

Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium": The Poetic Process of Impersonal Art

S. Bharadwaj*

Annamalai University, India

Corresponding Author: S. Bharadwaj, E-mail: mithrabharath@yahoo.in

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: March 13, 2018

Accepted: May 23, 2018

Published: September 01, 2018

Volume: 7 Issue: 5

Advance access: July 2018

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

ABSTRACT

W.B. Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" is a symbol of unity combining the realistic, intellectual, emotional and mythical elements into a harmony; the harmony ensuing from a resolution of conflicts or contending claims of his contemporaries, D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot. All sorts of existing critical perspectives on the most popular poem, though they provide "a greatly deepened understanding of Yeats," are limited to either paraphrasal or aesthetic, biographical or holistic, spiritual or allusive, symbolic or technical level and they fail to read the text in the context of the pre-texts and the texts falling within its texture, in the light of other poems of Yeats and his contemporaries to bring out its totally different poetic structure and its single distinctive quality. This paper adopting an analytical inquiry into rhetoric of the poem, the play of meanings, filiations among meanings and signs, substitutions and intertextuality, strives to uncover the difference within unity, the life-centric poetic process of Yeats's impersonal art, his paradoxical structure of life-in-death for "perfection of life" of mortal man in contradistinction to his contemporaries' death-centric structural concerns for "perfect work of art."

Key words: Paradox, Holistic, Irony, Arrogance, Magnificence, Erudite, Inherent and Callousness.

INTRODUCTION

Yeats may be called a pure poet in the sense that he seeks his distinctive identity chiefly as a poet although he expresses doubts about the sufficiency of the intellectual poetry. He prays in his old age:

God guard me from those thoughts men think
In the mind alone;
He that sings a lasting song
Thinks in a marrow-bone;
From all that makes a wise old man
That can be praised of all.... (Collected Poems 243)

This integration of thought and sensation is demonstrated particularly in the later poems. Cecil Day Lewis, in *Transitional Poem*, deplors the tendency to seek in Yeats's later poem *The Tower* a profundity of abstract thought:

Of all that labour and wife
And worship, who would give
A fiddlestick for these thoughts
That slightly yaw and bend,
Fat strings of barges drawn
By a tug that they have never seen
And never will comprehend? (Collected Poems 13-14)

But if the purity of poetry consists in its complete independence of subject and thought, life and death, the process of becoming and being, then Yeats's poetry is not pure. Yeats sings of his paradoxical poetry of breath-in-death in contrast with his contemporaries' poetry of death and creation:

Through winter-time we call on spring,
And through the spring on summer call
And when abounding hedges ring
Declare that winter's best of all;
And after that there's nothing good
Because the spring-time has not come—
Nor know that what disturbs our blood
Is but its longing for the tomb. (YCP 179)

And while the creative thoughts of life-in-death are vital and meaningful, being part of Yeats's experience and have a warm immediacy that distinguishes from ratiocinations, the inward debate of his contemporaries, D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot, faithfully rendered and put effectively into poetic use, takes on the character of paradox and argumentation. Lawrence comments implicitly that Yeats has been riding "on horseback asleep forever through the desert ... thinking death will awaken something" and that Eliot "scramble asleep in the mountains," "the Penitentes lash themselves till they run with blood ... in their efforts to come awake for one moment" (D.H. Lawrence 88).

In his quest for the symbol of Naturalism and individualism, the primitive religion of mankind, the religion of blood and community free from the influences of intellect and time, Lawrence "lies like a log and screams and his scream is silent ... because his body can't wake up," "we scream for someone to wake us/And our scream is soundless in the paralysis of sleep..." (DHL). He is "on a series of

pilgrimages to Ceylon, Australia and finally California and Mexico" (Sola Pinto 156). Eliot depicts the poet Lawrence as rootless nympholept, the German Princess Marie Larisch in *The Waste Land*, an international globe-trotter moving from country to country with no identity or religion or community or nationality. "Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch" (*Waste Land* 27). Yeats records the "anxiety" of both Lawrence and Eliot, their pursuit of intensity and impersonal art:

Earth in beauty dressed
Awaits returning spring,
All true love must die,
Alter at the best
Into some lesser thing,
Prove that I lie. (*YCP* 223)

However, in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* indicating Walt Whitman's individualism, "bound together ... as in the astounded clarity before death" (*DCP* 188), "the full flowering of his poetic genius freed from the autobiographical preoccupation" (Sola Pinto 156-57), Lawrence "laughs from fear, pure fear, in the grip of the sleep" (DHL) and wishes "to bring back the rare and orchid-like ... evil-yclept Etruscan" (16) and "the darkly lost," "dead" primitive life. While resisting the impact of Eliot, Lawrence comments on his intellectual power as "a raw American will, that has never been tempered by life" (DHL 63) and confesses his being afraid of his metaphysical process, "the catastrophe of your exaggerate love ... you who never find yourself in love ... but only lose yourself further, decomposing" (12). He articulates:

I am so terrified, America,
Of the iron click of your human contact,
And after this
The winding-sheet of your self-less ideal love,
Boundless love
Like a poison gas. (13)

Eliot's "supreme theme of Art and Song" is beyond the flux of real live beauty or nature and the state of becoming, "bodily decrepitude is wisdom" (*YCP* 226), "wisdom comes of beggary" (204). He underscores the principle of ironic structure and metaphysical reality distinct from the lyrical structure of Lawrence and the paradoxical structure of Yeats:

April is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain. (*WL*)

In the early poems, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "The Portrait of a Lady," "Preludes," "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" and "Gerontion," Eliot holds that tragedy is inherent in the finite and mortal condition of man and the tragic world of reality -- "the time for you to taste of that salt breath," "you had enough of sorrow before death" -- clashes with the ideal, "in grief's contagion caught ... I stared upon his blood-bedabbled breast ... and sang my malediction with the rest" (*YCP* 233); but the nature of the ideal and the mode of salvation that Eliot envisages are different in each poem. Yeats explains:

Sweeter emotion, working in their veins
Like gentle blood, has been driven from the place,

And instilt heaped upon him for his pains,
And for his open-handedness, disgrace;
Your enemy, an old fofol mouth, had set
The pack upon him. (88)

In a sense, all are troubled poems exploring the problems of suffering and death, faith and salvation and they should be placed, as Lawrence pertinently points out, in the mainstream of Eliot's thought and analysis in the long poem *The Waste Land*:

Your bounds of isolation,
But who never rise, resurrected, from this grave of mingling,
In a new proud singleness, America.
Your more-than-European idealism,
Like a be-aureoled bleached skeleton hovering
Its cage-ribs in the social heaven, beneficent.
And then your single resurrection
Into machine-uprisen perfect man. (DHL)

Yeats perceives that no distinct progress of thought from one poem to another is discernible: "though love's bittersweet had all come back" and "it seemed a Quattrocento painter's throng ... a thoughtless image of Mantegna's thought ... why should they think that are for ever young..." (*YCP*). However, F.R. Leavis regards "Gerontion" as an advance, the majestic serenity from the lapse of the preceding poems. The poem "... has a really dramatic detachment. In this respect it represents a great advance upon anything printed earlier in *Poems 1909-1925* ... "Gerontion" has the impersonality of great poetry" (43).

The affirmation in *The Waste Land*, "these fragments I have shored against my ruins" (*WL* 43), that the mind may realize its identity through assimilation of historical experience, through an understanding of the meaning of suffering and purgation, does not constitute the underlying motif in all the early poems according to Louis MacNeice:

If it is worth while really
To colonise any more the already populous
Tree of knowledge, to portion and reportion
Bits of broken knowledge brittle and dead,
Whether it would not be better
To hide one's head in the warm sand of sleep
And be embalmed without hustle or bother. (*Collected Poems* 68)

In the earlier poems of Eliot, the spectacle of human suffering in a world of flux and mutability is sought to be transcended through escape from awareness and other modes of release although these states of freedom are precariously momentary, "sleeps on the verge of nullity." MacNeice finds:

Spring sunshine has a quality
Transcending rooks and the hammering
Of those who hang new pictures,
Asking if it is worth it
To clamour and caw, to add stick to stick for ever. (*MCP*)

Eliot's response shifts continually. The possibilities of the mind's release from flux and decay are ceaselessly explored, but doubts persist that such salvation may not be attainable. Yeats attributes Eliot's quest for transcendental ideal to historic perception of European tradition, "those men that in their writings are most wise ... own nothing but their blind, stupefied hearts" (*YCP* 135).

Yeats, who finds Eliot's poem *The Waste Land* bound together by unity of thought and feeling and a continual recurrence of phrase and cadence, makes two important observations. First, Eliot's poem sums up his attitude to life and poetry, "found pride established in humility"; and secondly, it is the expression in varying keys of emotion of a mind, "there that slow man ... that meditative man," "and those ... impetuous men," which has loved "the principle of beauty in all things." Yeats sets well the scene:

There Hyde before he had beaten into prose
That noble blade the Muses buckled on,
There one that ruffled in a many pose
For all his timid heart.... (YCP 205)

In Eliot's *Waste Land*, the horror and the glory, the depths of anguish and the heights of rapture, the fullness of life envisioned in process and the miseries that are also inherent in process are juxtaposed and embodied in verbal equivalents although the stress falls on the tragic vision: "What portion in the world can the artist have/Who has awakened from the common dream/But dissipation and despair?" (YCP). Yeats speaks of Eliot's elegant "soul's journey":

A ghost-lover he was
And may have grown more arrogant being a ghost.
But names are nothing. What matter who it be,
So that his elements have grown so fine
The fume of muscatel
Can give his sharpened palata ecstasy
No living can drink from the whole wine. (195)

Day Lewis, too, suggests that Eliot, placing the opposite attitudes in juxtaposition, has achieved a kind of resolution in *The Waste Land*:

Twin poles energetic, they
Stand fast and generate
This spark that crackles in the void
As between fate and fate. (DCP 17)

It is debatable whether *The Waste Land* represents the poet's consummate achievement and sums up his attitude to life because it points to development in another direction both in thought and mode of presentation. And equally debatable whether the early poems offer a final resolution of the contraries; for while the visionary imagination affirms the authenticity of beauty and of artistic experience, the human heart returns not without agony and despair to the world of transient, perishable forms. Yeats, comparing them to "twilight grey" in which "hill is heaped upon hill," explains:

For there the mystical brotherhood
Of sun and moon and hollow and wood
And river and stream work out their will
And God stands winding His lonely horn,
And time and the world are ever in flight.... (YCP 46)

The lines throw light on the texture and inner stresses of Eliot's early poems and *The Waste Land*, "that seemed to whirl upon a compass-point ... found certainty upon the dreaming air" and uncertainties; "the intellectual sweetness of those lines ... that cut through time or cross it withershins" (YCP), "and deafening music shook the leaves; a troop ... shouldered a litter with a wounded man" (YCP).

Yeats suggests that the pain with which Eliot's early poetry is associated is not that of the poet's moral maturity; the

pain in Eliot's early poems is itself a luxury, "it seemed a gold-fish swimming in a bowl" (194), "an agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve" (210), and this shows Eliot's affinity with the metaphysical aestheticism. As Eliot's "meditations upon unknown thought ... make human intercourse grow less and less," the theme of his poetry could be identified with the divine poems of George Herbert, "such thought – such thought have I that hold it tight ... till meditation master all parts...." Yeats suggests:

Two thoughts were so mixed up I could not tell
Whether of her or God he thought the most,
But think that his mind's eye,
When upward turned, on one sole image fell;
And that a slight companionable ghost,
Wild with divinity,
Had to lit up the whole
Immense miraculous house
The Bible promised us.... (196)

There is an added suggestion in Day Lewis's reading that Eliot's experience of pain as rendered in the early poems retains vestiges of spurious element, "a fatuous flame" implicit of metaphysical influence:

When love's a cripple, faith a bed-time story,
Hope eats her heart out and peace walks on knives,
And suffering men cry an end to this sorry
World of whose children want alone still thrives....
(DCP 187)

There is a clear distinction between the position of a skeptical poet who shrieks from pride of life and "our bitterness" (YCP 36) and an intellectual poet who "shrieks from pride" and historical consciousness and whose "abstract art" rages and uproots his ways to reality. Yeats perceives "what unearthly ... rounds a mighty scene":

Because this age and the next age
Engender in the ditch,
No man can know a happy man
From any passing wretch.... (273)

Yeats's vision of "human dignity" and human reality is after all nourished by the very world of growth and change, of begetting and dying, "it is more human ... to shuffle, grunt and groan" (YCP) which Eliot wants to leave behind in search of permanence. Eliot brings out the quintessence of Yeats's paradoxical poetry:

Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers. (WL)

Yeats's sceptical poems endowed with paradoxical beauty and lyric impulse, "though ... sun and moon burning together" (YCP 16), are almost a repudiation of Eliot's premise and his ironic structure according to Day Lewis:

Yet time trundles this one to the rag-and-bone man,
While that other may
Reverberate all along
Man's craggy circumstance--
Naked enough to keep its dignity
Though it eye God askance. (DCP 19)

The major premise in Yeats's poetry is that the human mind must work, seek its salvation on the earthly plane itself and not in a visionary realm, that the heart must necessarily

undergo the trials of heroic experience. His aesthetic belief is that art must be rooted in the life of the people, "all that we did, all that we said or sang ... must come from contact with the soil, from that ... contact everything Antaeus-like grew strong" (YCP 277). This is implicitly rejected in Eliot's several poems in which the actual world is eschewed in favour of the paradox of death-in-living. The design of Yeats's later poetry, while rejecting the metaphysical, ironic symbols, the "benighted travellers" as "befitting emblems of adversity" (170), "the winding ancient stair," "the steep ascent ... upon the broken, crumbling battlement, the breathless starlit air," "ancestral night ... that can ... deliver from the crime of death and birth" (198), has exploited the resources of archetypal images of moral disinterestedness, "Sato's ancient blade," "the imagination of a man ... emblematical of love and war," "heart's purple ... emblems of the day against the tower ... emblematical of the night," "a soldier's right ... a charter to commit the crime once more" (YCP). However Yeats detects in his own poems, he has chiefly in mind his early and transitional poems, inadequacy:

My mind, because the minds that I loved,
The sort of beauty that I have approved,
Prosper but little, has dried up of late,
Yet knows that to be choked with hate
May well be of all evil chances chief. (YCP 160)

The early Yeats who brings "the books of my numberless dreams," "my passionate rhyme" (50), "poor rhymes," "building a sorrowful loveliness ... out of the battles of old times" (51), dreams of pure art, "a lout ... mauding here, and mauding there ... emptier of thought ... than the heavenly circuit of its stars" (188), "wandering" between "the silver apples of the moon" and "the golden apples of the sun" (47), between "the old wind-broken tree" and "one throb of the artery," "inanimate fantasy" of "mankind" and "animate" (161) lyric impulse of man, between the influences of the Pre-Raphaelite poets, "the poets laboring all their days ... to build a perfect beauty in rhyme" (54), William Morris, a poet of pure workmanship and songs and Algernon Swinburne, a poet of "many things" and imaginative ballads, between the artistic process of transmigration, death-in-life and the poetic process of transfiguration, life-in-death, between "a heart of stone" and "a heart of flesh and blood" (YCP), between "the greatness of the world in tears," "all that famous harmony of leaves" that "had blotted out man's image and his cry" and "all that lamentation of the leaves" that could defy aestheticism, "the instant clamorous eaves ... a climbing moon upon an empty sky" and "compose man's image and his cry" (32). He compares his searching creative self to "the wandering Aengus," the god of love in Irish mythology and to "a crazed girl," "a beautiful lofty thing ... stood in desperate music wound" (259). As his early poems are "cast ... amid lovely places" and "youth's bitterness being past" and "... afraid ... of the hovering thing night brought me" (YCP 150), "my song a coat ... covered with embroideries ... out of old mythologies ... from heel to throat," he envisages poetry of paradoxical structure, his freedom in sceptic moral disinterestedness, "for there's more enterprise ... in walking naked" (104), under the influence of Swinburne's love of "hermaphroditus" and paganism, "that Time could

touch a form ... that could show what Homer's age ... bred to be a hero's wage" (YCP 74), "this wild new growth of the corn and vine.this wine and bread without lees or leaven," (Swinburne 32), "face to face with its own desire.a delight that rebels, a desire that reposes. I shall hate sweet music my whole life long" (37), "two loves at either blossom of thy breast.strive until one be under and one above" and "two things turn all his life and blood to fire..... a strong desire begot on great despair.a great despair cast out by strong desire (50). The young Yeats dreams of "ballad of life" and "the triumph of time," "all that sweetness amid charm ... all that sweetness amid strength" (YCP), the poetry of paradox of life-in-death:

Crying amid the glittering sea,
Naming it with ecstatic breath,
Because it had such dignity,
By the sweet name of death. (YCP)

In the interpretation of death and art as witnessed in "the poetry of Michael Angelo," Walter Pater holds that great artist "like Dante and all the nobler souls of Italy," Michael Angelo "is much occupied with thoughts of the grave, and his true mistress is death — death at first as the worst of all sorrows and disgraces ... afterwards, death in its high distinction, its detachment from vulgar needs, the angry stains of life and action escaping fast" (95).

The transitional phase of Yeats is "all heart's aches," "broken dreams," "from dream to dream and rhyme to rhyme I have ranged ... in rambling talk with an image of air ... vague memories nothing but memories" (YCP 128) and dilemmatic about "the choice" between "perfection of the life" and perfection "of the work" of art, between the Eliotian impersonal structure reflecting the reality of life after death, "that old perplexity an empty purse," "a heavenly mansion, raging in the dark"(209) and the magnanimous, paradoxical structure of "many-minded Homer" (YCP) whose "toil has left its mark ... the day's vanity, the night's remorse." Yeats possibly thinks that while his artistic ability is consummate, his poetic vision does not have the maturity and detachment necessary to attain to an artist's comprehension and integration, "our shadows rove the garden gravel still ... the living seem more shadowy than they" (YCP). He "dreamed towards break of day," "struggled with the horror of daybreak" (232), "Saint George or else a pagan Perseus" (231), either Eliot's amoral aesthetic disinterestedness or Homer's moral disinterestedness. His transitional creative mind envisions the poetic tradition of Homer, the freeplay of his secular, poetic mind, his poetic licence and poetic empathy:

Whatever's written in what poet's name
The book of the people; whatever most can bless
The mind of man or elevate a rhyme;
But all is changed, that high horse riderless,
Though mounted in that saddle Homer rode
Where the swan drifts upon a darkening flood. (YCP)

Yeats chooses Homer as his "love's play," "Homer is my example and his unchristened heart" (YCP) who "had watched in bitterer sleep ... the marvelous stag of Arthur ... that lofty white stag" and "had set down among its laws ... nothing that we love over-much ... is ponderable to our touch" (156). The disenchanting "Homeric wisdom born of

a steady contemplation of things," his paradoxical structure "free and yet fast ... being both Chance and Choice" stands as "a discourse in figurative speech," a grasp of actualities, a refusal to mistake dreams, "beautiful lofty things" (258) for realities that mark him off from the metaphysical wisdom, "poetry, dancing upon the shore and that makes poetry "where the bales and the baskets lay ... no common intelligible sound" (*YCP*). Yeats resolves to establish himself as an impersonal poet of memory and poetic image, a poet of paradoxical structure and moral disinterestedness:

We should be hidden from their eyes,
Being but holy shows
And bodies broken like a thorn
Whereon the bleak north blows,
To think of buried Hector
And that none living knows. (190)

However, Yeats's poetry right from the beginning is in the nature of meditations or interior monologues of craftsmanship and sculptural art, "the cavern of the mind," "feet to the Rising and Setting may run ... they always beat on the same small stone" (*YCP*), "minute by minute they live ... the stone is in the midst of all" (153), "the bride is carried to the bridegroom's chamber ... through torchlight and tumultuous song" (*YCP*). He records the continuous presence of his comic vision and tragic joy, his transfiguring process "in what's gone," in the preceding phases:

These lineaments, a heart that laughter has made sweet,
These, these remain, but I record what's gone. A crowd
Will gather, and not know it walks the very street
Whereon a thing once walked that seemed a burning
cloud. (100)

But the meditative character is partly modified by his vivid insight into the poetic process of skeptical poetic tradition, into the process of growth and fruition, the sensuous firmness counterpointing and vitalizing the creative quest. Yeats is lucky enough to be impersonal, paradoxical and vicarious under influences of the world-centric, grapho-centric poetic tradition of Homer and Swinburne "where passion and precision have been one," "the sweet laughing eagle thoughts that grow ... where wings have memory of wings, and all ... that comes of the best knit to the best" while defying the poetic purity, "time out of mind, became too ruinous ... to breed the lidless eye that loves the sun," "mean roof-trees ere the sturdier for its fall," of Morris and Eliot and their logocentric, transcendental aesthetic tradition:

How should their luck run high enough to reach
The gifts that govern men, and after these
To gradual Time's last gift, a written speech
Wrought of high laughter, loveliness and ease? (*YCP* 77)

Yeats perceives that his early phase "worn-out with dreams" "lady's beauty" and "pictured beauty" improves "with years" and that his divided transitional realistic phase grows heroically, "old among dreams" and his later phase, "a weather-worn, marble triton ... among the streams" (111), "I sing what was lost and dread what was won ... I walk in a battle fought over again ... my king a lost king, and lost soldiers my men" (267), and finds paradoxical structure and moral disinterestedness "two natures blent ... into a sphere from youthful sympathy" (*YCP*) as a realization of his dreams and

labours of the preceding phases, a resurrection of the pagan, poetic tradition of Homer and Swinburne. Hence his hectoric tone wondering at his unified being and his sculptural art, "Pallas Athene in that straight back and arrogant head ... all the Olympians; a thing never known again" (*YCP*). He confesses his "triumph" of having "heroically lost, heroically found" (*YCP*) tragic joy:

And though it loved in misery
Close and cling so tight,
There's not a bird of day that dare
Extinguish that delight. (234).

Like great actors, great artists should play their part in a tragic drama with perfect self-control and devotion to the part which makes them gay, "all things fall and are built again ... and those that build them again are gay" (*YCP*).

Yeats's contemporary poets, Lawrence and Eliot in the very zest of creating poetic purity always represent life's reality as tragedy, "tragedy wrought to its uttermost." Whereas the paradoxical act of Yeats transforms tragedy itself into gaiety, "gaiety transfiguring all that dread" (250). He rejoices at "man's glory" (*YCP*), the resourcefulness of his artistic experience of the life-centric "bitter sweetness" (236) in contraposition to death-centric tragic mystery of "sweeter word" (235) and "bitter glory" (215), "wild wisdoms of spirit and tongue" (339) of his contemporaries Lawrence and Eliot:

We that look on but laugh in
What matter though numb nightmare ride on top,
And blood and mire the sensitive body stain?
What matter? Heave no sigh, let no tear drop,
A-greater, a more gracious time has gone;
For painted forms or boxes of make-up
In ancient tombs I sighed, but not again;
What matter? Out of cavern comes a voice,
And all it knows is that one word 'Rejoice!' (*YCP* 249)

The mind transcends pain only when it experiences pain consciously and with zest. This conscious experiencing presupposes psychic distancing that saves the mind from being involved and overwhelmed, and transforms pain into lasting and tragic joy, "bitter wisdom that enriched his blood" (237). Profoundest philosophy comes out of tragedy: total external blackout results in internal illumination. Yeats writes in his Introduction to *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse* that "in all the great tragedies, tragedy is a joy to the man who dies, and further, in Greece the tragic chorus danced" (xxxiv).

Moreover, Yeats perceives that his later poetry of poetic image and moral disinterestedness strikes a sharp contrast to his contemporaries's personal and collective myths, their pursuit of poetic purity and aesthetic, amoral disinterestedness. In the later poem "The Tower," he compares and contrasts:

The death of friends, or death
Of every brilliant eye
That made a catch in the breath—
Seem but the clouds of the sky
When the horizon fades;
Or a bird's sleepy cry
Among the deepening shades. (168)

Day Lewis, underling the significance of "the myth of the individual" as the poets's vehicle in the post-war poetry, writes:

Emerging from the collective mind and illuminating it during the centuries when there was no other light, their task nevertheless was to get man on his own feet, teach him to walk by himself, think and feel for himself, no longer one unit in a living aggregate but an individual human being. So the poetic myths are dead and the poetic image which is the myth of the individual, reigns in their stead. (*Poetic Image* 32)

Yeats's later poem *The Tower*, especially the Byzantium poems created out "of the toil" of mind stands as a symbol of the pure art and artistry, "a perfect beauty in rhyme" (*YCP* 54) underlining the value of perfect life. Thomas speaks of Yeats's organic process resulting in an achievement of impersonal structure "parallel" to that of Eliot:

This is the fortune of manhood: the natural peril,
A steeplejack tower, bonerailed and masterless,
No death more natural;
Thus the shadowless man or ox, and the pictured devil,
In seizure of silence commit the dead nuisance:
The natural parallel. (*Poems* 73)

Yeats pursues the notion of innate idea that makes a bird build its nest and this notion is paralleled by the ideas of a modern psychologist like C.G. Jung. He writes:

I know now that revelation is from the self but from that age-long memoried self, that shapes the elaborate shell of the mollusc and the child in the womb, that teaches the birds to make their nest; and that genius is a crisis that joins that buried self for certain moments to our trivial daily mind. (*Autobiographies* 272)

This is very close to what Jung means by the psychic process of individuation: "... the breaking of the ego to allow for outflowings from the deep deep unconscious and a re-organization that is new self" (86). Yeats holds that, besides determining human lives, this collective unconscious structurally rooted in its immemorial biological past determines the lives of nations as well (*Autobiographies* 274).

A common theme runs through the later poems distilling "rare personal good from common ill" (*DCP* 183), the painful contrast of flux and stability, and Yeats notes a partial restatement of the motif of his early poems or his motifs implicit or elaborated in the transitional poems, "though hope fall from you and love decay ... burning in fires of a slanderous tongue," (*YCP*), "a visionary white sea-bird ... lamenting that a man should die ... and with that cry I have raised my cry" (131). Moreover, the statements in the later poetry are complicated because of the increase in Yeats's self-awareness that results in an intensification of doubts. Lawrence perceives that Yeats's skeptical, paradoxical structure "giving off hues of life ... rather like an octopus, but strange and sweet-myriad-limbed octopus ... like a nude, like a rock-living, sweet-fleshed sea-anemone ... flourishing from the rock in a mysterious arrogance" stands diametrically different from his contemporaries's lyrical and ironic structures:

And laugh at Time, and laugh at dull Eternity,
And make a joke of stale Infinity,
Within the flesh-scent of this wicked tree,
That has kept so many secrets up its sleeves,
And has been laughing through so many ages

At man and his uncomfortableness,
And his attempt to assure himself that what is so is not so,
Up its sleeve. (*DHL* 17-18)

The two later poems, "Sailing to Byzantium" and "Byzantium" read together, throw light on the nature of the exploration made in the poems of Lawrence, Eliot and Yeats, "stories of the bed of straw ... or bed of down" and "stories of bed of feathers" (*YCP* 191). Yeats himself underlines the focal point of the two poems:

His wildness
O bid me mount and sail up there
Amid the cloudy wrack,
For peg and Meg and Paris' love
That had so straight a back,
Are gone away, and some that stay
Have changed their silk for sack.
Were I but there and none to hear
I'd have a peacock cry,
For that is natural to a man
That lives in memory,
Being all alone I'd live alone
And sing it lullaby. (*YCP*)

Day Lewis, while comparing and contrasting Eliot's poems of the twenties and Yeats's Byzantium poems, brings out their structural concerns as "overtures to death" (*DCP* 178), the "image of despair" (185) and "the value of our stay" (182), "our mortal best" (*DCP*). He brings out the distinctive greatness of Yeats's Byzantium poems:

Then shall the mounting stages of oppression
Like mazed and makeshift scaffolding torn down
Reveal his unexampled best creation—
The shape of man's necessity full grown.
Built from their bone, I see a power-house stand
To warm men's hearts again and light the land. (*DCP*)

However, in "Sailing to Byzantium," the doubts are incorporated in an inclusive structure in which alternative approaches conflict and cohere. Yeats reconstructs the tone of paradoxical voice of life-in-death and death-in-life, the structural focus of the poem:

Dry timber under that rich foliage
At winter-dark midnight in the sacred wood,
Too old for a man's love I stood in rage
Imagining men. (*YCP*)

The prequel focuses more on paradox as structure, the poetic process of life-in-death and disinterested goodness, "the strength that gives our blood and state magnanimity of its own desire" (*YCP* 200) and the sequel, concentrating more on the scope of the structure of irony and "the intensity of artistic process, the pressure ... under which the fusion takes place," "the process of transmutation of emotion" ("Tradition" 55), the poetic process of death-in-life, the aesthetic amoral disinterestedness, "the winged skeleton of ... bleached ideal" (*DHL*) for great poetry and metaphysical salvation for man's suffering, suggests the value of life-centric impersonal art, the paradoxical, sceptical structure of Yeats, "everything that is not God consumed with intellectual fire" (*YCP*) and hints at the message of personal salvation for the suffering of mortal man.

Review of Related Literature

Yeats makes a distinctive success in his later poetry in presenting experiences in its complexity and the sensibility in his later poems is complex, the reaction of a mature and seasoned man (Mizner 612-14). Alvarez writes that "Yeats's poetry ... is modern because the tone of voice is that of the time" (42). Yeats exploits the resources of the common speech, sometimes for effects of irony, but mostly for direct, poignant and gritty expression (Fraser 60) and the "strong simplicity of his later style" expresses a large "complex of feelings" (61). Fundamentally, he employs symbols as "focuses of experience" (Tindall 211) and they are the objective correlative of the feelings, emotions, attitude or the experience of their maker. Yeats, in the later phase, apprehends life, passions, and reality from within, from an understanding issuing from suffering and exultation (Zabel 325). The accumulated experience of a life-time, the fusion of the dramatic and the concrete, the experimental and the conventional, the dream and the fact served as structure and depth to him. As such, Yeats comes to adopt an inclusionist's view and avoids all simplification or sentimental exclusion in his poems. Allan Tate holds that "Yeats has a more inclusive mind than any of his critics has had" (98). Yeats's insistence on the integrity of his Muse, and his poetic sincerity rules out all abstraction, generalization or ready-made philosophy, on one hand; and presses a keen realization of infinite variety of human experience and its presentation, on the other. (Houghton 316). Critics such as Cleanth Brooks, J.C. Ransom and Allen Tate have affirmed the presence of a tough argument and thought in Yeats's poems. On the other hand, Arthur Mizner, Kenneth Burke, Austin Warren, and the poets like W.H.Auden and Stephen Spender have denied such a framework to Yeats's poems. Auden in *Look Stranger!* has questioned even the existence of a moral attitude, religious or historical emotion in Yeats's poetry and predicted the mutability and death of the skeptical poetry aiming at "personal glory," individual myth and symbol, "the barren spiritual marriage of stone and water":

Our hunting fathers told the story
Of the sadness of the creatures,
Pitied the limits and the lack
Set in their finished features;
Saw in the lion's intolerant look,
Behind the quarry's dying glare,
Love raging for the personal glory
The reason's gift would add,
The liberal appetite and power,
The rightness of a god. (17)

When D.S.Savage observes that the development revealed in Yeats's work is a "development in a vacuum" (194), what he hints at seems to be the absence of a unifying moral subject in his poetry. In *The Destructive Element*, Spender has also drawn attention to it (130).

"Sailing to Byzantium" is one of the most minutely analysed poems of Yeats. Expert critics have studied it in great detail and with rare critical acumen. Their levels of interpretations, "natural, intellectual, spiritual, antithetical" (Olson 209-219), "musical, structural and verbal organization"

(Brooks 189-92), "symbolic arrangement" (Tindall 212), have examined its pattern, images, metaphors and the poet's concentrated approach and his attitude at length. To A.Norman Jeffares, the poem "... began as an expression of dislike of his own age" (43). Northrop Frye perceives that the poem illustrating "the comic vision" of the poet "has the city, the tree, the bird, the community of sages, the geometrical gyre and the detachment from the cyclic world" ("The Archetypes of Literature" 433). Jon Stallworthy writes that "the opposition of soul and body" as presented in the poem "foreshadows the opposition of Byzantium and Ireland" and that Yeats was "conscious of his former loves and future death" (90). C.H.Sisson has observed that "'Sailing to Byzantium' is the most consistent attempt on the part of Yeats to give himself over to the intellect" (74), and F.R.Leavis estimates that the poem "doesn't come out of any wholeness of being or mastery of experience, its poetic or quasi-musical satisfyingness as a totality is not an index of any permanent stability achieved by the poet in life" (*Lectures* 75). Harold Bloom finds the poem rather static (347) and the journey as depicted in the poem seems to end where it begins. In such a plethora of specialized critical opinions, one can extremely self-consciously endeavour to offer one's response to the poem carrying "traces" of other contemporary poems from which it differs. All sorts of existing critical perspectives on the most popular poem, though they provide "a greatly deepened understanding of Yeats" (Allen 66), are limited to either paraphrase or aesthetic, biographical or holistic, spiritual or allusive, symbolic or technical level and they fail to read the text in the context of the pre-texts and the texts falling within its texture, in the light of other poems of Yeats and his contemporaries to bring out its totally different poetic structure and its single distinctive quality.

Method and Objectives of the Study

The poem is a symbol of unity combining the realistic, intellectual, emotional and mythical elements into a harmony; the harmony ensuing from a resolution of conflicts or contending claims of his contemporaries, Lawrence and Eliot. Hence this paper adopting an analytical inquiry into rhetoric of the poem, the play of meanings, filiations among meanings and signs, substitutions and intertextuality, strives to uncover the difference within unity, the life-centric poetic process of Yeats's impersonal art, his paradoxical structure of life-in-death for "perfection of life" of mortal man in contradistinction to his contemporaries's death-centric structural concerns for "perfect work of art," Eliot for metaphysical structure of death-in-life, "the structural emotion" or "art emotion" and Lawrence for visionary structure of libido-in-death, "personal emotions" ("Tradition" 57), the "ridge of libidinous magnetism" (DHL 74).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In the opening stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium" comprising four stanzas of eight lines each, the focal point is on the poignant personal context suggestive of the poem, *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* in which the poet Lawrence evokes the battle

of the contemporary poets and their ideal and "pragmatical" tradition, "stirred ... stared on the horses of the sea, and heard ... the cars of battle and his own name cried ... and fought with the invulnerable tide" (*YCP* 28) and invokes "the spirits of the lost," the "sensual music" of a "dead" primitive "country," Etruria "to bring their meaning back into life again," "the delicate magic of life," "an aroma of lost human life" (DHL 17) and "the undeliverable secret" (DHL) that is "embalmed" in "Tuscan Cypressess ... monumental to a dead, dead race" (DHL). He perceives:

There is only one evil, to deny life
As Roman denied Etruria

And mechanical America Montezuma still. (DHL)

The yearning expressed in the opening lines of Lawrence's poem "The Evening Land" shows an almost despairing withdrawal from the intellectual poetry of Eliot: "Oh America/The sun sets in you/Are you the grave of our race?/ Shall I come to you, the open tomb of our race?" (DHL). He describes the intellectual poet Eliot as "a nympholept" (14), his metaphysical ideal of death-in-life postulated in *The Waste Land* as "your single resurrection ... into machine-uprisen perfect man."

The "country" which is Etruria, "dead with a dead race and a dead speech" (DHL) and ideal for Lawrence, as Yeats points out, is imagined as a human body in which "the young ... in one another's arms, birds in the trees ... at their song." The "fish, flesh, or fowl commend all summer long" (*YCP* 163) and they delicately correspond to the sensual love of the poet Lawrence. Lawrence, like the intellectual poet Eliot, watches the world of process; but he is more involved, and his participation is intenser. Unlike the remote, impersonal poet Eliot, the poet Lawrence seeks an active, ardent, sensuous participation in physical beauty, but he also longs for a poised, changeless state from "whatever is begotten, born, and dies." The expression "those dying generations" suggests process, while the words "at their song" carry forward the strivings for purity and changelessness. The pressure of his involvement also directs the course of desire and sways him, at least partly, from the role of a steadfast observer. The sense of continuity is implicit in dying; but a physical object, after attaining its fullness, inevitably decays, and this paradox of growth and degeneration is inherent in process. The descent from the climactic moment is also marked in human response, and the intensity of ardour cannot be permanently retained. Lawrence's problem as a mortal lover is to prevent the progressive erosion of physical beauty and emotional ardour, to rescue and preserve the climactic moment and achieve a condition in which the stability of Eliot can be reconciled with the pulsating rhythm of desire. This is the overt meaning of the first four lines, but there are correspondences in the last two lines at a deeper level bringing in a tonal complexity, "caught in that sensual music all neglect ... monuments of unaging intellect" (*YCP*). Lawrence's last fragmentary poems, "Bavarian Gentians" and "The Ship of Death" that "deal with the themes of death and eternity" (de Sola Pinto 157), that "celebrate the silent kiss that ends short life or long" (*YCP*) indicate the possibility of an alternative choice; but there is also attendant feeling, or realization that in the temporal order that there is no escape from mutability,

that the state of intense passion cannot be made permanent. "Delight becomes death-longing if all longing else be vain" (*YCP*). The moment of highest exhilaration is, thus, also a moment of uncertainty and despair, and this complex sensibility explains the sudden transition in thought in the early poems of Eliot.

Yeats understands that in Lawrence's poems, death or intensity of pure art is sought both as a consummation and as an escape, "exacting breath ... that they touch or sigh," "every touch they give ... love is nearer death ... prove that I lie" (*YCP*) and he attributes Lawrence's failure to continual change of hate and love, his standing "on blood-saturated ground" as "soldier, assassin, executioner" (*YCP*). He is surprised at finding Lawrence's longing for pure poetry identical to Eliot's longing for pure art in the early poems. He distinguishes his own performance as an inclusive poet of lyric impulse continuously searching for a symbol of impersonal art from that of his contemporaries:

Odour of the blood on the ancestral stair!

And we that have shed none must gather

And clamour in drunken frenzy for the moon. (*YCP*)

In *Transitional Poem*, Day Lewis also conveys the identical perception of Lawrence's sensualism and his vain attempt at aesthetic structure:

(So the antique balloon

Wobbles with no defence

Against the void but a grapnel that hops and ploughs

Through the landscape of sense.) (*DCP*)

Moreover, Lawrence's desire to remain simultaneously at two levels and experience the sensation both as an observer and as an ardent participant seems unattainable, and he seeks release from process by plunging into the void of unawareness.

However, Yeats's apostrophe, "that's no country for old man" functioning as a digression from the focal point of the first stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium," contains a fond, assuring thought that through the dissolution of romantic consciousness, the loss of his "brittle, super-sensual arrogance," the processing of his drawing "yourself upon yourself in insistence," the moulding of his blowing spontaneous personal emotion, "the magnetic current in fierce blasts," "shuddering storm wind, or a water rushing through" (DHL), Lawrence may achieve a reconciliation of contraries, repose and ardour, detachment and earnest involvement, changelessness and the intensity of human passion. The young Yeats affirms in an early poem: "That we must labour to be beautiful, I said, 'It's certain there is no fine thing/Since Adam's fall but needs much labouring'" (*YCP* 64) and in the later poem "The Tower," he reaffirms the significance of his poetic process that differs from that of his contemporary, Lawrence whose romance for poetic purity reminds Eliot's dreaming of "superhuman" intensity and pure aesthetic structure in the early poems:

I have prepared my peace

With learned Italian things

And the proud stones of Greece,

Poet's imaginings

And memories of love,

Memories of the words of women,

All those things where of

Man makes a superhuman,
Mirror-resembling dream. (YCP 167)

The second stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium" focuses on the thought-division, the deep and basic problems confronting the old man as symbolically presented in Eliot's "Gerontion" projecting the impersonal consciousness recoiling upon itself. Although Eliot's attempt at integration does not fully succeed in "Gerontion"—the failure also adds to the complexity of his poem's texture—the parallelism and the opposition give a certain unity and coherence to the apparently disjointed pattern. But Yeats's lines do not merely present this irreconcilable contrast; it encloses within its structure attitudes and experiences that both clash and coalesce:

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress.... (YCP)

The apostrophe in the last two lines --"And therefore I have sailed the seas and come/To the holy city of Byzantium" -- conveys the urgency of the poet Eliot's desire to attain to the stability and repose symbolized as "the holy city of Byzantium," a transcendental place of architectural art, intellect and philosophy. The phrase "holy city" suggests, besides changelessness, an unwavering purposiveness of the impersonal architectural art that Eliot obtains in *The Waste Land*. The associations carried by and attributed to the symbol Gerontion are enriched and elaborated in the succeeding poem *The Waste Land* that also marks a partial modification of Eliot's initial aspiration, "thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season" "waiting for rain." The almost instantaneous retreat of the old man --"Nor is there singing school but studying/Monuments of its own magnificence..." (YCP) -- shows that the symbol Gerontion, because of its inherent character, "an old man in a dry month ... being read to by a boy," "my house is a decayed house" (WL 18) cannot project the desired state; but the attitude, despite the withdrawal, is one of solemnity, veneration blended with wistfulness, destruction and creation. Eliot explains:

The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours.
Think at last
We have not reached conclusion, when I
Stiffen in a rented house. Think at last
I have not made this show purposelessly
And it is not by any concitation
Of the backward devils. (WL 20)

Yeats perceives that Eliot's emphasis on the need for continual vitalization and cleaning of the human world of emotion, and the removal of all that is dead and putrid is part of the vitalizing process, "wound in mind's wandering ... as mummies in the mummy-cloth are wound" (YCP). He tells the "mummy truths" underlying Eliot's process of intensity and impersonal art:

Nothing can stay my glance
Until that glance run in the world's despite
To where the damned have howled away their hearts,
And where the blessed dance.... (YCP)

The third stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium" presents the purgatorial act in the form of a necessary ritual of "studying monuments of its own magnificence" carrying religious

sanction of self-sacrifice which is an implicit demonstration of Eliot's concept of tradition and his theory of depersonalization as discussed in "Tradition and the Individual Talent." Yeats rephrases Eliot's surrendering to historic idea of transcendental art:

Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity. (YCP)

The expression "the singing masters of my soul" underlines the silent, gentle, mysterious workings of historical sense that continually destroys life also causes a renewal of life, "the holy fire, perne in a gyre" witnesses steadfastly this eternal ritual of impersonal art, and the immaculate "sages standing in holy fire ... as in gold mosaic of a wall" (YCP) indicate the purity of what is essentially a religious ceremony. Eliot writes that "the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence" ("Tradition" 49) and "compels" the poet aiming at maturity to recognize the continuity of past literature, to know which of the writers of the past continue to be significant and to acquire the knowledge of such writers through critical labour. Impersonal poetry or poetry of art emotion presupposes and includes destruction. Gerontion's meditative repose contrasts with the dynamism of the sea, but the sea representing tradition, the consciousness of "the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country" serves, as it were, as the historic sense of the impersonal art which is eternally awake to see that the task of purifying the personal emotion is ceaselessly, unflinching performed. This is what Yeats has reconstructed in the third stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium" suggesting the idea of death or concentration through historical perception which Eliot points out in the essay: "what happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality..." ("Tradition" 52-53). The modern critic de Sola Pinto remarks that Eliot's "Gerontion," the "first great prophetic poem ... is also his first attempt to put into practice that ideal of "tradition" in poetry which he expounds in his essay on "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (166).

Eliot's early poems are an exercise in obtaining the "historic sense" of European consciousness, the parallelism between the past and the present, the mythical technique which is the basic method employed later in *The Waste Land*, with which "Gerontion" has a striking similarity. Eliot points out:

I would meet you upon this honestly.
I that was near your heart was removed therefrom
To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated? (WL)

In Eliot's poetic career, the search for impersonal structure in the early poems leads to an infinitely higher achievement in poetry, the magnum opus, namely *The Waste Land*. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, he finds himself "we have lingered in the chambers of sea" (*Selected Poems* 8), in "Portrait of a Lady" he understands "this music is successful with a 'dying fall' ... now that we talk of dying" (13), in

"Preludes" he clings to "the notion of some infinitely gentle ... infinitely suffering thing" (16), in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" he sees "a broken spring in a factory yard ... rust that clings to the form that the strength has left ... hard and curled and ready to snap" (18), and in "Gerontion" he perceives "I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch ... how should I use them for your closer contact..." (WL). In *The Waste Land*, the magnum annus, the metaphysical process of death-in-life results in "significant emotion" ("Tradition" 59). Eliot makes it clear:

--Yet when we came back, late, from the hyacinth garden,
Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not
Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
Living nor dead, and I knew nothing.

Oed' and leer das Meer. (WL 28)

In *The Waste Land*, the state of flux, and the historical movement, involving death and change, is given a positive purificatory function according to Lawrence:

Sweating his drops of blood through long-nighted Gethsemane
Into blossom, into pride, into honey-triumph, into most
exquisite
splendour.

Oh, give the tree of life in blossom

And the Cross sprouting its superb and fearless flowers!
(DHL 21)

The Tiresias symbol in *The Waste Land*, like Gerontion, stands above cyclic process and combines stillness with animation, wakefulness with detachment according to Lawrence. In the poem "Coole Park, 1929," Yeats recalls the very focus of the second and third stanzas of "Sailing to Byzantium" reflecting Eliot in quest of "structural emotion" or "art emotion" ("Tradition" 57), "the structurality of structure" (Derrida 90), the hypothesis underlying his critical essay as well as his early poems and *The Waste Land*:

I meditate upon a swallow's flight,
Upon a aged woman and her house,
Although that western cloud is luminous,
Great works constructed there in nature's spite
For scholars and for poets after us,
Thoughts long knitted into a single thought,
A dance-like glory that those walls begot. (YCP)

Yeats maintains that in *The Waste Land* Eliot celebrates the transcendental art changing into changelessness beyond the cycles of change, flesh and blood being burnt into the purity of fire, the dancer dying into the dance. The City of empyrean music in "Gerontion" changes into Byzantium City of ethereal music, "the artifice of eternity" in *The Waste Land*.

In "Sailing to Byzantium," Yeats moves alternately in the first three stanzas between two discrete worlds, ecstasy and despair, and in the process gained insight into both the distilled essence of the poems of Lawrence and Eliot, the beauty and the misery of finite existence. After having presented the ephemeral and the deathless art of Lawrence and Eliot at first in the preceding three stanzas in an objective manner without any mockery and sarcasm, Yeats implants with increasing firmness his own impersonal, paradoxical art in the last stanza in the midst of the world of process. "a man awaits

his end ... dreading and hoping all ... many times he died ... many times rose again" (YCP). The relevance of the image of paradoxical poetry as impersonal art in the last stanza in which the actual and the ideal interpenetrated becomes clearer. For the poet Lawrence with unperceiving eyes the gateway to the mystery of rapturous art is locked, "nor dread nor hope attend ... a dying animal" (YCP), and for the "drowsy" Eliot the early poems have only formal beauty, but they are frozen and uncommunicative, "dark that ran ... down every withered finger from the decay" (YCP).

Contrary to his contemporaries's process of impersonal structure from romantic individualism and metaphysical intellectualism, in Yeats's vision of the impersonal art resulting from human labour, from the process of individuation, the Attis art stirs into life, "a form that the Grecian goldsmiths make"; for him, the dead Grecian sculptural art is a symbol of moral disinterestedness, both distant and near, both serene and animated. The integration of the two realms, the temporal and the timeless was achieved in a brief historical phase in ancient Greece when life was sustained by simple, active faith. The fabric has shattered with increasing self-consciousness, and in the altered setting, "many ingenious lovely things are gone ... that seemed sheer miracle to the multitude ... protected from the circle of the moon" (YCP 175), "violence upon the roads ... violence of horses" (YCP), pain alone seems real and the vision of supreme felicity, elegance and eternal art seems illusory. For the sentient mortals there is no other means of conquering reality and escaping from flux and self-awareness. Again, the world of flux may be a world of appearance and therefore less real; but for suffering generations of mortals this world is painfully real, and a denial or escape from process is for them a denial of truth. Yeats indicates his unified, organic sensibility as a counterpoint to the romantic sensibility of Lawrence and "the metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul" ("Tradition" 56), the metaphysical sensibility of Eliot:

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come. (YCP)

Yeats holds that he, having sailed faithfully the sea of poetic tradition of Homer and Swinburne, reaches the city of impersonal art which would awake Eliot to the realities of life. He earnestly hopes that his "self-delighting ... self-appeasing, self-affrighting" (YCP) impersonal, paradoxical structure evolved from the poetic process, "from cradle ... to grave" would be awakening to Eliot of ironic structure obtained from the historical process, "from grave to cradle," that his life-centric "lunar" progression of unified being would be an eye-opener to the disagreeable Eliot musing on death-centric linear progression of unified sensibility, and that his poetic process of intensity analogous to the natural process, "I mere shade at last ... coagulate of stuff ... transparent like the wind" (187) would make Eliot on the alert because his "process of depersonalization" analogous

to "the condition of science" ("Tradition" 53) is purely metaphysical, "cradle and spool are past" (*YCP*). The poetic symbol "a drowsy Emperor" that recalls the old Emperor Justinian I of the Eastern Roman Empire remembered for the codification of Roman law that influenced the legal systems of Europe, for the highest achievement in the development of architectural art and letters and for the celebrated Byzantium church of St. Sophia, evokes the image of Eliot as a celebrated intellectual poet dreaming of pure art, "a hunger for the apple on the bough ... most out of reach" (*YCP*), a sovereign poet of architectural art meditating anxiously for the preservation of Dante's intensity and historical heritage of Byzantine art, "of Magnus Annus at the spring ... as though God's death were a play" (*YCP* 181), and as a modern critic of "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that has formulated the values of order and discipline, external central authority and historical sense, the metaphysical poetry and architectural art among the poets of the 20th century.

Moreover in the last three lines of the last stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium," Yeats hints at the continuous presence of moral disinterestedness as the main concern of his poetry in general and the main focus of the paradoxical poem "Byzantium," "as cold and passionate as the dawn" (*YCP*) in particular. Men suffer and will continue to suffer in the future; and yet in this eternally recurring scene of mutability and decay, Yeats's "Byzantium," "the golden bough," a symbol of artifice and transcendental structure is suggestive of ultimate truth of personal salvation and also of the heights of poetic process, human labour and aspiration, "imagining that I could ... a greater with a lesser pang assuage ... or but to find if withered vein ran blood" (*YCP*). Yeats maintains that in harmony with the poetic tradition of Homer and Swinburne he will remain a friend to man, not so much a source of comfort as a perpetual challenge to Eliot's intellectual soul and his metaphysical salvation. In *The Waste Land* Eliot, adopting the fertility myths of Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* and James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, adjudging the theme of Godlessness and meaninglessness, the theme of sterility and suffering in the life of "lords and ladies" in the post-war Europe in an impersonal manner, suggests the hope of redemption from the malaise of sterility and cultural fragmentation through spiritual discipline, through understanding of the historical memory of Dante, Ovid, and Gerard de Nerval. In "Byzantium," Yeats performs in the guise of the Egyptian deity, Osiris and challenges disconcertingly Eliot. Yeats confirms:

In mockery I have set
A powerful emblem up,
And sing it rhyme upon rhyme
In mockery of a time
Half dead at the top. (*YCP*)

Adopting the mask of Osiris, revered as the legendary source of Egypt's well-being, the judge of the dead and god of the after-life, represented in mummified form with a plumed crown and killed by his brother Set, the god of darkness, but later resurrected, Yeats adjudicates the merits and the demerits of Eliot's poems as well as his own poems, the vision of wholeness in art and the vision of sorrow in the whole poetry of Eliot and his own, the dichotomies of

metaphysical salvation and personal salvation for man's suffering and strengthens the possibility of redeeming the time in a pragmatic manner. This adjustment is itself a commentary on Yeats's impersonal, paradoxical mode of historical awareness -- his immersion in its futility and anarchy, and his disinterested attempt to give it a shape and significance.

In *The Waste Land* and the early poems, Eliot perceives that to attain to the full intensity which also affords freedom from pain, one must disentangle oneself from life, from all sensory experiences. For Lawrence, while passion consumes the human heart, it is also richly pleasurable. The thought brings solace and is also disturbing according to Yeats:

A great man in his pride
Confronting murderous men
Casts derision upon
Supersession of breath;
He knows death to the bone.
Man has created death. (*YCP*)

To recover and realize the lost harmony of Attis art in this changed context must demand a stupendous, heroic effort of the imagination. And the mode of realization must necessarily be different from Eliot's innocent ritualistic practice and from Lawrence's wilderness. Yeats observes:

A mind Michael Angelo knew
That can pierce the clouds,
Or inspired by frenzy
Shake the dead in their shrouds;
Forgotten else by mankind,
An old man's eagle mind. (257)

It is this critical labour that the readers witness in the concluding stanza of the poem "Among School Children" in which the two worlds, the timeless and the temporal, are brought together and envisaged telescopically as it were:

Labour is blossoming or dancing where
The body is not bruised to pleasure soul.
Nor beauty born out of its own despair,
Nor blear-eyed wisdom out of midnight oil. (184)

The contemporary poets's quest for eternal art is comforting, but the mode of deliverance suggested in the poetry of Lawrence and Eliot involves, as Yeats points out, great sacrifice of life:

Everything that man esteems
Endures a moment or a day,
Love's pleasure drives his love away,
The painter's brush consumes his dreams;
The herald's cry, the soldier's tread
Exhaust his glory and his might:
Whatever flames upon the night
Man's own resinous heart has fed. (*YCP*)

Lawrence perceives that what the eternal artifice, *The Waste Land*, conveys is structuralistic, phono-centric and ironic tradition "say in the deep sockets of your idealistic skull ... dark, aboriginal eyes ... stoic, able to wait through ages," "say, in the sound of all your machines ... and white words, white-wash American" (*DHL* 14) which the metaphysical poet alone can decipher. For Yeats the Eliotian impersonal art is placed on distant, elegant heights of abstract memory, "old cloths upon old sticks to frighten a bird" (*YCP*), "even from that delight memory treasures so

... death, despair, division of families, all entanglements of mankind grow" (YCP).

The ancient ritualistic worship has lost its relevance in an increasingly complex civilization, and modern man can have the pristine vision only through the inward process of disengagement from the world of flux in which he is involved through instinctive, biological needs. In "Sailing to Byzantium," Yeats transforms and transfigures the tree of life *vis-à-vis* the tree of knowledge into impersonal art and this is what the poetic tradition of Homer and Swinburne have made in their paradoxical poetry:

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.
(YCP 212)

Only in a state of disinterested perception can one view the quintessential flow of life, the form of absolute energy in full repose. "Sobriety is a jewel ... that I do much adore ... a drunkard is a dead man ... and all dead men are drunk" and "that I may stay a sober man ... although I drink my fill" (268).

Findings and Interpretations

The poem "Sailing to Byzantium" discusses the distinctive merits of Yeats's poetry, his poetic process of impersonal art, his art of making structure as a paradox of life-in-death by accommodating and reconciling with his anti-self, the antithesis "Plato and Plotinus for a friend ... until imagination, ear and eye ... can be content with argument and deal ... in abstract things" (YCP 164) and proves the "worth" of his poetry, "nor self-delighting reverie ... nor hate of what's to come, nor pity for what's gone ... nothing but grip of claw, and the eye's complacency ... the innumerable clanging wings that have put out the moon" (174). Yeats, having perceived Lawrence's process of intensity as "a bird's round eye," wild passion "of its own emptiness" (YCP 289), Eliot's artistic process of intensity as "a vision of terror," the "great tomb-haunter sweeps the sky" finding "there nothing to make its terror less," "all sleek and new ... wildness," "supernatural ... as though a sterner eye looked through her eye ... on this foul world in its decline and fall" (YCP), finds his own organic process of impersonal art, "give his own and take his own ... and rule in his own right," as "what none other knows" (YCP), as "human," "no dark tomb-haunter once; her form all full ... as though with magnanimity of light ... yet a most gentle woman" (YCP).

Lawrence's Romantic Art

Yeats's pattern of contrast and comparison developed from the beginning of "Sailing to Byzantium" intends to provide a more objective and dramatic structure to his poetic experience of scrutinizing the poems of his contemporaries,

Lawrence and Eliot. In the first stanza the poet Lawrence, absorbed in physical passion and Whitman's naturalism, also experiences death or the process of impersonalization as a part of the cyclic process — the process of becoming that nourishes objects and assures their fullness of growth also leads inevitably to decay — but he does not share the impersonality of Eliot who watches the mutable scene with equanimity. "Nothing is innocent now but to act for life's sake" (DCP). Yeats rejects the sensual images of Lawrence's poems as they are too wild and impetuous to be poetic, "they came like swallows and like swallows went" (YCP). In "Gerontion," Eliot underscores that the heroism and hedonism of romantic lovers, their fruit of tree of life is bound to wither away:

Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.
(WL 19-20)

To Eliot, the greatness of a poet is not revealed in his individualism. "It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting" ("Tradition" 57) and "poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality" ("Tradition"). The implied connections and contrasts between Lawrence and Eliot become gradually clearer in analyzing the early poems of Eliot sharpening and reflecting the dilemma of the mortal lovers like Prufrock and the old Lady, "a man awaits his end ... dreading and hoping all" (YCP).

Eliot's metaphysical Art and Historical Impersonality

Yeats continues to project himself in the second stanza as a more objective and dramatic character Gerontion. The impersonal art, "the artifice of eternity" — a recurrent symbol in Eliot's poems "Gerontion" and *The Waste Land* and his critical essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" — is associated with an eternal order beyond flux; and this pure, cold, passionless, yet eternally wakeful consciousness, "the historical sense," "monuments of unageing intellect" and "monuments of its own magnificence" are contrasted with the ardent, wild passions of the mortal lover who wishes, almost pathetically, to perpetuate his sensation. Eliot himself explains the meaning of his explorations in the early poems:

I was neither at the hot gates
Nor fought in the warm rain
Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass,
Bitten by flies, fought. (WL)

In *Transitional Poem*, Day Lewis explains objectively Eliot's pursuit of "structural emotion":

My lover of air, like Artemis
Spectrally embraced,
Shuns the daylight that twists her smile
To mineral distaste. (DCP)

The impersonal character of the old man is, in fact, so much stressed in the second stanza of Yeats's poem that it tends to be a poetic rendition of an abstraction of Eliot's poem

“Gerontion”: “an old man in a draughty house ... under a windy knob” (*WL*). Eliot pursues, questions and continually tests the validity of his symbols such as Prufrock, the Lady, Gerontion and the pursuit brings the recognition that the symbol does not completely express what he would wish. Yeats demonstrates in his brilliant exposition:

That thing all blood and mire, that beast-torn wreck,
Half turned and fixed a glazing eye on mine,
And, though love’s bitter-sweet had all come back,
Those bodies from a picture or a coin
Nor saw my body fall nor heard it shriek,
Nor knew, drunken with singing as with wine,
That they had brought no fabulous symbol there
But my heart’s victim and its torturer. (*YCP*)

The third stanza of “Sailing to Byzantium” implies that Eliot’s poem “Gerontion” is related to his critical declaration “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” that the perfect impersonal art is in “the continual self-sacrifice, in the extinction of personality” affording harmony and synthesis. Eliot anticipates:

Signs are taken for wonders. ‘We would see a sign!’
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvenescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger. (*WL*)

This is particularly evident in the poem “Gerontion,” in which the adequacy of the symbol is immediately questioned, and it seems to be almost repudiated, “vacant shuttles ... weave the wind. I have no ghosts” (*WL* 19). To Eliot, poetry is “a concentration, and a new thing resulting from the concentration, of a very great number of experiences which to the practical and active person would not seem to be experiences at all; it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of deliberation” (“Tradition”). This results in “compelling” his soul “to study ... in a learned school ... till the wreck of body ... slow decay of blood...” (*YCP*). Eliot points out the idea of commitment, “surrender” to “the historical sense” and self-annihilation: “And the poet cannot reach ... impersonality without surrendering himself wholly to the work to be done. And he is not likely to know what is to be done unless he lives in what is not merely the present, but the present moment of the past, unless he is conscious, not of what is dead, but of what is already living” (“Tradition” 59).

To Eliot “art ... is but vision of reality” (*YCP*), the reality beyond changing appearances in which art and truth, self-annihilation and impersonality are identical is the ultimate object of human knowledge. Yeats finds:

And one has seen in the redness of wine
The Incorruptible Rose,
That drowsily drops faint leave on him
And the sweetness of desire,
While time and the world are ebbing away
In twilights of dew and of fire. (55)

This is Platonic truth, “a ghostly paradigm of things” (*YCP*) and Plotinus also declares the same truth, “buffeted by such seas ... Plato there and Minos pass ... there stately Pythagoras ... and all the choir of Love” (230). It is this impersonal art of self-sacrifice, self-extinction and salvation identical to the historical reality of “Dat-

ta. Dayadhavam. Damyatta” (*WL*), self-annihilation, crucifixion and resurrection that Eliot suggests as his “Peace,” Shantih shantih shantih” (*WL*), his architectural art, “in this decayed hole among the mountains ... in the faint moonlight ... about the chapel” (*WL* 42) in *The Waste Land*. Eliot’s impersonal art recalls the lines from the metaphysical poet, George Herbert’s poem “Death”: “But since our Saviour’s death did put some blood/Into thy face;/Thou art grown fair and full of grace,/Much in request, much sought for as a good” (141).

Yeats’s Impersonal Concerns

But man on earth is utterly ignorant of the metaphysical vision of creating perfect art outside the dying generation, timeless art outside flux of life or nature, the state of being outside the state of becoming as ultimate reality. The abstract images or “presences ... that passion, piety or affection” (*YCP*) are beyond his labouring mind and his toiling life as these philosophic images are “self-born mockers of man’s enterprise,” emblematic of all the glory of heaven where men “toil not neither do they spin.” So Yeats altering “Plato’s parable ... into the yolk and the white in one shell” declares his faith in the poetry of paradoxical structure for the common man:

I mock Plotinus’ thought
And cry in Plato’s teeth,
Death and life were not
Till man made up the whole,
Made lock, stock and barrel
Out of his bitter soul,
Aye, sun and moon and star, all
And further add to that
That, being dead, we rise,
Dream and so create
Translunar paradise. (*YCP*)

Ordinary men are evidently unaware of the ultimate order or of the need to perceive this reality, and Eliot’s message is not directed to such people. The message has relevance, as Yeats notes, for poets, artists, and perceptive individuals who have borne the full load of human misery and have also attained glimpses of the eternal flow of life in moments of disinterested metaphysical vision. Yeats perceives:

Here, traveller, scholar, poet, take your stand
When all those rooms and passages are gone,
When nettles wave upon a shapeless mound
And saplings root among the broken stone,
And dedicate-eyes bent upon the ground,
Back turned upon the brightness of the sun
And the sensuality of the shade-
A moment’s memory to that laurelled head. (*YCP*)

They alone can recognize the validity of what appears to Lawrence and Yeats as “supernatural” and “superhuman” respectively.

Yeats’s Impersonal Art

In the last stanza of the poem “Sailing to Byzantium,” Yeats thrusts himself forward and voices his main concern. Does

Lawrence's matured poem or Eliot's early poem provide any realizable means of resolving the antimony of the actual and the ideal? The answer is that it is possible for Eliot to find release from pain in brief or prolonged states of visionary trance and metaphysical thinking in *The Waste Land*, "that this unconquerable labyrinth of the birds, century after century ... cast but dead leaves to mathematical equality" but in Lawrence the gulf separating the two orders of experiences is not really bridged, "whether for daily pittance or in blind fear ... or out of abstract hatred, and shed blood ... but could not cast a single jet thereon" (*YCP*). All these complexities are attributed to Lawrence's "brittle, super-sensual arrogance" and Eliot's "gorgeousness ... dark and lustrous ... and skinny and repulsive ... and poppy-glossy" (DHL), their "opinionated mind ... barter that horn and every good ... by quiet natures understood ... for an old bellows full of angry wind..." (*YCP*). Yeats commends paradoxical structure "with a more than comprehensible arrogance" (62) while hectoring modestly that "an intellectual hatred is the worst ... opinions are accused." His poem "Sailing to Byzantium" represents his skeptical, impersonal art and impersonal concerns symbolic of the sceptic, poetic tradition of Swinburne and Homer:

Considering that, all hatred driven hence,
The soul recovers radical innocence
And learns at last that it is self-delighting,
Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,
And that its own sweet will is Heaven's will.... (*YCP*)

Yeats's impersonal art is free from the metaphysical vision and "intellectual hatred" because "arrogance and hatred are the wares ... peddled in the thoroughfares," and in structuring the unity of the form, "if there's no hatred in a mind ... assault and battery of the mind ... can never tear the linnet from the leaf," deathlessness of art becomes true according to Yeats. He confirms his faith in moral disinterestedness:

Swear by those horsemen, by those women
Complexion and form prove superhuman,
That pale, long-visaged company
That air in immortality
Completeness of their passions won;
Now they ride the wintry dawn
Where Ben Bulbin sets the scene. (301)

For Yeats life and vitality that exudes from Greek sculpture has its source in the sense of form, "a plummet-measured face," Phidias' art sweeps away darkness and foam, creating a finite model of beauty that "gave women dreams and dreams their looking glass" (282) and "Michael Angelo left a proof ... on the Sistine chapel roof" stressing measurement and form that, paradoxically, generate more passion and look more casual. He writes that it is a sculptor's chisel that produces "calculations that look but casual flesh":

Proof that there's a purpose set
Before the secret working mind:
Profane perfection of mankind. (*YCP* 302)

The great philosopher, Spengler, holds that, for the Greek artist the chisel was the compass and that, perhaps, ever before Pythagoras, this sense of the finite form or numberless measurement "had found expression as a noble arraying of sensuous material units, in the strict can-

on of the statue" (58). The emotion, which Yeats presents in his mature phase, is the religious, historical emotion, the emotion of his race which goes back to pre-Christian and pre-monotheistic past to find its moorings (Warren 637-38). This attempt is to provide for himself what the failure of Christianity and the breakdown of other traditions have deprived him as a creative artist. With all this in the background, Yeats's success lies in that "he knew he had to grow from sensation to emotion, from reverie to thought, from passivity to action; and the growth is as much marked by intention as by natural or instinctive process" (Zabel 319).

Yeats has been adopting the strategy of masking his intentions from the beginning of his poetic career, the playing of roles in different figures in a variety of figurative language to create poetic image or individual myth. "By the help of an image ... I call to my own opposite, summon all ... that I have handled least, least looked upon" and that "would carry it away" from the poets of historic tradition and their "momentary cries before it is dawn" to the poetic tradition of "blasphemous men" (*YCP*). In the early phase, Yeats finds analogy for deriding the visionary dead past and exalting the living present in the image of Isis, the Egyptian goddess of fertility:

'I would but find what's there to find,
Love or deceit.'
'It was the mask engaged your mind,
And after set your heart to beat,
Not what's behind.' (*YCP* 76)

In the transitional phase divided between "a style ... found by sedentary toil" of traditional poets and "the imitation of great masters" of poetic tradition, he proves "of all imaginable things ... the most unlike, being my antiself ... and, standing by these characters" (*YCP*) and discloses his disinterested goodness in the poetic image of Horus, the falcon-headed Egyptian sun deity identical to the Greek god Apollo:

That's our modern hope, and by its light
We have lit upon the gentle, sensitive mind
And lost the old nonchalance of the hand;
Whether we have chosen chisel, pen or brush,
We are but critics, or but half create,
Timid, entangled, empty and abashed,
Lacking the countenance of our friends. (*YCP*)

He reaffirms in his later poem, "never to have lived is best, ancient writers say ... never to have drawn the breath of life, never to have looked into the eye of day ... the second best's a gay goodnight and quickly turn away" (192).

In the later poems, he invents the myth of Osiris, the god of Egyptians' well-being to impart the universal significance of disinterested action of heroic proportions:

I pace upon the battlements and stare
On the foundations of a house, or where
Tree, like a sooty finger, starts from the earth;
And send imagination forth
Under the day's declining beam, and call
Images and memories
From ruin or from ancient trees,
For I would ask a question of them all. (*YCP*)

In the later and the last phases, “the conflagration” between the metaphysical tradition and the poetic tradition, self and antiself, night and day, “fantastical ... imagination” of “abstract things” and “excited, passionate” and imagination of “the livelong summer day” (164) has been continuously engaging the mythopoeic imagination of Yeats and he has been persistently building impersonal, paradoxical structure till his last poem as a symbol of unity of pictures of contending contemporary’s poetry.

So, it is obvious that the typical characteristic of Yeats’s poetry is equanimity or impersonal approach, not callousness, the equanimity contained in his own epitaph:

Cast a cold eye
On life, on death.
Horseman, pass by! (303)

Of Yeats’s technique in his later poems, Eliot writes: “... in technique there was a slow and continuous development of what is always the same medium and idiom.” And about impersonality, which is also deeply related to his technique and mode of presentation, he remarks:

There are two forms of impersonality: that which is natural to the mere skilful craftsman, and that which is more and more achieved by the maturing artist. The first is that of that I have called the ‘anthology piece’, of a lyric by Lovelace or Suckling, or of Campion, a finer poet than either. The second impersonality is that of the poet who, out of intense and personal experience, is able to express a general truth; retaining all the particularity of his experience, to make of it a general symbol. And the strange thing is Yeats, having been a great craftsman in the first kind, became a great poet in the second. (*On Poets and Poetry* 254-55)

Yeats’s Impersonal Vicariousness

Yeats’s continuous experiment with the symbolic structure of paradox, the process of life-in- death corresponds to his faith in the impersonal art of vicariousness, “for nothing can be sole or whole ... that has not been rent.” He brings out the truth of his poetry in general and his poem “Sailing to Byzantium” in particular:

‘Fair and foul are near of kin,
And fair needs foul,’ I cried.
‘My friends are gone but that’s a truth
Nor grave nor bed denied,
Learned in bodily lowliness
And in the heart’s pride. (221)

This is in contrast with Lawrence’s poetic truth “love has pitched his mansion in ... the place of excrement” and with Eliot’s that “live in a heavenly mansion ... not in some foul sty.” The word “truth” or salvation, in this context, does not mean release from sin; it means freedom from ignorance, or freedom from the prison of experience, and this freedom is achieved through participation and involvement. Yeats is, thus, avowedly moral in intention and is fundamentally different from the aesthetic, amoral disinterestedness of Lawrence and Eliot. He perceives that he could achieve self-realization and play his proper role in society only by writing impersonal, paradoxical poetry enshrining “a terrible

beauty” (*YCP* 152), the “troubled heart”(164) and the “horrible splendour of desire” (165) and reflecting a profound concern with human situation against human destiny. He sings:

Hearts with one purpose alone
Through summer and winter seem
Enchanted to a stone
To trouble the living stream. (*YCP*)

Day Lewis points out the functioning of mythopoeic imagination underlying the impersonal, paradoxical structure of Yeats’s poetry:

Phrase-making, dress-making—
Distinction’s hard to find;
For thought must play the mannequin, strut in phrase
Or gape with the ruck: and mind,
Like body, from covering gets
Most adequate display. (*DCP*)

A poet cannot help being paradoxical for it is the natural language of poetry. According to Cleanth Brooks, paradox can also be emotional and profound. “Our prejudices force us to regard paradox as intellectual rather than emotional, clever rather than profound, rational rather than divinely irrational” (“Language of Paradox” 292). Lawrence underscores the paradoxical approach and the heroic, sceptical focus of Yeats’s poetry, especially the later poem *The Tower* analogous to “iron break and bud,” “the almond tree”:

Something must be reassuring to the almond, in the evening star, and the
snow-wind, and the long, long nights,
Some memory of far, sun-gentler lands,
So that the faith in his heart smiles again
And his blood ripples with that untellable delight of
one— (DHL)

In “Almond Blossom,” Lawrence wondering at the later poet Yeats as a polygon of many sides, speaks of a profound man as a many-sided person whose perspective alone can ensure freedom born of detachment and afford tolerance. “Even the willful, obstinate, gummy fig-tree/Can be kept down, but he’ll burst like a polyp into prolixity/And the almond tree, in exile, in the iron age!” (DHL).

In “Sailing to Byzantium,” Yeats’s many-sidedness may have both aesthetic and moral implications. The artist splits his personality into different selves to receive varied impressions; but many-sidedness is also the antithesis of selfishness, vanity and dogma—the three deadly sins that Yeats denounces in no uncertain terms in the poem “No Second Troy” which shows the vehemence of his moral indignation recalling his description of his ladylove Maud Gonne:

What could have made her peaceful with a mind
That nobleness made simple as a fire,
With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind
That is not natural in an age like this,
Being high and solitary and most stern? (*YCP* 73)

This is, in effect, a plea for detachment and tolerance. In a short poem “Fragments,” Yeats articulates more emphatically his pragmatic approach to the problems of impersonal art and toleration:

Where got I that truth?
Out of medium’s mouth,

Out of nothing it came,
 Out of the forest loam,
 Out of dark night where lay
 The crowns of Nineveh. (YCP 182)

Yeats's process of transfiguration, the impersonalization of his "personality" of skepticism, "new human emotions," his "impressions and experiences which are important for the man" stands in sharp contrast to Lawrence's seeking for "particular emotions," his "complex or unusual emotions" ("Tradition") and to Eliot's "metaphysical theory ... that the poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways" ("Tradition" 56). Understanding, tolerance, humility and capacity for submission -- these are the qualities possessed, in Yeats's view, by a man of genius, and these are pre-eminently moral qualities. The word genius, however, indicates artistic sensibility and power, and here again aesthetic and ethical issues are fused in Yeats's moral disinterestedness. Yeats points out:

A woman and a man,
 Unless the Holy Writings lie,
 Hurried through the smooth and rough
 And through the fertile and waste,
 Protecting, till the danger past,
 With human love. (180)

The recurrent theme of Yeats's poetry which is also the theme of the poem "Sailing to Byzantium" is the response of the human heart and of the creative human consciousness to the mortal predicament. He himself explains the necessity of labouring for great poetry of magnanimous impersonal art:

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 marmalade.
 The rhetorician would deceive his neighbours,
 The sentimentalist himself. ... (134)

Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" representing his poetic *oeuvre* is unlike the pure metaphysical, impersonal art of Eliot or the pure personal lyricism of Lawrence; it is neither witty nor sensual, but as impersonal as "the sound of the rain or sound ... of every wind that blows" (169), as archetypal and paradoxical as "a bird's sleepy cry ... among the deepening shades" (168), "Hound Voices ... cleaning out and bandaging of wounds ... and chants of victory amid the encircling hounds" (290) that has been voicing the poetic process of impersonal art and moral disinterestedness, "a breath ... of birth and death" (289), for the voiceless fellow-beings as an alternative to the artistic process of death-in-life, the aesthetic, amoral disinterestedness. He brings out the truth:

For wisdom is the property of the dead,
 A something incompatible with life; and power,
 Like everything that has the stain of blood,
 A property of the living; but no stain
 Can come upon the visage of the moon
 When it has looked in glory from a cloud. (200)

Yeats confirms that his impersonal poetry of lyric impulse stands distinguished from Lawrence's personal nearness and

Eliot's intellectual farness:

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

Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" witnesses the impersonal artist's ability to submit to experience, to enter into the identities of other beings both human and non-human, his self-effacing objectivity of expression and his capacity of the moral being for disinterested action and demonstrates that the two activities are different and can be mutually exclusive. He reaffirms:

I am content to follow to its source,
 Every event in action or in thought;
 Measure the lot; forgive myself the lot!
 When such as I cast out remorse
 So great a sweetness flows into the breast
 We must laugh and we must sing,
 We are blest by everything,
 Everything we look upon is blest. (199)

The cyclic progress of paradoxical structure of "Sailing to Byzantium" is symbolic of Yeats's impersonal poetry, his transfiguring mind and his tragic joy besides being suggestive of his moral disinterestedness and magnanimous response to the challenge and realities of life. Moreover, the poem posits disinterested goodness as the ultimate value, and this goodness of Homer and Swinburne, "the pride of people that were ... bound neither to Cause nor to State" (YCP), is realized in action in the context of his contemporaries's poetry.

CONCLUSION

"Sailing to Byzantium," thus, indicates that the Yeatsian process of transformation and transfiguration, "greater glory in the Sun ... an evening chill upon the air ... bid imagination run much on the Great Questioner" (208) is on the march to "overcome Gods upon Parnassus ... overcome the Empyrean; hurl ... Heaven and Earth out of their places" (236), to defy the Lawrentian process of transgression "a bloody, arrogant power ... rose out of the race," the Eliotian historical process of death-in-life, the Byzantine pure art in the form of a necessary purgatorial ritual carrying metaphysical sanction of transmigration, "rose like these walls from these ... storm-beaten cottages" (YCP). Lawrence's desire for self-asserting self-delight that transcends time and history and Eliot's ancestral sound for self-abnegating transcendentalism that transcends time grows wild (YCP), "black procreant male of the selfish will and libidinous desire ... overlooking the world for his own" (DHL 72), "all the folly of a fight ... with a common wrong or right ... the innocent and the beautiful ... have no enemy but time" (YCP 197), whereas Yeats's seeking of transcendental art is inclusive of everything living on earth and pitches upon the golden mean, "in a breath ... a mouthful held the extreme of life and death," "propinquity had brought ... imagination to that pitch where it casts out ... all that is not itself" (YCP) and this, in turn, recalls the Shake-spearian vicarious impersonal art. Yeats observes:

Shakespearian fish swam the sea, far away from the land;
Romantic fish swam in nets coming to the hand;

What are all those fish that lie gasping on the strand?
(193)

In continuation of the relentless march, the poem "Byzantium" that strikes a singing match, "what He can question, what if questioned I ... can with a fitting confidence reply" (YCP), between the beautiful "gazelle" and "the great gazebos" (YCP), between the aesthetic, amoral disinterestedness and the moral disinterestedness, between Eliot's impersonal art implying metaphysical salvation and Yeats's vicarious impersonal art suggesting personal salvation for man's suffering, vindicates the forward march of progress of Yeats's impersonal art descending "into the loveless dust," the disinterested vicariousness of his paradoxical structure, "City and city may contend ... by that great glory driven wild ... pray I will and sing I must ... and yet I weep" (YCP). The Byzantium poems, as a whole, while contending with the greatness of Eliot's ironic impersonal, "superhuman" structure made out of metaphysical structurality, underscore the magnanimity of Yeats's profound impersonal art, his paradox of life-in-death and his "triumph of time" identical to the kind Grecian sculptural art, "ceremony's a name for the rich horn ... and custom for the spreading laurel tree" (YCP).

REFERENCES

- Alvarez, A. *The Shaping Spirit*. Chatto and Windus, 1958.
- Allen, James Lovic. "Yeats's Byzantium Poems and the Critics, Reconsidered." *Colby Library Quarterly*, X: 2, June 1973, pp. 57-71.
- Auden, W.H. *Look Stranger!* Faber, 1936.
- Bloom, Harold. *Yeats*. Oxford UP, 1970.
- Brooks, Cleanth. *Modern Poetry and the Tradition*. Oxford UP, 1966.
- . "The Language of Paradox." *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader*, edited by David Lodge, Longman, 1972, pp.
- Day Lewis, Cecil. *The Poetic Image*. Cape, 1947
- . *Collected Poems*. Cape-Hogarth, 1954.
- Derrida, Jacques. "Structure, sign and play in the discourse of the human sciences." *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, edited by David Lodge, Pearson Education, 2003, pp. 89-103.
- Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land and Other Poems*. Faber, 1972.
- . *Selected Poems*, edited by Manju Jain, Oxford UP, 1992.
- . *The Sacred Wood*. Methuen, 1969.
- . *On Poets and Poetry*. Faber, 1957.
- Fraser, G.S. *Vision and Rhetoric: Studies in Modern Poetry*. Faber, 1959.
- Frye, Northrop. "The Archetypes of Literature." *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader*, edited by David Lodge, Longman, 1972, pp.422-33.
- Herbert, George. "Death." *The Metaphysical Poets*, edited by Helen Gardner, Penguin Books.
- Houghton, W.E. "Yeats and Crazy Jane: The Hero in Old Age." *Modern Philology*, XL:4, May 1943, pp. 316-29.
- Jeffares, A.N. *The Poetry of W.B. Yeats*. Edwin Arnold, 1961.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. "Psychology and Alchemy." *Collected Works* Vol.XII, Princeton UP, 1968, pp. 473-483.
- Kermode, Frank. *Romantic Image*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.
- Lawrence, D.H. *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*. Martin Secker, 1923.
- Leavis, F.R. *New Bearings in English Poetry*. Chatto and Windus, 1932.
- and Q.D.Leavis. *Lectures in America*. Chatto and Windus, 1969.
- MacNeice, Louis. *Collected Poems 1925-1948*. Faber, 1949.
- Mizner, A. "The Romanticism of W.B. Yeats." *The Southern Review*, VII:3, Winter 1942, pp. 621-23.
- Olson, Elder. "Sailing to Byzantium: Prolegomena to a Poetics of the Lyric." *The University Review*, V111:3, Spring 1942, pp. 209-219.
- Pater, Horatio Walter. "The Poetry of Michelangelo." *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, edited by Donald Hill, California UP, 1980, pp.73-97.
- Pinto, Vivian de Sola. *Crisis in English Poetry 1880-1940*. Hutchinson, 1961.
- Savage, D.S. "The Aestheticism of W.B. Yeats." *The Permanence of Yeats*, edited by James Hall and Martin Steinmann, Collier Books, 1950, pp.193-216.
- Sisson, C.H. *English Poetry 1900-1950: An Assessment*. Hart-Davis, 1971.
- Spender, Stephen. *The Destructive Element*. Jonathan Cape, 1938.
- Spengler, Oswald. *The Decline of the West*, Vol.I, translated by C.F. Atkinson, Knopf, 1959.
- Stallworthy, Jon. *Between the Lines: Yeats's Poetry in the Making*. Clarendon P, 1963.
- Swinburne, Charles Algernon. *The Collected Poetical Works*. William Heinemann, 1917.
- Tate, Allan. "Yeats's Romanticism: Notes and Suggestions." *The Southern Review*, VII:3, Winter 1942, pp. 591-600.
- Tindall, W.Y. "The Symbolism of Yeats." *Accent*, V:4, Summer 1945, pp. 203-212.
- Thomas, Dylan. *Poems*. Hunter, 2003.
- Yeats, W.B. *Collected Poems*. Wordsworth Editions, 2000.
- . *Autobiographies*. Macmillan, 1961.
- , ed. "Introduction." *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892-1935*. Oxford UP, 1936, pp. i-xlii.
- Warren, Austin. "William Butler Yeats: The Religion of a Poet." *The Southern Review*, VII: 3, Winter 1942, pp. 624-38.
- Zabel, M.D. "Yeats: The Book and the Image." *The Nation* 156, 10:6, Mar. 1943, pp. 438-50.