves the reader through Robartes's experience of his vision meditated through memory. Yeats seeks transcendence and vehemently aims at creating a phantasmagoric world in which he can depict his vision. In order to avoid escaping into pure experience, which hinders any possible unification of memory and phantasmagoria, the poet frames his vision of time and space. In "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", time is not "overthrown" (Yeats 1994, p. 145) as it is in "The Phases of the Moon". The character of Michael Robartes, through whom Yeats creates a successful poetic vision, plays the part of the poet within the poem. Yeats occupies the same space in the second section of the poem as the reader. He seems to be taking in Robartes's vision and experiencing it through this character. In the third section of the poem, the narrative framework falls apart which results in the re-emergence of the poet writing through Robartes when the mask of Robartes disappears. The second section of the poem is about the transcendental vision that the poet seeks, whereas the third section presents the aftermath of such vision. "Cormac's ruined house" plays a significant role in Robartes's vision. According to the myth of Oisin, Oisin, who has been gone for one hundred years, returns without being aged. He inherits the castle of his grandfather, because everyone he knew is dead. He finds the castle in ruins, for he has not attended to it. As soon as he touches the ground, he becomes an old man. Yeats, in his pursuit of his visionary transcendence, ignores the external world in favor of an internal imagination, i.e., his personal phantasmagoria.

Michael Robartes's first vision arises "When the old moon is vanished from the sky/And the new still hides her horn" (144). It takes place in complete darkness. The dark moon symbolizes the blotting out of the self. According to what Yeats states in *A Vision*, in the first phase of the moon, "Thought and inclination, fact and object of desire, are indistinguishable . . . . There is complete passivity, complete plasticity" (Yeats 1890, p.183). In this phase, even the automatic act of will is dominated and confined by its own incapability to manifest itself. The second vision, on the contrary, allows the act of will to develop to its utmost capability. In contrast to the first vision, this vision appears in the full of the moon. The second vision consists of three images, which symbolize the three powers of the self and its full development: The Sphinx, the Buddha and the dancer. According to Richard Ellman, the Sphinx "is the

intellectual, gazing on both known and unknown things; the Buddha is the heart gazing on both loved and unloved things; the dancing girl, most important of all, is primarily an image of art. She dances between them because art is neither intellectual nor emotional but a balance of these qualities" (Ellman 1954, p.255). The whole image suggests an internal harmony; it consists of three images which are combined as one. These images are quite independent of each other and are the three aspects of the same nature. The Sphinx is a creature with "the head and breasts of a woman, the body of a bull or dog, the claws of a lion, the tail of a dragon and the wings of a bird" (Cirlot 1962, p. 289). It has the power to reconcile beauty and mystery with rule and power. Sphinx's eyes which are "lit by the moon" (Yeats 145)

Gazed upon things known, all things unknown,

In triumph of intellect

With motionless head erect". (Yeats 145)

Sphinx's head symbolizes intellectual judgment. The Buddha, on the other hand, stands for the spiritual power of the loving heart. Changeless and still permanent, both Sphinx and Buddha are fixed on the moon. Both of them are enlightened with eternal wisdom by the moon. In contrast to the permanently still Sphinx and Buddha, the dancer is a girl at play who "had danced her life away" (Yeats 145) and had also "outdanced thought" (145). The dancer is both dead and full of life, and when she is dancing and dreaming of dance, the perfect body rises above thought and action. The dance is the vital energy that can unite memory and phantasmagoria; it can also expose them to further transformations.

It is, then, in "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" that the realization of Yeats's work towards transcendence can eventually be observed. In this poem, Yeats creates a phantasmagoric image of the Sphinx and Buddha watching the dancer between them. The reader hears Michael Robartes relating his vision in a scene which is all phantasmagoric. The emblematic image of the Sphinx and Buddha are also mentioned in *A Vision*:

In certain written years ago in the first excitement of the discovery I compared one to the sphinx and [the other] to Buddha. I should have put Christ instead of Buddha, for according to my instructors [the spirits] Buddha was a Jupiter-Saturn influence. (Yeats 207-208)

The dancer gets its meaning from emblematic nature of the Sphinx and Buddha. The way Yeats describes and presents the two imagistic emblems in the poem influences the dancer's presentation. The fact that she dreams of dancing and that her dance is a dream, provides her with a paradoxical presence, as if the whole poem is about nothing but her very dance:

On the grey rock of Cashel I suddenly saw

A Sphinx with woman breast and lion paw,

A Buddha, head at rest,

Hand lifted up that blest;

. . . . . .

And right between these two a girl at play

That, it may be, had danced her life away,

For now being dead it seemed

That she of dancing dreamed. (Yeats 144-145)

Michael Robartes's transcendence, i.e., his achieving the fifteenth phase of the moon, is depicted through his ability to watch the dancer who stands for absolute beauty.

In retelling his dreams, Robartes abruptly takes the reader from the first phase of the moon in the poem's first part to the fifteenth phase by "I suddenly saw. . ." (Yeats 145). As Richard Ellmann says, the contrasting visions of the first and the fifteenth phases symbolize "the two extremes of the poet's nature and human nature in general, the utmost development of the self on the one hand, and its obliteration on the other" (Ellman 1954, p.255). The time of the first section of the poem, in lunar terms is set at exactly the opposite phase of the lunar system. The first phase is related to the dark of the moon, whereas, the fifteenth phase, during which the second vision takes place, is at full moon. According to Unterecker, the first phase represents the manipulation of pure body. The fifteenth phase, on the other hand, is representative of "the drama of pure soul. Amoral, will-less things pummel the body of phase 1; symbols of intellect (the Sphinx) and love (the Buddha) set in motion the dance of the soul at phase 15" (Unterecker 1967, p.135). It is in the fifteenth phase that growing increasingly beautiful, the body is brought to a perfection which is impossible in life. In the harmonic triumph of the soul over the body, Yeats's favorite image for organic unity, i.e., the dancer appears. The image of the dancer symbolizes the artist's vision of order in a rather disordered world. A vision of elemental chaos dominates the first part of the poem, whereas a vision of elemental order is presented in the second part. The subject of the third part of the poem is the living man who is made of body and soul. He experiences a sense of chaos and order and it is during just brief moments of insight that he manages to observe the whole design. Michael Robartes, after perceiving his double vision, reacts emotionally to the revelation of cosmic design he has come to possess: "Thereon I made my moan,/And after kissed a stone" (Yeats 146).

The truth and wisdom the poet desires are possessed by Michael Robartres, who can explain it in terms of the transformation of the soul on The Great Wheal of twenty-eight incarnations:

Twenty and eight the phases of the moon,

The full and the moon's dark and all the crescents,

Twenty and eight, and yet but six and twenty

The cradles that men must needs be reached in:

For there's no human life at the full or the dark. (Yeats 138)

In *A Vision*, the first and the fifteenth phases are treated as contrary aspects of the same nature which impose their antithetical features upon creation. These phases as Kallaus suggests, "are not human incarnations, because there is no struggle in these phases. They recall the image of the whirling antinomies of the sun and the moon" (Kallaus 2000, p.76). The first phase, which is also called Moon in Sun, is a phase in which man is submissive. The fifteenth phase is, however, the phase of complete subjectivity. In this phase, man's will is perceived as beauty. According to Hazard Adams, the first phase is dominated by thought, whereas the fifteenth phase is dominated by imagistic beauty. Both phases reveal the distinction between thought and image: thought in its perfection is pure abstraction, complete bodily annihilation, soul dominating fully. Image in its perfection is complete union of body and soul, to the extent that body as body and soul are cast away beyond the visible world and only the beautiful image as image remains. "[…]. At each extreme there is no life, only the ideal. At one extreme is the ideal of perfect nothingness, which is also perfect submission to God. At the other extreme is the ideal of perfect image, the perfect somethingness" (qtd. in . in Kallaus 76-77).

The Relation between the Soul and the Body Is Portrayed in Michael

Robartes's song in which, the soul takes a journey through the twenty-eight phases. The soul dominates the early and late lunar phases which are related to childhood and old age. In the late phases of the moon, however, the body overhears the soul. The fifteenth phase marks the most significant stage in the soul's journey and it is the period of the Unity of Being. In this phase, thought is dissolved in image and the soul is depilated in bodily beauty: "All thought becomes an image and the soul/Becomes a body" (Yeats 139). This state is also referred to in *A Vision*: "All that the being has experienced as thought is visible to its eyes as a whole, and in this way it perceives, not as they are to others, but according to its own perception all orders of existence" (138). In the fifteenth phase, man also goes through a state of mind in which "All dreams of the soul/End in a beautiful men's or woman's or woman's body" (Yeats 139). Phantasmagoria creates reality in a moment of great individual power. According to the poem "The Phases of the Moon", in order to attain the vision, one must pass through all the phases of the moon, i.e., all the stages of transformation. It is not possible for the poet to recognize the last three stages mainly because Aherne is skeptical of the poet's wisdom. He believes that the poet's search is nothing but an aimless pursuit, and an endless going round and round in circles: "He'd crack his wits/Day after day, yet never find the meaning" (Yeats 141). It is, however, through phantasmagoria alone that the meaning can be revealed to the poet. Content cannot be separated from form, so he turns to art to reconcile the oppositions in the unity of bodily form in the image of the dancer.

The final step of the process of transformation in the quest for truth takes place in the final poem of the collection, i.e., "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes". This poem narrows down the theme undertaken by Robartes in the poem "The Phases of the Moon" to the detailed description of the first and fifteenth phases, and reconciles the extreme stages of self-development on the level of art. As Richard Ellman states, the two opposite phases symbolize "the two extremes of the poet's nature and human nature in general, the utmost development of the self on the one hand, and its obliteration on the other" (Ellman 1954, p.255).

In "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", the extremes of the first and fifteenth phases are reconciled. This poem also unites the contraries of intellect and phantasmagoria. The final image of the dancer marks the transformation of the self through whirling antinomies with their final reconciliation. "The dancer is one example of the image which the artist constantly pursues" (Kermode 1970, p.59). According to Graham Martin, in "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes", "the image of the dancing girl, signifies the artist's visionary release from the long tension of self-discovery" (69). Yeats links the spinning dancer, who is symbolic of the poet's whirling mind, to the poetic image that arises from Anima Mundi. Geza Roheim regards the whirling motion as "characteristic of the moment of falling asleep and of the primary process" (Webster 185). Yeats is attempting to represent both the moment when conscious thought or memory is replaced by the unconscious thought or phantasmagoria which is symbolized by the body of the whirling dancer and the image the poet's unconscious mind then creates.

Although Yeats eventually achieves his poetic aim in the last poem of *The Wild Swans at Coole"*, it should not be regarded as a conclusion or the final step, for as Sir James George Frazer says in the conclusion to *The Golden Bough*, "We are at the end of our enquiry, but as often happens in the search after truth, if we have answered one question, we have raised many more; if we have followed one track home, we have had to pass by others" (824).

As Yeats believes, the poet has always his phantasmagoria, his personal imaginative world of ideas and emotions; it is not important whether the elements of this phantasmagoria are the mythologies of a Homer or Dante, the characters chosen from romance and history of a Shakespeare or even the moods and emotions of Yeats himself. The message Yeats tries to bring home is that the poet's personal phantasmagoria and that of his poems will be the same and that the object it creates will be identical, in the same as the "golden bird" of" Sailing to Byzantium" is both poet and his works. What Yeats, as a

critic, emphasizes in his idea of phantasmagoria is the objects, the images and the icons which can give pattern and meaning to experience. As he himself believes, his phantasmagoria absorbs the mass of sensations produced by the writer and his work; it reproduces them in its own iconography and patterns, "its own phenomenology on the written page, creating a verbal structure analogous to the phantasmagoric process, the argumentation of the5 critical statement paralleling the mental process of the critic" (Fallis 1976, p. 72).

Yeats states that the memory is evoked through consciousness, moments of trance, contemplation or "the moment when we are both asleep and awake." He adds that, "in making and understanding of a work of art, and the more easily if it is full of patterns and symbols and music, we are lured to the threshold of sleep" (32). Yeats proclaims that poets in moments of contemplation, receive the "creative impulse from the lowest of the nine Hierchies, and so make and unmake mankind . . .for does not 'the eye altering alter all?'" (31) As Wilson states, "Yeats believed in a collective unconscious which would operate to suggest his archetypal meaning to all readers" (13). Yeats's use of private symbols in his personal phantasmagoria and poetry is rooted in his growing interest in mysticism, magic and occult theologies of the Hermetic and Kabalistic tradition. Images and symbols play an important role in the composition of Yeats's poems. It is the fact of which the poet is quite aware, for in "Ego Dominus Tuus", he hints at that when he says, "I seek an image, not a book/ Those men that in their writings are most wise/ Own nothing but their blind, stupefied hearts" (Yeats 1994, p.134). He explains it best in "Upon a dying Lady": "I have no speech but symbol, the pagan speech I made/ Amid the dreams of youth" (133). It should be noted that though insistence on mystery has its own haunting beauty about it, more often than not, it results in the obscurity in language, especially with the system of symbols in which the correspondence between a concrete term and its associations seems private to the artist.

In his "The Symbolism of Poetry", Yeats talks about two types of symbols, i.e., emotional and intellectual symbols. Emotional symbols stimulate the reader's emotion, that is, they can make the reader feel either attracted or disgusted through the images evoked by the symbol. Under the spell of such symbols, the reader is so peculiarly moved that even he himself cannot tell. Intellectual symbols, on the other hand, evoke ideas alone or ideas blended with emotions. They are primarily there to invade the mind of the reader with the idea that the poet has in mind. As Yeats believes, "if the symbols are merely emotional, the reader gazes from amid the accidents and destinies of the world, but if the symbols are intellectual too, he becomes himself a part of pure intellect, and he is himself mingled with the procession" (33). He apparently prefers symbols that are both intellectual and emotional. Intellectual symbols convey wisdom and such symbols never become old, the more they are used, the richer they become. For his symbols, Yeats rarely gives direct references. He makes use of Greek, Roman and Christian mythology in his poems to signify his symbols. He also has his "personal mythology and a related symbolism, partly in the manner of Blake" (Henn 1965, p.123).

6. *Conclusion*

This study has endeavored to illustrate the unification of memory and phantasmagoria as a key concept in the philosophical poems of W. B. Yeats's *The Wild Swans at Coole*. The significance of the deployed Yeatsian phantasmagoria in this collection of poems comprising of phantasmagoric images and symbols have been discussed. The theme of questing truth and discarding persona after persona finds expression in the selected poems. The poems "Ego Dominus Tuus", "The Phases of the Moon", "The Cat and the Moon" and "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" have been analyzed in the light of the unification of memory and phantasmagoria in this study.

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