DOI: 10.46586/er.14.2023.10389
License: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0
Entangled Religions 14.3 (2023)
er.ceres.rub.de

The Entangled Imagination

W.B. Yeats' "Moods" and the Psychologization of Magic

Dirk Johannsen
University of Oslo

ABSTRACT Among modern practitioners of magic, the "psychologization of magic" has become a common strategy to adapt practices such as rituals of invocation to naturalistic thought. In this article, I discuss what was probably the most elaborate attempt to bridge the gap between the magic of the past and a magic suited for the present that took place within the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (1888–1903). Approaching the Order's teachings through the lens of the contemporaneous literary discourse, the Irish poet and magician William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) attempted to consolidate supernaturalist and naturalist understandings of magic throughout the 1890s. In 1892, he made the concept of the "immortal moods" a key to both his poetry and his magical practice. Evoked through symbols in a ritual or a poem, these moods would descend "like a faint sigh into people's minds" and move them to action, causing "all great changes in the world." Yeats explored this concept in theoretical writings, poetic experiments, and his ritual practice, finding his own imagination entangled with past imaginations. Serving a brief term as the Golden Dawn's Imperator and Instructor in Mystical Philosophy in 1901, he condensed the insights gained from this work in the doctrines of the "great mind and great memory." Presenting a study of Yeats' psychology of the universal mind, this article shows how his amalgamation of literary and folkloristic theorizing paved the way to connect magical and poetic practice to the emerging psychological discourse.

KEYWORDS William Butler Yeats, Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Psychologization of Magic, Psychological Associationism, Folklore, Tradition, Literary Theory, Symbolism.

Introduction

For W.B. Yeats, magic and poetry were inextricably entwined. In his early works,[1] he developed a dual theory of magic and poetry that revolved around shifting notions of the moods, [1]

1 The year 1903 marks a reorientation in both Yeats' life and poetry in many ways and is therefore commonly used to demarcate the 'younger' or 'early' Yeats from the more mature poet. I limit my study to sources written between 1890 and 1901, the period during which he was an active member of the original Golden Dawn.

the universal mind, and the great memory. The resulting understanding of the relationship between magical and poetic practice constitutes an early instance of a "psychologization of magic," as it came to shape the interplay between the adoption of earlier practices and conceptual innovation in Western learned magic throughout the twentieth century (Otto 2016, 38).

In general terms, psychologization denotes "the (unintentional) overflow of psychological theories and praxes to the fields of science, culture, and politics and/or to subjectivity itself" (de Vos 2014, 1547). In the late nineteenth century, however, the disciplinary framework of academic psychology was still in its infancy, and it was constantly being renegotiated (Gripentrog 2016). Accordingly, the "spreading of the discourse of psychology beyond its alleged disciplinary borders" was a highly diverse phenomenon (de Vos 2014, 1547), also when it came to attempts to psychologize magic. Following up on Wouter Hanegraaff's pioneering analysis of "how magic survived the disenchantment of the world" by translating historical notions and practices of magic into psychological terms and techniques (2003), Egil Asprem has convincingly argued that this psychologization does not follow a linear development or a unitary trend (Asprem 2012, 161). In a study of Israel Regardie, Christopher Plaisance provided a compelling case for the need to approach processes of psychologization as a loosely connected cluster of discursive strategies (Plaisance 2015); only some of these strategies derived from the works of (more or less) academic psychology. In her study of British occultism, Alex Owen has already highlighted the spectrum of cultural debates of the nineteenth century that revolved around the "psychologization of the self" and the resulting mystery of consciousness, making it quite natural for magic to be "conceived in psychologized terms" (Owen 2004, 149, 115–47; see also Hanegraaff 2013, 135–37). Bernd-Christian Otto and I have recently argued that the learned magical discourse of the late nineteenth century experienced major transformations in response to the re-interpretation of the faculty of imagination that took place in the emerging modern literary discourse (Otto and Johannsen 2021). Here, Otto raises the broader question "whether it was not the emerging psychological, but the emerging literary discourse that had sparked the so-called 'psychologisation of magic' of the 20th century" (2021, 363). The case of W.B. Yeats is one of the most prominent examples of this dynamic. [2]

In 1890, Yeats joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the preeminent society of learned magic at the turn of the century, and became an ardent practitioner. The system of magic that he found in the Golden Dawn catered to emerging artists (Denisoff 2013), and it allowed him to perceive his poetic work as "no different" from the practice of magic (Graf 2015, 27). The initiations outlined a transformative process of attaining a higher consciousness;[2] practices such as astral visions cultivated the "formative" imagination of the adepts (King 1997, 51; see Otto and Johannsen 2021); and the teachings mapped symbolic correspondences between the "mortal world" and "immortal essences" (Yeats 1896, 58). By 1900, during the internal struggles that soon led to the disintegration of the original Order (Gilbert 1997), Yeats became the Golden Dawn's Instructor of Mystical Philosophy, and even served a short term as its Imperator (Harper 1974). During this time, he wrote his famous essay *Magic* (Yeats 1903, 29–69 [1901]), in which he formulated three doctrines as the foundation of "nearly all magical practices": [3]

> (1) That the borders of our minds are ever shifting, and that many minds can flow into one another, as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single [4]

2 For further details on this process, see Bogdan's chapter in this special issue (2023).

energy.

(2) That the borders of our memories are as shifting, and that our memories are a part of one great memory, the memory of Nature herself.

(3) That this great mind and great memory can be evoked by symbols. (Yeats 1903, 29 [1901])

In the following, I argue that the psychologized understanding of magic expressed in Yeats' doctrines does not result from a reception of a disciplinary psychology or pre-existing theories of the subconscious. Instead, it is a parallel development mediated through literary and folkloristic theory. While it may seem counterintuitive at first, Yeats relied on the pronounced naturalistic framework of psychological associationism, which he sought to subvert through his poetry and his magic. Reinterpreting the psychological creation of mental associations as a revelation of symbolic correspondences and using them to evoke spirits in the form of moods, Yeats made poetry an act of magic (Johannsen 2021) and magic a psychological therapeutic. While his theorizing remains deeply indebted to a long history of esoteric ideas, it first manifested itself in the early 1890s, embedded in a lively contemporary culture of public artistic debate and casual ritual practice. [5]

The Moods: A Fairy Tale

In 1893, W.B. Yeats published the famous collection of essays and fairy legends[3] that gave name to the Celtic Revival in Irish literature: *The Celtic Twilight*. In confronting a modern audience with an "ancient simplicity and amplitude of imagination," Yeats wanted to evoke long forgotten *moods* in his readers: [6]

> What is literature but the expression of moods by the vehicle of symbol and incident? And are there not moods which need heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland for their expression, no less than this dilapidated earth? […] Let us go forth, the tellers of tales, and seize whatever prey the heart long for [sic], and have no fear. Everything exists, everything is true, and the earth is only a little dust under our feet. (1894, 6–7) [7]

With this bold preface, *The Celtic Twilight* set out to defy all genre classifications. Traditional legends and descriptions of peasant-storytellers are interspersed by poems, philosophical reflections, and accounts of Yeats' own encounters with the hidden world and the occult subculture of his day. [8]

A curious example can be found in a chapter titled *Regina, Regina Pigmeorum, Veni* (1894, 83–89).[4] It concerns "a rather interesting magical adventure,"[5] which Yeats relates as follows: [9]

> One night a middle-aged man, who had lived all his life far from the noise of [10]

3 Yeats often uses the archaic spelling *faeries* to demarcate the spirits of folkloristic traditions from characters of children's literature.

4 The title ("Queen, queen of the pygmies, come") is a reference to *William Lilly's History of his Life and Times from the year 1602 to 1681* (reprinted and known to Yeats as Lilly 1882), where the phrase is presented as a "call" used for crystal scrying (1882, 229).

5 Letter to Richard Le Gallienne, October 15, 1892 (Yeats 1986, 321).

> cab-wheels, a young girl, a relation of his, who was reported to be enough of a seer to catch a glimpse of unaccountable lights moving over the fields among the cattle, and myself, were walking along a far western sandy shore. We talked of the Dinny Math or faery people, and came in the midst of our talk to a notable haunt of theirs, a shallow cave amidst black rocks, with its reflection under it in the wet sea sand. I asked the young girl if she could see anything, for I had quite a number of things to ask the Dinny Math. She stood still for a few minutes, and I saw that she was passing into a kind of waking trance […]. I then called aloud the names of the great faeries, and in a moment or two she said that she could hear music far inside the rocks […]. (1894, 83–84)

With the contact established, narrator Yeats now commands the queen of the fairies from the cave, sensing her as a "faint gleam of golden ornaments, [a] shadowy blossom of dim hair." The ensuing interaction, however, remains mediated through the girl in a trance. [11]

> I asked [the queen] to tell the seer whether these caves were the greatest faery haunts in the neighbourhood. […] No, this was not the greatest faery haunt, for there was a greater one a little further ahead. I then asked her whether it was true that she and her people carried away mortals, and if so, whether they put another soul in the place of the one they had taken? 'We change the bodies,' was her answer. 'Are any of you ever born into mortal life?' 'Yes.' 'Do I know any who were among the Dinny Math before birth?' 'You do.' 'Who are they?' 'It would not be lawful for you to know.' [12]

This interview with the fairy queen is a curious take on the European folkloristic endeavours of the nineteenth century.[6] The legends that early folklorists collected by interviewing local storytellers centred on a set of relatively static motifs presenting the faeries as hidden but in constant interaction with the human world; in one of these motifs, for example, the fairies carry away human children and replace them with a changeling. Their ambiguous nature, sometimes appearing as spirits of nature, at other times as spirits of the dead, gave rise to much scholarly debate about the roots of the fairy tradition. [13]

To resolve the issue, Yeats simply enters the story world and confronts the fairies with questions that would otherwise be directed at local storytellers. He even proposes his own theory of the nature of the fairy tradition to their queen: "I then asked whether she and her people were not 'dramatisations of our moods'? 'She does not understand,' said my friend [the seeress] […]" (1894, 86–87). Passages like this split the audience. Many reviewers welcomed the "wild, wierd [sic], and witching" mixture of genres as a fitting homage to the "mystic side of the Celtic spirit" or the "occult philosophy" of the "wild Irish."[7] Others, notably those from some Irish papers, showed less understanding of Yeats' handling of folkloristic sources and found him "imprisoned in a small cell of mysticism."[8] The *Irish Daily Independent* found Irish folklore to be utterly "masqueraded" by Yeats' occultism ("a London whimsey"), declaring the interview with the faery queen a particularly absurd "instance of ineptitude": "Think of [14]

6 For Yeats' role in the context of the Irish folkloristic endeavour, see the chapter on "Yeats, Celticism, Comparative Science" in Garrigan Mattar (2004, 41–82). On the relation between Yeats, the fairies, and literary modernism, see Faxneld (2018).

7 *Dublin Evening Telegraph*, February 17, 1894, 8; *The Sketch*, January 31, 1894, 16; *Illustrated London News*, February 17, 1894, 202.

8 *United Ireland*, November 11, 1893, 1.

Mr Yeats when the Fairy Queen reveals herself to him inquiring if she and her fairy folk were not 'dramatisations of our moods'."[9] Only after Yeats accused the reviewer of scholarly arrogance[10] did the paper concede that poetic immersion in the traditions might yield something new: "The enchanted places of the [Irish] West […] suggest to [Yeats] whole philosophies […]. 'Dramatisations of our moods,' ways of envisaging our wants and dreams […] are an endless study for him."[11]

[15] Despite his interest in scholarly folklore, poetry and ritual magic were the two fields in which Yeats conducted this study of "the moods" throughout the 1890s. In the Golden Dawn, he was provided with the tools: The order's symbolism and the member's progression through the different degrees of initiation were carefully regulated (Gilbert 1986). Maybe a reason for the adaptability of the order during a time marked by celebrations of scientific progress, however, was the fact that it did not impose any particular theory of magic as authoritative. Yeats' concept of "the moods" stood at the centre of his attempt to fill this gap. Striving to establish himself in a literary discourse dominated by scholarly reflection, Yeats yearned "to lead a world sick with theories to those sweet well-waters of primæval poetry, upon whose edge still lingers the brotherhood of wisdom, the immortal moods" (1895a, xxvi). He found that moods, rather than rational argument, connect people and move them to action. While each individual person feels them as something subjective and passing, each individual mood transcends time, to "be felt again and again." Every feeling we experience is, in this sense, a memory of feelings others experienced in the past. As "modes of thought and feeling which recur in the children of men through all ages" (*United Ireland*, February 8, 1896, 3), the moods were, in Yeats' mind, the link between the seemingly arbitrary experiences of everyday life and an eternal world of spiritual essences. They revealed the individual mind as a reflection of some shared, universal mind.

Towards a Dual Theory of Magic and Poetry

[16] Yeats' *The Celtic Twilight* oscillates between genres; it is as much fiction as it is folklore and poetical reflection. The magical adventure of evoking the fairy queen for the purpose of an interview, however, is a biographical report from his own magical practice. Together with his uncle Georg Pollexfen and his cousin Lucy Middleton, Yeats conducted the ritual on October 14, 1892 at the caves of Lower Rosses Point, Sligo, not far from his uncle's house, where he had spent many childhood summers (1986, 321–23). At the time of the ritual, Yeats had been a member of the Golden Dawn for two years and had swiftly risen through the ranks of the outer order. Four months later, he would be initiated to the inner order, the *Rosae Rubae et Aureae Crucis*, as an Adeptus Minor, which (in theory) was the place where he would be familiarized with the evocation of spirits (see also Bogdan 2023).

[17] By the early 1890s the Golden Dawn was in many ways an institution under development, and Yeats was a particularly valued and deeply invested member. As a close friend of the order's founders, MacGregor Mathers and William Wynn Westcott, he brought his experience as a vocal member of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society and was widely recognized as one of the "coming young men"[12] of the London literary scene. With unique access to the

9 *The Irish Daily Independent*, January 3, 1894, 4.
10 *The Irish Daily Independent*, January 10, 1894, 2.
11 *The Irish Daily Independent*, January 17, 1894, 2.
12 *Inverness Courier*, April 3, 1894, 3.

Irish and British artistic avant-garde, he recruited many of the order's most promising members.[13] Yeats was not kept from engaging in practical magic, nor from inviting others to join in. He shared the results of his magical experiments generously with his literary community, at least with those he saw as comrades in arms.

In the days following the encounter with the fairy queen, he excitedly informed his friends of his success: "I was very triumphantly successful in an invokation [sic] of the Fairies at a noted location of theirs," he boasted to his political mentor John O'Leary; he also reported to his friend and editor Edward Garnett that "voices were heard & all sorts of queer figures seen. You I think have seen the symbols worked & so may understand the methods."[14] To fellow poet Richard Le Gallienne, who was about to introduce symbolism as *The Religion of a Literary Man* (1893) to the English literary debate, he wrote in detail about how he "made a magical circle & invoked the fairys [sic]" which allowed his uncle to hear "boys shouting & distant music" and his cousin to engage in a "long conversation […]. I tell you this because I have used my symbols with you so that you can understand such things are possible."[15] [18]

We learn more about this shared use of symbols from a short essay titled *Invoking the Irish Fairies*. Yeats had published this piece two weeks earlier in *The Irish Theosophist*, a journal edited by his friend George Russell (AE), writing under his Golden Dawn motto D.E.D.I. (*Demon Est Deus Inversus*). It reveals the preparation undertaken for the invocation at the caves at Lower Rosses Point and offers a glimpse of a culture of casual rituals and astral scrying in and around the early Golden Dawn. Written in the manner of a causerie and a style that could be called 'occult decadence,' Yeats reports that "the Occultist and student of Alchemy whom I shall call D.D. and myself" one morning decided to gaze into the astral light while waiting for the kettle to boil (1892, 6–7). But to summon what? [19]

> We had called up likewise, the tree of knowledge and of life, and we had studied the hidden meaning of the Zodiac […]. We had gone to ancient Egypt, seen the burial of her dead and heard mysterious talk of Isis and Osiris. We have made the invisible powers interpret the tablets of Cardinal Bembo,[16] and we had asked of the future […]. 'We have seen the great and they have tired us,' I said; 'let us call the little for a change. The Irish fairies may be worth the seeing; there is time for them to come and go before the water is boiled.' I used a lunar invocation and left the seeing mainly to D.D. (1892, 6) [20]

The seeress D.D. or *Deo Date* was Dorothea Hunter. Like Yeats' uncle Georg Pollexfen, she would be initiated into the Golden Dawn the following year, but this did not keep her from entering the astral sphere to encounter the queen of the fairies at this point.[17] Because only Yeats' was familiar with the "mystic system," he controlled the vision. Following his performance of the lunar invocation, before Deo Date's eyes appeared "a barren mountain crest [21]

13 See Johannsen (2021) for a more detailed account of the influence Yeats exerted on the Golden Dawn by integrating the order's teachings into an encompassing vision of a spiritual renewal of the arts and, by extension, politics.

14 Letters to John O'Leary, October 16, 1892, and Edward Garnett, October 17, 1892 (Yeats 1986, 322–23).

15 Letter to Richard Le Gallienne, October 15, 1892 (Yeats 1986, 321).

16 The *Bembine Table of Isis* is discussed in Eliphas Lévi's *History of Magic* (2001, 81–85) and was edited by W.W. Westcott (1976), maybe serving as a part of the Golden Dawn curriculum (see Hall 1928, 160–74).

17 In the Golden Dawn, Dorothea Hunter would become the official Instructor in Clairvoyance on April 21, 1900, after serving as an important collaborator in Yeats' project of creating a Celtic mystery school, coordinating joint astral explorations to translate the Golden Dawn's symbolism into a Celtic tree of life (Warwick Gould in Yeats 1997, 663–68). Yeats would take the post of Instructor of Mystical Philosophy (Howe 1978, 228).

with one ragged tree," the invoked moon shining through its branches, "and a white woman stood beneath them." Yeats commanded the woman to show the faeries. Soon, a "multitude of little creatures" appeared for D.D., and the white woman revealed herself as their queen. Following the queen from the good fairies to those evil, Yeats writes, D.D.'s vision culminated in "that contest of the minor forces of good and evil which knows no hour of peace."

[22] In his concluding reflections, we learn why Yeats, while at the caves at Sligo beach, chose—of all possible questions to ask a fairy queen—to ask whether she was a dramatized mood. "The fairies," Yeats explains, "are the lesser spiritual moods of the universal mind, wherein every mood is a soul and every thought a body. Every form they take and every action they go through, has its significance and can be read by the mind trained in the correspondence of sensuous form and supersensuous meaning" (1892, 7). This is the first expression of the paradoxical formula that would become Yeats' dual theory of magic and poetry.[18]

Associations and Correspondences: Psychology, Folklore, and the Literary Discourse

[23] From today's perspective, it may seem natural to associate Yeats' use of the theosophical notion of a universal mind expressed in shared modes of thought and feeling with notions of the subconscious or a collective unconscious that were developing at about the same time. Several studies have argued that Yeats' understanding of the function of poetry corresponds to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis (notably Fanger 2008) or identified the similarities between his mystical system and Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology (following Hollis 2005).[19]

[24] The context in which Yeats developed his theory in the early 1890s, however, was different, and it was indebted to an earlier understanding of the mind. He had just entered a competitive artistic scene in which naturalistic conceptions of literature provided a dominant framework, against which he tried to demarcate his own poetical practice. To discover the roots of Yeats' dual theory of magic and poetry, we have to turn to psychological associationism. This theory of the mind had become the starting point for a wide psychologization of every aspect of life, especially after philosopher John Stuart Mill studied the nature of logic ([1843] 1874) and declared it "a branch of psychology" (de Vos 2014, 1547–8).

[25] In building on the tradition of British empiricism and resisting Romantic philosophers such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Stuart Mill's father James Mill had already in 1829 compiled a "prototypical associationist picture of [the] mind" by reducing "the various 'active' and 'intellectual' powers of the mind to association" (Dacey 2020). Following Locke and Hume, James Mill argued that all higher cognitive functions were based on a constant "association of ideas" in the mind ([1829] 1878). The ideas themselves Mill saw as "copies" of our sensations. Memories, for example, would simply be segments of a "particular train of ideas," i.e., a chain of associated "copies" of previous sensations. When confronted with a similar sensation or a

---

18 The phrasing reveals a largely theosophical framework and alludes to the idea that thought forms permeate the Mahat or universal mind (see below). The dramatizations of the moods that Yeats now develops is first hinted at in a diary passage from 1889, with Yeats reflecting on the nature of Madame Blavatsky's secret teachers, the Mahatmas. He ponders whether they are spirits ("not likely") or "dramatizations of HPB's own trance nature" (printed in Yeats 1972, 281).

19 These studies focus mostly on the 'later' Yeats with concepts developed after 1903, such as "the mask." As Hollis notes, the similarities between Yeats and Jung point primarily to a shared familiarity with "common primary materials, especially those of Gnostic Eastern, platonic, hermetic, and theosophic origin" (Hollis 2005, 290).

related idea, the “laws of association” would serve to evoke the memory ([1829] 1878, 1:318–40). The same mechanism and laws, Mill argued, would also govern the imagination. The only difference between the thoughts of a merchant and the imagination of a poet was, according to Mill, the particular quality of the individual ideas derived from their underlying sensations. Whereas the merchant’s “train of ideas” was directed towards physical outcomes, the poet’s “train of ideas” was ideally composed of ideas to be appreciated as “a source of pleasure” for its own sake ([1829] 1878, 1:242–43).

[26] John Stuart Mill widened his father’s strict laws of association to some degree. On the one hand, he defined sensations as mental states, allowing him (with Alexander Bain) to view both sensations and ideas as produced and processed by material organs, foreshadowing a psychology integrated with “the science of Physiology” soon popularized by Herbert Spencer (Bistricky 2013; Spencer 1855). On the other hand, he allowed for the emergence of new, superordinate ideas from the association of given elements, manifest, for example, in the complex mental pictures “put together” by a poet—such as the idea of a “Castle of Indolence” or a fairyland (Mill [1843] 1874, 591). Of course, the ontological status of such composites remained unclear and often dubious, and here logic found its domain. When serving as a cornerstone of science, Mill argued, the purpose of logical reasoning was to inquire into the validity of these complex associations with regard to the given empirical evidence. Logical inference would serve to determine whether an association of two or more ideas was sufficiently grounded in empirical reality, or whether it was just an arbitrary connection, a fantasy. This principle soon came to define the responsible use of the poet’s imagination in European literary naturalism.

[27] The literary movements of the 1870s were deeply indebted to the Mills’ associationist psychology. The French literary critic Hippolyte Taine (1871), for example, introduced Mill to France to argue that the self was but an artificial construct, to be dissected in naturalist literature (Nias 1999). The Danish literary critic Georg Brandes (1873) used Mill’s “laws of association” to call for a new literature to unveil the arbitrariness of the associations of ideas underlying religion and reactionary politics, leading to the triumphal period of Nordic realism in European literature (Johannsen 2016).

[28] Following Mill, these strands of literary naturalism would identify memory as a “train of associations” constituting the individual self, a construct that was far from stable. False memories could enter the chain arbitrarily; elements of dreams, including fantastic and surreal visions, associated themselves with real happenings and distorted memories. Because of the fragile nature of memory, blends of reality and fantasy would be remembered as if they were real, subsequently accounting for religious legends and romantic poetry (Brandes 1873, 205–8). A new realism was presented as a necessary remedy to the arbitrariness that had governed the religious and literary imagination for too long. The modern poet was no longer subject to his imagination: He became its analyst, carefully approaching the artificial chains to uncover the ‘real,’ i.e., empirical connections that governed people’s thoughts and actions.

[29] Immersed in the literary debates that took place across Europe, Yeats found himself and his fellow young poets in a “war of spiritual with natural order” (1992, 233). When he first tried to establish himself in London’s artistic scene by the end of the 1880s, naturalistic theories had become a dominant framework for serious literature. Ireland’s foremost novelist George Moore had introduced the French naturalism of Émile Zola to the public, and Henrik Ibsen’s social criticism, promoted by George Bernard Shaw, came to set the standard for stage plays. Established literary journals and book circles left little room to argue for an Irish national

literature or that poetic dreams of fairyland could possess 'timeless' artistic value (see figure 1). Still, Yeats came prepared. His father, a convinced "disciple of John Stuart Mill" (Yeats 1972, 19), had (much to Yeats' dismay) familiarized him early on with the foundations of naturalistic thought. Now aiming at the death of realism (1894), Yeats developed his literary symbolism throughout the 1890s in direct confrontation with the fundamental tenets of literary naturalism.[20]

"Why should we be either 'naturalists' or 'realists'?", he challenged the literary establishment, and it was precisely the fairy tales that made his public argument (1893, 189). In presenting the queen of the fairies to the naturalists, he introduced them to folkloristic theorizing. By the 1890s, the academic study of folklore had gained prominence because of both its political and epistemological significance. It had rapidly sharpened its theoretical profile throughout the 1880s and became the most obvious candidate for taking the lead in the study of "the mythical mind" (Moe 1926). Its epistemological challenge was to mediate between anthropological models of human universals and the ruptures made evident in the study of society's temporal development. The key term that was designed to address this challenge was *tradition*, which was introduced as a collective singular only by the second half of the nineteenth century (Eriksen 2016; also see Glassie 1995; Noyes 2009). Speaking of tradition served to denote a "parallel, but different type of temporal process" that suggested permanence where historiography documented change (Eriksen 2016, 91).[21] Identifying static traditions in a changing world was a necessary ingredient to substantiate the very notion of historical development: it kept the elements of a historical narrative connected and bridged the gap between past and present. In the context of late nineteenth-century nation-building endeavours, the political relevance was obvious: In identifying (or inventing) traditions, the alleged past of a nation would legitimate its present or future form (Giolláin 2000, 63–93). [30]

By the 1880s and 1890s, scholars of folklore adapted to their new role in the public debate by adding to the psychologized notion of an internalized 'popular memory' to their empirical field of 'popular tradition.' It is here that Yeats found the foundation for his 'great memory' conception.[22] In folklore studies, memory was still understood as a process based on the association of ideas. However, the specific ideas that caught the folklorist's attention—the ingredients of mythical legends—turned out to be astoundingly stable and not arbitrary at all. In their continuity throughout time, certain recurring elements of the imagination appeared as static motifs. They would cluster to constitute traditions spreading from generation to generation, connecting the 'mythical' mentality of the people of ancient times directly to the present. As a *tradition*, fairy tales revealed some form of invariability of the mind. [31]

In a series of reviews written in the early 1890s (collected in Yeats 1970), Yeats enthusiastically documented "the books of folk-lore, coming in these later days from almost every country in the world" to testify "to the ancient supremacy of the imagination" (1893, 188). At no point did Yeats question the general mechanism proposed by the naturalists' psychology. Instead, he raised the question whether the non-empirical associations of ideas found in religious and mythical lore were indeed arbitrary, or whether they were in fact governed by hidden principles. The similar images, characters, and events of timeless "root-stories" had, [32]

20 On Yeats' and the Golden Dawn's connection to French symbolism, see Johannsen (2021, 176–80).

21 This folkloristic approach to the past complements the occult mode of reading history in literary modernism (Surette 1993, 19). Claiming to adhere to a "secret tradition" was a common strategy of legitimizing the engagement with selected ritual practices taken from a different time and context in modern British occultism.

22 On Yeats' role among the Irish pioneers of folklore studies, see Giolláin (2000, 95–113).

Figure 1 Sir Max Beerbohm, 'Mr W B Yeats Presenting Mr George Moore to the Queen of the Fairies' (1904). Collection & image © Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin (Reg. 71). © The Estate of Max Beerbohm. Yeats' affection for the fairies was a source of constant ridicule. Note the map of Ireland and books with titles such as *Realism: Its Cause & Cure and Short Cuts to Mysticism.*

after all, always functioned as inherent symbols for "feelings and passions which find no adequate expression in common life" (1893, 189). What in the eyes of a naturalist seemed like arbitrary associations of the individual mind, traditions revealed to be established and widely shared associations between form and meaning: they were correspondences.

[33] Through the lens of the literary discourse, Yeats saw the system of magic espoused by the Golden Dawn as a natural extension of the ongoing debate. Echoing Coleridge's Romantic distinction between associative fantasy and a genuinely creative faculty of the imagination (1817, 1:86–87), the Golden Dawn provided a comprehensive training program aimed at cultivating the imagination's "plastic energy" and "formative power" (King 1997, 51). Yeats learned to induce and control astral visions and engaged extensively in joint visionary journeys, where initiates 'collected' symbolism and compared their results, often trying to confirm the 'objectivity' of their insights with cabbalistic hermeneutics (Asprem 2007), studies of early modern grimoires, or, in the case of Yeats, Irish mythological cycles and folkloristic reports. Most importantly, he was not only introduced to the hermetic doctrine of the correspondences 'between the above and the below,' but also provided a map to navigate them in the form of tables of correspondences projected onto the cabbalistic Tree of Life, so they could be put to use in both ritual and poetry. In these practices, he found his imagination entangled with all past imaginations. The abstract notions of a universal mind and a great memory had become an experiential reality.

[34] While the tables of correspondences charted the universal mind and the great memory, they did not account for their own impact: the inner movement felt in engaging in a ritual or chanting a poem. Magic and poetry, for Yeats, was not about truth—"everything is true" (Yeats 1894, 7)—but about creating effect. In the literary discourse he found the final ingredient for his dual theory of magic and poetry. The concept of the moods became Yeats' own contribution to theorize the effect of poetry and the efficacy of the Golden Dawn's magic.

The Immortal Moods

[35] "Moods" was a "key word in late romanticism" and the subject of much polemic in the literary debates of the 1880s (Hönninghausen 2010, 92). According to realism, the writer's attention was supposed to turn from emotional introspection to critique of social matters. In 1891, however, Oscar Wilde reinstated "the moods" as a core term of aesthetic philosophy. In *The Critic as Artist*, Wilde famously argued that the highest form of criticism was "the record of one's own soul," and that this record would trace "the spiritual moods and imaginative passions of the mind" (1891, 114) that were always subjective but could be shared by everyone: "The aim of art is simply to create a mood" (1891, 143). At that time a protégé of Wilde, Yeats found this treatise to be "wonderful" and set out to learn to control the creation or revelation of moods (Doody 2018, 37). In working with symbols, the artist should aim not at analysis and commentary but at insight and effect—just like the magician. Giving an occult spin to Wilde's argument, Yeats argued:

> [36] the business of poetry is not to enforce an opinion or expound an action but to bring us into communion with the moods and passions which are the creative power behind the universe; that though the poet may need to master many opinions, they are but the body and symbols for his art, the formula of evocation for making the invisible visible. (1895b, 169)

Art turned into the occult science of symbolism. Yeats found it at work in the poetry of Shelley, described in its principles in the works of William Blake and the Theosophical Society, formulated as a literary programme by the French symbolist movement, and fully laid out in the Golden Dawn. [37]

The first public presentation of the concept of the moods used as a weapon against naturalism took place in a lecture given at the Chiswick Lodge of the Theosophical Society on July 17, 1893: *The Nature of Art and Poetry in Relation to Mysticism*. Here, Yeats contrasted the realist "mimic art [...] based wholly on memory and associations of ideas" to the "true art" of symbolism.[23] Covered by several London papers, the *West London Observer* gave a concise summary of the core ideas presented for discussion (July 22, 1893, 6). The theosophists, Yeats stated in addressing his audience, had found the "true nature of the imagination" in the doctrine of *Mahat*, the universal mind "reflected in the mind of each one of us." Its substance, however, remained unclear, as the "thought forms" proposed by Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant would be composites and therefore not lasting. Instead, the universal mind must be "made up of spiritual states or moods of the universal soul," which would be immortal and unchanging, finding "expression on this plane of matter by means of symbols of colour, form, sound [...]." This rather abstract argument had, for Yeats, very practical applications. He referred, for example, to recent reports of an Italian mental institution where different coloured glass windows had shown strong effect on the patients' moods, corresponding to the colours and shapes. In the same way, poetry could evoke moods by carefully assembling symbols, following "the doctrine of correspondences, in the famous Smaragdine table of Herme's Trismegistics [sic], 'as above so below'."[24] [38]

In a later essay, he expounded on the artist's use of correspondences, fully equating art and magic as hermetic disciplines.[25] Symbols were not to be confused with allegory but were simply representations of "things above" by "things below." All art "that is not mere storytelling" has "the purpose of those symbolic talismans which mediæval magicians made with complex colours and forms, and bade their patients ponder over daily [...] for it entangles, in complex colours and forms, a part of the divine essence" (Horton and Yeats 1898, 10). In the Golden Dawn, Yeats had learned the practice of creating painted talismans, and he created his poems accordingly (Johannsen 2021). In a laborious process, he weaved words into symbolic scenes, where allusions, images, and sounds would interact just in the right way to evoke "a perfect emotion," an "immortal mood" (Horton and Yeats 1898, 11). Nothing was arbitrary: Each association of ideas was a potential revelation of correspondences with the universal mind, an actualisation of the forms inscribed in the great memory giving the moods a body to manifest themselves. The work of the poet oscillated between creation and revelation. [39]

Yeats captured this oscillation in his poetic work with the theme of the enchanted enchanter. Enchanted enchanters were the protagonists of almost all of his fiction written in the 1890s, whether they were called Hanrahan or Robartes, Aengus or Forgael. Like the prototypical Irish bard Hanrahan, for example, the artist or the magician controlling the moods is "a maker of the dreams of men," evoking by way of symbol the moods that move men to action (Yeats 1992, 143). At the same time, however, these moods had already imposed themselves on the artist or magician, urging him or her to utter the symbols. In becoming a bard, Hanrahan had [40]

23 *Middlesex County Times*, July 22, 1893, 3.

24 *West London Observer*, July 22, 1893, 6.

25 The essay was published as the introduction to a book of drawings made by his friend W.T. Horton. Yeats had sponsored Horton's initiation to the Golden Dawn in 1896.

been taken by the faeries and was himself enchanted. The moods are both the agent of change and its manifestation.[26]

A first coherent account of this double nature of the moods as "wandering souls" and "passing emotions" is given in Yeats' short story *Rosa Alchemica* (1896), where it is presented as the theory of magic of a secret *Order of the Alchemical Rose*. In this story, the protagonist is taken to the mystical organization's headquarters, where he finds a mysterious book that contains listings of "symbols of form, and sound, and colour, and their attribution to divinities and demons" (1896, 67), i.e., tables of correspondences as they were used in the Golden Dawn. [41]

> The bodiless souls who descended into these forms were what men call the moods; and worked all great changes in the world; for just as the magician or the artist could call them when he would, so they could call out of the mind of the magician or the artist, or if they were demons, out of the mind of the mad or the ignoble, what shape they would, and through its voice and its gestures pour themselves out upon the world. In this way all great events were accomplished; a mood, a divinity, or a demon, first descending like a faint sigh into men's minds and then changing their thoughts and their actions […]. (Yeats 1896, 66) [42]

The moods are the 'permanent spiritual forces,' the spirits conjured in the Solomonic art, the fairies and Gods, to the extent that they are a reflection of human feelings and mental states. As wandering souls that animate men, or as passing emotions expressing "an undecaying hope in our trivial ambitions, a divine love in sexual passion," they are "alone immortal" {(1895c), p. 138], as captured in the poem that was the motto to *The Celtic Twilight* (1894, vii): [43]

> Time drops in decay Like a candle burnt out. And the mountains and woods Have their day, have their day; But, kindly old rout Of the fire-born moods, You pass not away. [44]

A Universal Mind and an Irish Soul: A Psychologized Magic and Poetry

In introducing a magical symbolism to the literary scene, Yeats announced that "the moods of men" were "the region over which art rules," as his friend Arthur Symons phrased it in a declaration written in 1896 at "the weedy rocks of Rosses' Point" in Sligo, where Yeats had encountered the queen of the faeries (Symons 1897, xiv). Timeless and universal, they make each imaginative poet and each initiated magician part of a long tradition. To them, every symbol becomes an "ancient revelation" that makes the past present. While the local faery queen had not (yet?) been able to relate to the concept in 1892, Yeats had made it his key to a new vision of art. The post-naturalistic artist would become again a "priest of those immortal moods which are the true builders of nations, the secret transformers of the world."[27] This proud announcement of a reborn Irish national literature, however, already contained a new challenge: How could the immortal moods account for a specific Irish soul? [45]

By the second half of the 1890's, Yeats began to struggle with the fact that his own theory [46]

26 Yeats had found the idea in William Blake, as his friend Arthur Symons comments: "By *states* Blake means very much what we mean by moods, which in common with many mystics, he conceives as permanent spiritual forces, through which what is transitory in man passes, while man imagines that they, more transitory than himself, are passing through him" [quoted in Hönninghausen (2010), p. 94 [1896]).

27 *Dublin Daily Express*, July 5, 1895, 7.

highlighted the universal, while his literary ambition was leaning towards the national. Yeats was an Anglican with little knowledge of Gaelic, was educated in London and socialized in the British literary scene. To become the Irish national author, the founder of an Irish school of literature, Yeats knew that this national literature could not be defined by language, religious identity, or even provenance. Instead, it needed to equate Irish and Celtic, with the Celtic element envisioned as rooted in the depths of the Irish mind, unaltered by accidental historical events (such as Catholicism) and modes of expression (such as the Gaelic tongue). Still, folklorists and fellow writers started asking critical questions. Leading scholars like the Scottish Andrew Lang had begun to recast the study of folklore as a study of anthropological universals and questioned the idea of national traditions. Yeats conceded that the "natural magic" found in Irish folklore "is but the ancient religion of the world" (Yeats 1903, 275 [1897]). Abandoning academic claims, however, he argued that the overall character of Irish folklore still had a unique national flair because of the specifically Celtic complexion of its moods, but that this aspect of the tradition was inaccessible to the historian.[28] In Irish Literary Society circles there were calls to address the "practical problem" of the modern Irish writer along these lines: "how to cultivate Irish moods, and to ensure their adequate expression and appreciation—how to make Irishmen think and feel as an Irishman ought naturally to think and feel."[29]

[47] The paradox of a national literature based on a universal mind and immortal moods was far too intricate to be solved by natural means, and Yeats resorted to ritual. From 1896 to 1900, he tried to build a "Celtic mystery order" as an offshoot of the Golden Dawn (Yeats 1997, 663–68; Kalogera 1977), which translated the Golden Dawn's system into a "Celtic idiom." Rooted "in the maturity of our traditions," it was meant "to fashion out of the world about us, and the things that our fathers have told us, a new ritual for the builders of peoples, the imperishable moods" (Yeats 1895c, 140). Ritually confronted with the moods they would then express ("for none but the Divine Brotherhood can tell him how men loved and sorrowed, and what things are memorable and what things are alms for oblivion," Yeats 1895c, 138), the poet-adepts of this mystery school would constitute the movement that would re-enchant Ireland. Their literature "though made by many minds, would seem the work of a single mind, and turn our places of beauty or of legendary association into holy symbols" (1955, 254).

[48] In his private correspondences from this time, we find that the theoretical and political problems Yeats was struggling with had a deeply personal side. Yeats translates the dichotomy of Celtic and universal poetry into the Golden Dawn's language of occult forces: "'Solar', according to all I learned from Mathers, meant elaborate, full of artifice, rich, all that resembles the work of a goldsmith, whereas 'water' meant 'lunar', and 'lunar' all that is simple, popular, traditional, emotional" (Yeats 1955, 371). Lunar forces carried the Celtic tradition, while the universal knowledge taught in the Golden Dawn was of solar quality. With this interpretation in place, ritual invocations became a remedy against what he perceived to be imbalances in both his work and his character.[30]

[49] As a result, the experience of being torn between the opposing influences of the sun and the moon became a leitmotif of his daily magic practice. When he caught himself composing

28 At this point in the debate, Yeats wondered if 'nationality' captured his ambition, as it evoked notions of a diverse national history which he could not consolidate with his search for timeless moods, and pondered if he should have rather chosen to focus on [the Celtic] race; e.g., see Letter to Standish James O'Grady, August 31, 1895 (1986, 472).

29 *United Ireland*, February 8, 1896, 3.

30 For contemporary takes on invocations of planetary spirits, see Otto's chapter (2023).

fiction interspersed with a “mysticism without any special birthplace” (Yeats 1997, 658) and thus too technical to be of any use in the “spiritualization of the Irish Imagination” (Yeats 1997, Ixi), he would invoke the moon to counter the solar influence (Yeats 1997, 52). Too much lunar influence, however, posed the danger of making his writing unattractive to the wider literary market. Even worse, while “the spirits of the moon,” which he often invoked before bedtime (e.g., Yeats 1997, 48), had given him some of his most important symbols for his poems in his dreams, they wore him down. Because moods were as much spirits as emotions, Yeats saw little difference between the magical production of literature and the magical management of his own mental health. When both he and his uncle Georg Pollexfen suffered from a period of “depression,” for example, ritual was the remedy: “I have found out what is wrong with us. We are attacked by lunar powers & must evoke the sun” (1997, 301). In his daily practice, Yeats’ magic of the moods connected intuitively with the emerging psychological discourse. With the individual mind reflecting the universal mind, and gods and spirits manifesting themselves in passing emotions, it became natural that magical evocations gained a therapeutic function.

Conclusion: The Psychology of the Universal Mind

[50] In his famous 1901 essay *Magic*, we find the genesis of Yeats’ psychologized understanding of magic concisely summarized:

> [51] I cannot now think symbols less than the greatest of all powers whether they are used consciously by the masters of magic, or half unconsciously by their successors, the poet, the musician and the artist. At first I tried to distinguish between symbols and symbols, between what I called inherent symbols and arbitrary symbols, but the distinction has come to mean little or nothing. Whether their power has arisen out of themselves, or whether it has an arbitrary origin, matters little, for they act, as I believe, because the great memory associates them with certain events and moods and persons. Whatever the passions of man have gathered about, becomes a symbol in the great memory, and in the hands of him who has the secret, it is a worker of wonders, a caller-up of angels or of devils. The symbols are of all kinds, for everything in heaven or earth has its association, momentous or trivial, in the great memory […]. (Yeats 1903, 64–65 [1901])

[52] The language of the essay on *Magic*, first presented in the Golden Dawn’s literary *Fellowship of the Three Kings* (Foster 1997, 245), remains the language of the literary discourse. Associations of ideas, Yeats argues, are never arbitrary, as the naturalists had claimed. Everything exists, and the magician and the poet is, willingly or unwillingly, a creator evoking moods with symbols and thus revealing them from the great memory. From the great memory, they develop their potential.

[53] In 1901, Yeats is able to reconsider both religious traditions and magical practices in light of their efficacy. Departing from his earlier neglect of Irish Catholicism, he now finds that religious traditions are culturally effective because their symbols were ‘charged’ by the moods and passions of many generations. This is a psychological theory of religion, but with a twist. Yeats hurries to add that in order for the collective imagination to reveal passions and moods, it is not necessary to “learn” about the symbols and their meaning. His famous poems, often perceived to be obscured by the dense symbolism, were not meant to be understood either,

but to be chanted and heard for their effect to unfold. As Yeats illustrates with the case of folk-magical charms, the so-called "simples," the result is not a placebo effect:

> Knowledgeable men and women in Ireland sometimes distinguish between the simples that work cures by some medical property in the herb, and those that do their work by magic. Such magical simples as the husk of the flax, water out of the fork of an elm-tree, do their work, as I think, by awaking in the depths of the mind where it mingles with the great mind, and is enlarged by the great memory, some curative energy, some hypnotic command. They are not what we call faith cures, for they have been much used and successfully, the traditions of all lands affirm, over children and over animals [...]. (Yeats 1903, 65–66 [1901]) [54]

The effect of magic and poetry is thus both psychological and transcendent. As Christopher Plaisance pointed out, a broad range of approaches marks the process of a psychologization of magic in the early twentieth century. Among the modes he identifies, Yeats' approach falls into the category of an "idealistic psychologization," "whereby the esoteric is psychologized at the same time as psychology is esotericized" when "the psychologized vista is [...] seen as a 'separate but connected' locus accessible to all by means of the application of esoteric praxis" (2015, 19–20). [55]

This mode is commonly contrasted with "reductionist" approaches, which were manifest in a wider Golden Dawn context in some of Aleister Crowley's writings (Asprem 2008; Pasi 2011).[31] However, Crowley's approach also emerges, though somewhat delayed, from a literary discourse. For example, in his 1904 introductory essay to the *Goetia*, *The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic*, Crowley refers to Herbert Spencer when he identifies magical phenomena as "dependent on brain-changes." The spirits of the *Goetia*, accordingly, become "portions of the human brain," turning the operations of ceremonial magic into "a series of minute, though of course empirical, physiological experiments" (Crowley 1995, 16, 18).[32] In a fin-de-siècle context, this view was neither particularly new nor bold. Crucially, it was not perceived to diminish the value of the ritual scripts. [56]

Spencer's "physiological" re-interpretation of Mill's associative psychology (first in 1855, increasingly popularized with subsequent editions), which declared the laws of association to be determined by the activities of the nervous system, had filled the literary world with enthusiasm. An "urge towards mysticism" swept through Europe, as the Austrian writer and 'prophet of modernity' Herman Bahr observed in 1890, deriving no longer from the heart but from the nervous system (Bahr 1891, 99). After the natural sciences had rejected spirituality, the sciences of the mind had rediscovered the supernatural in the minds of human beings. The artist's task was to explore the "psycho-physiological wheelworks" in order to chart the "uncharted territories of the human mind," as Swedish symbolist Ola Hansson phrased it (Hansson 1890, 321). Truly modern authors would write ghost stories again, but this time filled with "modern ghosts [...]: impressions from the world around us and from processes within ourselves that extend beyond the borders of normal consciousness and understanding" (Hansson 1892, 354). In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, for example, van Helsing reveals himself as "a student of the brain," just to argue that his train of associations—hypnotism is empirically [57]

31 Both emphasize that Crowley employed different psychological models, but exchanged them for a supernaturalist model in later writings. In his contribution to this issue, Bogdan shows a continued psychologization also in later works of Crowley (2023).

32 On the *Goetia*, see also Bogdan's chapter (2023).

proven, therefore thought-reading is implied, therefore astral bodies are required, therefore corporeal transformation is possible, and therefore, vampires exist—is logically valid (Stoker 1897, 178). Precisely this kind of psychologized ghost story was the genre of choice among later novelists of the Golden Dawn. Fictional occult detectives with "suitably prepared brains" (Blackwood 1909, 70), such as Algernon Blackwood's John Silence and Aleister Crowley's own Simon Iff (2012), were using psycho-physiological reasoning to study mystifying tragedies and devise magical remedies. By the end of the nineteenth century, the naturalistic "reduction" of the imagination to a feature of the brain provides the rationale for magic.

[58] In contrast to these approaches, Yeats had chosen a different kind of literature. The difference in the mode of psychologization advocated by him and Crowley, for example, reflects their different positions in the artistic scene. Yeats had been an active part of precisely the developments that paved the way for Crowley's approach, but he had rejected the auxiliary device of a "psycho-physiological wheelwork" by the early 1890s. Instead, he cultivated an understanding of poetry that would take the psychological foundations of naturalistic literature seriously but also turn them upside down. Arbitrary associations in poetry and magic could now reveal an entangled imagination that made the passions of the past a reality in the present. In his symbolism, he created a psychologized magic in which associationism became the foundation for a psychology of the universal mind.

References

Asprem, Egil. 2007. "Kabbalah Recreata: Reception and Adaption of Kabbalah in Modern Occultism." *The Pomegranate* 9 (2): 132–53.

———. 2008. "Magic Naturalized? Negotiating Science and Occult Experience in Aleister Crowley's Scientific Illuminism." *Aries* 8: 139–65.

———. 2012. *Arguing with Angels. Enochian Magic & Modern Occulture*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Bahr, Herman. 1891. *Die Überwindung des Naturalismus*. Dresden / Leipzig: E. Pierson's Verlag.

Bistricky, Steven L. 2013. "Mill and Mental Phenomena: Critical Contributions to a Science of Cognition." *Behavioral Sciences* 3: 217–31.

Blackwood, Algernon. 1909. *John Silence. Physician Extraordinary*. Boston: John W. Luce.

Bogdan, Henrik. 2023. "Ars Congressus Cum Daemone: Aleister Crowley and the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel." *Entangled Religions* 14 (3). https://doi.org/10.46586/er.14.2023.10265.

Brandes, Georg. 1873. *Hovedstrømninger i det 19de Aarhundredes Litteratur. Den Romantiske Skole i Tydskland*. Kopenhagen: Den Gyldendalske Boghandel (F. Hegel).

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. 1817. *Biographia Lieraria; or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. Vol. 1. London: Rest Fenner.

Crowley, Aleister. 1995. *The Goetia: The Lesser Key of Solomon the King. Clavicula Salomonis Regis*. Translated by Samuell Liddell Mathers. York Beach: Red Wheel Weiser.

———. 2012. *The Simon Iff Stories & Other Works*. London: Wordsworth Editions.

Dacey, Mike. 2020. "Associationism in the Philosophy of Mind." In *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. iep.utm.edu/associat/.

Denisoff, Dennis. 2013. "The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, 1888–1901." *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*. http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps.

Doody, Noreen. 2018. *The Influence of Oscar Wilde on W.B. Yeats*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Eriksen, Anne. 2016. "Entangled Genealogies." *Ethnologia Europaea* 46 (2): 91–105.

Fanger, Claire. 2008. "Mirror, Mask and Anti-Self: Forces of Literary Creation in Dion Fortune and W.B. Yeats." In *Esotericism, Art, and Imagination*, edited by Arthur Versluis, 161–82. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Faxneld, Per. 2018. "'Only Poets and Occultists Believe in Them Just Now': Fairies and the Modernist Crisis of Authorship." In *The Occult in Modernist Art, Literature, and Cinema*, edited by Tessel M. Bauduin and Henrik Johnsson, 93–110. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-76499-3_5.

Foster, R. F. 1997. *W.B. Yeats: A Life. I: The Apprentice Mage 1865–1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Garrigan Mattar, Sinéad. 2004. *Primitivism, Science, and the Irish Revival*. Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press.

Gilbert, R. A. 1986. *The Golden Dawn Companion: A Guide to the History, Structure, and Workings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn*. Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press.

———. 1997. *The Golden Dawn Scrapbook. The Rise and Fall of a Magical Order*. York Beach: Samuel Weiser.

Giolláin, Diarmuid Ó. 2000. *Locating Irish Folklore. Tradition, Modernity, Identity*. Cork: Cork University Press.

Glassie, Henry. 1995. "Tradition." *The Journal of American Folklore* 108 (430): 395–412.

Graf, Susan Johnston. 2015. *Talking to the Gods. Occultism in the Works of W.B. Yeats, Arthur Machen, Algernon Blackwood, and Dion Fortune*. Albany: SUNY Press.

Gripentrog, Stephanie. 2016. *Anormalitet und Religion. Zur Entstehung der Psychologie im Kontext der Europäischen Religionsgeschichte des 19. Und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts*. Würzburg: Ergon.

Hall, Manly P. 1928. *The Secret Teachings of All Ages. An Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy*. San Francisco: H.S. Crocker.

Hanegraaff, Wouter J. 2003. "How Magic Survived the Disenchantment of the World." *Religion* 33: 357–80.

———. 2013. *Western Esotericism. A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Bloomsbury.

Hansson, Ola. 1890. "Literære Produktionsmaader." *Samtiden. Populært tidsskrift for litteratur og samfundsspørgsmaal* 1: 314–20.

———. 1892. "Causerier i mystik." *Samtiden. Populært tidsskrift for litteratur og samfundsspørgsmaal* 3: 352–60.

Harper, George Mills. 1974. *Yeats's Golden Dawn. The Influence of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn on the Life and Art of W.B. Yeats*. Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press.

Hollis, James R. 2005. "Convergent Patterns in Yeats and Jung." *Psychological Perspectives* 48 (2): 288–97.

Horton, William Thomas, and W. B. Yeats. 1898. *A Book of Images*. London: The Unicorn Press.

Howe, Ellic. 1978. *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn. A Documentary History of a Magical Order, 1887–1923*. York Beach: Samuel Weiser.

Hönninghausen, Lothar. 2010. *The Symbolist Tradition in English Literature: A Study of Pre-Raphaelitism and Fin de Siècle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johannsen, Dirk. 2016. "On Elves and Freethinkers. Criticism of Religion and the Emergence of the Literary Fantastic in Nordic Literature." *Religion* 46 (4): 591–610.

———. 2021. “The Emergence of Fictional Practice in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn: W.B. Yeats’ Talismanic Poetry.” In *Fictional Practice. Magic, Storytelling, and the Power of the Imagination*, edited by Bernd-Christian Otto and Dirk Johannsen, 174–201. Leiden: Brill.

Kalogera, Lucy Shepard. 1977. “Yeats’s Celtic Mysteries.” PhD diss, Florida State University.

King, Francis. 1997. *Ritual Magic of the Golden Dawn. Works by S.L. MacGregor Mathers and Others*. Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books.

Lévi, Eliphas. 2001. *The History of Magic*. Translated by A. E. Waite. Boston: Weiser.

Lilly, William. 1882. *William Lilly’s History of His Life and Times, from the Year 1602 to 1681*. London: Charles Baldwyn.

Mill, James. (1829) 1878. *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*. Vol. 1. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer.

Mill, John Stuart. (1843) 1874. *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Moe, Moltke. 1926. “Det mytiske tankesæt. Efter forelæsninger fra 1888.” In *Moltke Moes samlede skrifter*, edited by Knut Liestøl, 2:265–83. Oslo: Aschehoug.

Nias, Hilary. 1999. *The Artificial Self. The Psychology of Hippolyte Taine*. London: Routledge.

Noyes, Dorothy. 2009. “Three Traditions.” *Journal of Folklore Research* 46 (3): 233–68.

Otto, Bernd-Christian. 2016. “Historicising ‘Western Learned Magic’.” *Aries* 16 (2): 161–240.

———. 2023. “Conjuring Planetary Spirits in the Twenty-First Century: Textual-Ritual Entanglements in Contemporary ‘Magic(k)’.” *Entangled Religions* 14 (3). https://doi.org/10.46586/er.14.2023.10299.

Otto, Bernd-Christian, and Dirk Johannsen. 2021. “Fictional Practice from Antiquity to Today.” In *Fictional Practice. Magic, Storytelling, and the Power of the Imagination*, edited by Bernd-Christian Otto and Dirk Johannsen, 334–66. Leiden: Brill.

Owen, Alex. 2004. *The Place of Enchantment. British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Pasi, Marco. 2011. “Varieties of Magical Experience: Aleister Crowley’s Views on Occult Practice.” *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 6 (2): 123–62.

Plaisance, Christopher A. 2015. “Israel Regardie and the Psychologization of Esoteric Discourse.” *Correspondences* 3: 5–54.

Spencer, Herbert. 1855. *The Principles of Psychology*. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer.

Stoker, Bram. 1897. *Dracula*. New York: Doubleday & Company.

Surette, Leon. 1993. *The Birth of Modernism. Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats, and the Occult*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Symons, Arthur. 1897. *London Nights*. 2nd ed. London: Leonard Smithers.

Taine, Hippolyte. 1871. *On Intelligence*. London: L. Reeve and Co.

Vos, Jan de. 2014. “Psychologization.” In *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*, edited by Thomas Teo, 1547–51. New York: Springer.

Westcott, W. Wynn. 1976. *The Isiac Tablet or the Bembine Table of Isis*. Introductory Preface by Manly P. Hall. Los Angeles: Philosophical Research Society.

Wilde, Oscar. 1891. *Intentions*. Leipzig: Heinemann and Belestier.

Yeats, W. B. 1892. “Invoking the Irish Fairies.” *The Irish Theosophist* 1 (6): 6–7.

———. 1893. “A Literary Causerie: The Message of the Folk-Lorist.” *The Speaker*, 188–9.

———. 1894. *The Celtic Twilight. Men and Women, Dhouls and Faeries*. 2nd ed. New York / London: Macmillan.

———. 1895a. *A Book of Irish Verse. Selected from Modern Writers with an Introduction and Notes*. London: Methuen.

———. 1895b. “Irish National Literature II.” *The Bookman*, 167–70.

———. 1895c. “Irish National Literature II.” *The Bookman*, 138–40.

———. 1896. “Rosa Alchemica.” Edited by Arthur Symons. *The Savoy. An Illustrated Quarterly* 2 (2, April): 56–78.

———. 1903. *Ideas of Good and Evil*. London: A.H. Bullen.

———. 1955. *Autobiographies*. London: Macmillan.

———. 1970. *Uncollected Prose 1. First Reviews and Articles 1886–1896*. Edited by John P. Frayne. London: Macmillan.

———. 1972. *Memoirs. Autobiography – First Draft. Journal*. Edited by Denis Doneghue. London: Macmillan.

———. 1986. *The Collected Letters of W.B. Yeats. Volume One: 1865–1895*. Edited by John Kelly and Eric Domwille. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

———. 1992. *The Secret Rose, Stories by W.B. Yeats: A Variorum Edition*. Edited by Warwick Gould, Phillip L. Marcus, and Michael J. Sidnell. Second revised and enlarged edition. London: Macmillan.

———. 1997. *The Collected Letters of W.B. Yeats. Volume Two: 1896–1900*. Edited by Warwick Gould and Deidre Toomey. Oxford: Clarendon Press.