

# *A Vision:* *Key to Yeats as Alchemical Poet and Magician*

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Conflicts and oppositions in Yeats' life and chart were healed and regarded in a new light through his experience with the channeled material he received and recorded in *A Vision*. This was the culmination of an alchemical process of soul work. His training as astrologer and occult philosopher allowed him to be able to read the messages of the spirits and the reception coincided with astrological indicators. His physical marriage with Georgie Hyde-Lees provided the necessary cauldron for the alchemical work to take place.

Where got I that truth?  
Out of a medium's mouth,  
Out of nothing it came,  
Out of the forest loam,  
Out of dark night where lay  
The crowns of Ninevah. 1

## ***A Vision Arrives as a Wedding Present***

Yeats was 52 years old, a well-established poet and playwright, when he married 25 year old Georgie Hyde-Lees in 1917. "...four days after my marriage, my wife surprised me by attempting automatic writing. What came in disjointed sentences in almost illegible writing, was so exciting, sometimes so profound, that I...offered to spend what remained of [my] life explaining and piecing together those scattered sentences. 'No,' was the answer from the spirits, 'we have come to give you *metaphors for poetry.*'"<sup>2</sup> (my italics).

In 1925 the Anglo-Irish poet William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) published his first edition of *A Vision*. The images and metaphors from this book can be found throughout his later poetry, some of his strongest work. This article is an attempt to show how the astrology of Yeats' natal chart and the transits during the reception of the book illustrate the importance of what he found in *A Vision*, and how it provided integration of his life as poet, as magician and as political activist.

## ***Astrologer and Student of Magic***

Yeats, who many believe to be the greatest poet in the English language of the twentieth century, was a well-trained astrologer and occultist. He gave his magical education full credit as source and inspiration for his poetry. In 1925 he wrote to his friend and fellow poet, Thomas Sturge-Moore: "If I had not made magic my constant study I could not have written a single line...The mystical life is the centre of all that I do and all that I think and all that I write."<sup>3</sup>

Yeats' rationalist father directed his early education. In reaction, Yeats turned to the Irish countryside and people for the imaginative and spiritual sustenance he lacked. Much of Yeats' early work as poet and playwright has to do with rediscovering the Celtic tradition of his native Ireland, and to the magical practices, which remained a part of that culture. We know Yeats was instrumental in transforming Irish theater, but his dedicated participation in the occult revival, which took place during this same period, remains in the shadows.

Yeats enrolled in the School of Art, Dublin when he was eighteen, and during that same period became involved in his occult studies. Throughout his lifetime, Yeats kept notebooks full of astrological charts. Many of the charts were horaries for Tarot readings. He may have begun his astrological studies as a student of theosophy when he was eighteen. Yeats left the Theosophical Society in 1890, soon after he became a member of the Hermetic Society of the Golden Dawn at age twenty-five. He moved quickly through the ranks of initiations of the Golden Dawn, and two years after he joined he became 'Instructor in Mystical Philosophy' for the Order.

### **Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn**

The Golden Dawn was founded in London in 1888 with the specific intention to train people in the Western Magical tradition. Rituals were modeled on the sacred rites of Egypt and Greece, and attempted to connect the participants to specific spiritual entities. Astrology was part of the Golden Dawn training, as were Kabbalah and Tarot. The Rider-Waite Tarot deck developed from their work with archetypes and divination and continues to be the most commonly used deck in the English-speaking world.

This group is particularly significant to students of the occult when we consider that, perhaps for the first time since Christianity had separated them, men and women came together as equals in magical ceremonies. Alchemy was once more seen as a mystical process reflected in the mixture of male and female energies rather than a foolish experiment in chemical transformation. Yeats dedicated the first edition of *A Vision* to Moina Mathers, a mystical artist, a founding member of the Golden Dawn, and sister to the philosopher Henri Bergson. He wrote in his dedication:

“Perhaps this book has been written because a number of young men and women, you and I among the number, met nearly forty years ago in London and in Paris to discuss mystical philosophy.”<sup>4</sup>

The Golden Dawn attracted artistic, literary and political revolutionaries of the time. Members included Maud Gonne, the 'Joan of Arc' of Irish independence, the avant-garde actress Florence Farr and the magician Aleister Crowley, later ousted from the group. Many members, like Yeats, were involved in the creation of new theatrical forms, and the magical work they pursued in The Golden Dawn was both enriched by their talent and provided inspiration to their artistry.

*A Vision* allowed Yeats to experiment with the process of alchemy, which he had studied earlier, but had never fully embraced. In 1896 Yeats wrote *Rosa Alchemica*, where he explored the dynamics of alchemy in the form of a short story.

“I had discovered, early in my researches, that their (the alchemists) doctrine was no merely chemical phantasy, but a philosophy they applied to the world, to the elements and to man himself; and that they sought to fashion gold out of common metals merely as part of an universal transmutation of all things into some divine and imperishable substance; and this enabled me to make my little book a fanciful reverie over the transmutation of life into art, and a cry of measureless desire for a world made wholly of essences. I understood the alchemical doctrine, that all beings, divided from the great

deep where spirits wander, one and yet a multitude, are weary; and sympathized, in the pride of my connoisseurship, with the consuming thirst for destruction which made the alchemist veil under his symbols of lions and dragons, of eagles and ravens, of dew and of nitre, a search for an essence which would dissolve all mortal things.” 5

This was the young Yeats who admired the power of destruction in the alchemical process. But clearly he was not yet ready to connect himself to the spirits of the ‘great deep,’ nor did he believe he could transmute the lead of the material world into the gold of a yearned for spiritual existence. It was not until his marriage and reception of *A Vision*, when transiting Saturn (lead) in the company of Neptune (dew) was in conjunction with his progressed Sun (Gold) that he found the process, which, for him had the transformational power of alchemy. Through the process of receiving and transforming the spirit material his wife channeled, Yeats became the alchemist. At last he understood and accepted himself as both human and sublime.

### **The Theme of Opposites**

In the Western Magical tradition, and most clearly delineated in alchemy, there is always the task to acknowledge and then integrate polarity, and to distill purification from the heat of suffering. As a member of the Golden Dawn he would have had to grasp the unity of opposition over and over. Yeats’ magical name, *Demon Est Deus Inversus* (the Devil is God inverted) underlines that passion for opposition.

In identifying his own natural appetite for opposition Yeats says,

“...my mind had been full of Blake from boyhood up and I saw the world as a conflict...and could distinguish between a contrary and negation. ‘Contraries are positive,’ wrote Blake, ‘a negation is not a contrary... there is a place at the bottom of the grave where contraries are equally true’”6

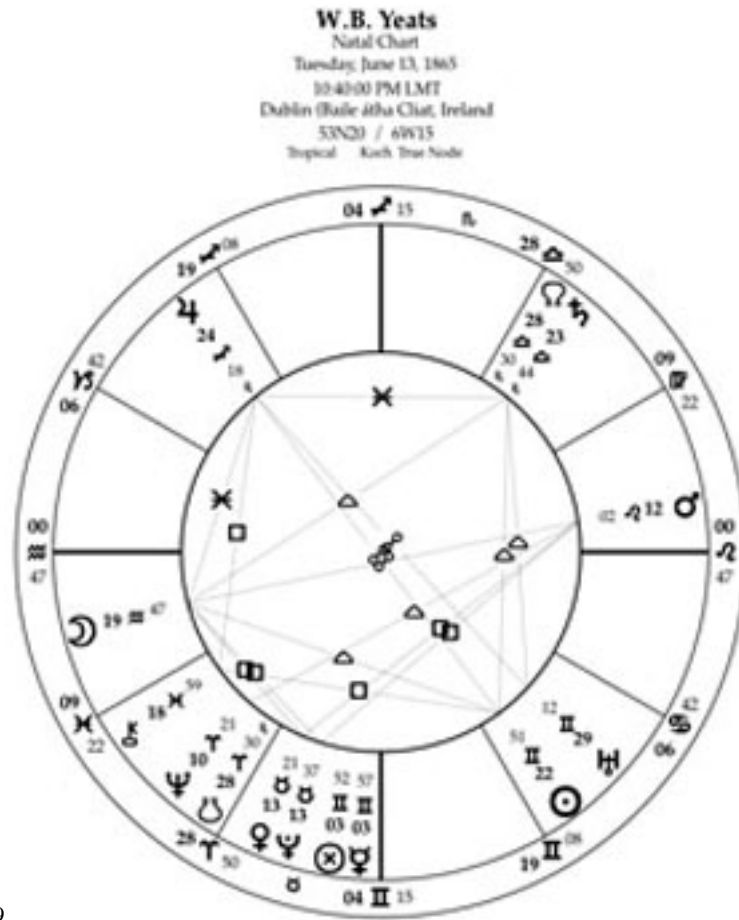
The spirit messages drove Yeats to delve into history and biography for evidence of parallels to the cycles as they were revealed.

“My initiation into the ‘Hermetic Students’ had filled my head with Cabbalistic images, but there was nothing in Blake, Swedenborg, Boehme or the Cabbala to help me now...”7 Turning to history and biography Yeats “read with an excitement I had not known since I was a boy...and made continual discoveries... if my mind returned too soon to their unmixed abstraction they would say, ‘we are starved.’”8.

For the same reason the spirits asked Yeats

“not to read philosophy until their exposition was complete, and this increased my difficulties. Apart from two or three of the principal Platonic Dialogues I knew no philosophy. Arguments

with my father, had destroyed my confidence and driven me from speculation to the direct



experience of the Mystics.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Astrology of Yeats' Natal Chart**

The necessity to reconcile opposition is clearly delineated in Yeats' birth chart. His Sun is conjunct Uranus in the sign of Gemini, the twins, the sign most associated with duality. Opposite this brilliant but rationalist combination, is his Jupiter, powerful in the sign of Sagittarius. Jupiter in Sagittarius in the 11th house seems right for the political side of Yeats, He was born into the ruling class, the landlord English presence, yet he was a staunch Irish Republican and Celtic revivalist. Here was another painful contradiction which was transformed over time. He felt in his early life that he was neither English nor Irish, yet, he was active in support of the Irish revolution for freedom, and became a member of the Irish parliament once the new government was formed.

Jupiter in Sagittarius in the 11th house is also symbolic of his role as ritualist and hierophant in the Golden Dawn. North Node conjunct Saturn in Libra makes a sextile to this Jupiter from the cusp of the Ninth House. Yeats struggled to incorporate all these threads of his life into the rich tapestry of his life.

What Then?

His chosen comrades thought at school  
He must grow a famous man;

He thought the same and lived by rule,  
All twenties crammed with toil;  
*'What then?' sang Plato's ghost? 'What then?'*

Everything he wrote was read,  
After certain years he won  
Sufficient money for his need,  
Friends that have been friends indeed;  
*What then sang Plato's ghost, 'What then?'*

All his happier dreams came true—  
A small old house, wife, daughter, son,  
Grounds where plum and cabbage grew,  
Poets and Wits about him drew;  
*'What then? sang Plato's ghost, 'What then?'*

*'The work is done,' grown old he thought,  
According to my boyish plan;  
Let the fools rage, I swerved in naught,  
Something to perfection brought';  
But louder sang that ghost, "What then?"*<sup>10</sup>

Yeats' powerful Gemini Mercury stands upon the IC perhaps to symbolize the literary and intellectual nature of the Anglo-Irish culture into which he was born. He tried to overcome his intellectual nature in order to excel as poet and magician. He desperately wanted to connect to the world of spirit through direct experience. Yet when he did make contact with spirits through his wife's reception of *A Vision*, his Gemini Mercury and Sun-Uranus combination would come into its own. For the first time in his life he willingly delved into scholarship to discover the historical and cultural manifestations of the Moon's cycle, which was revealed to him through the channeled material.

Yeats' ascendant and Moon in Aquarius in his first house might be an indicator of the importance of astrology in his life. Mars opposes Moon in the 7<sup>th</sup> house in the sign of Leo. This fiery Mars balanced his airy Ascendant, Moon and Sun with the passion for action which they lacked. The Moon trines Saturn in Libra and the Sun in Gemini to form a grand trine in air. This pattern can often be found in the chart of people who enjoy intellectual stimulation, but don't make use of their talents.

Other than Chiron, there are no planets or angles with water signs. It's strange that a poet so identified with emotional imagery should lack this element. Perhaps the deep feeling, and certainly the intense love of the Irish countryside is symbolized by his Pluto and Venus conjunction in Taurus. As a Druid and astrologer, I have drawn up the horoscopes of many people who reverence the earth as sacred and beloved, and have often noticed the prominence of Taurus in their charts.

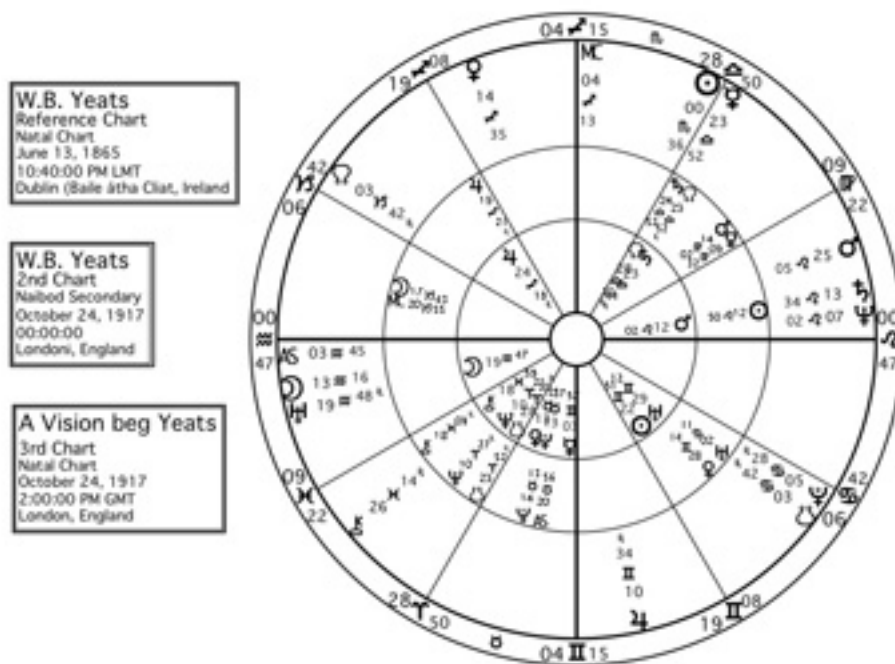
Neptune in Yeats' chart makes a trine to his 7th house Mars. His most famous lines are an illustration of that trine:

## The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.<sup>11</sup>

At the time of Yeats' birth, Neptune and Saturn were approaching an opposition, which we are experiencing in 2006-2007. At the time of his wedding and the reception of *A Vision*, Saturn and Neptune had just completed a conjunction in the 7th house. Form (Saturn) and spirit (Neptune) had come together to show him the true nature of opposition.

It seems significant that Yeats' life long desire to channel (Neptune) spirit information came directed to him, through his wife (seventh house).



### Astrology of the Arrival of *A Vision*

Four days after their marriage Georgie Yeats, who was also a member of the Golden Dawn and an astrologer, began to channel the messages, which became *A Vision*. Progressed Mercury and Mars had just entered Yeats' eighth house of transformation. Transiting Mercury was exactly conjunct his natal Saturn on that day. Saturn in his chart is conjunct his North Node in Libra. In order to cook in the cauldron of alchemy, Yeats had to except this responsibility of marriage, and with it the process of turning the base metal of everyday human life into the gold he so yearned for in his spiritual quest.

The Moon was in Aquarius on the day of the first spirit messages, and during the afternoon was conjunct his natal Aquarius Moon. In close proximity to the Moon, transiting Uranus was also making an exact conjunction to his first house natal Moon. This seems quite right for the beginning of an unusual work about the Moon's cycles! The Moon magic continued with the approaching opposition during the reception of the spirit information, between his progressed Sun, in Leo, and his natal Moon. A bit later his progressed Moon would conjunct that powerful Moon in Aquarius and then be in the Full Moon position to his progressed Sun. Sol and Luna were in a cosmic alchemical dance.

Yet looked at overall, the book, the way it was received, and the basic principles and themes, are Mercury and Neptune territory. Here again we find the basic dichotomy of *A Vision*: objective-subjective. Neptune is about vision (subjective), yet this experience sent Yeats into an intellectual foray (objective) that would seem Mercurial. Contemplating the Moon in this Mercurial way, Yeats reclaimed his delight in scholarship and philosophy.

### **Astrology of Yeats' Marriage**

Yeats, as astrologer expected to marry while his progressed Sun in Leo was conjunct his natal Mars in the seventh house. At the same time, transiting Saturn had also entered the 7th house and passed over his Mars. And if that were not enough cosmic prompting, Yeats' last progressed new Moon, which occurred in 1904 had taken place at 29° Cancer, 1 degree from his 00° Leo Descendant, the cusp of the 7<sup>th</sup> house. The manifestation (progressed Full Moon) of that important new cycle would take place in 1919 within a few degrees of Yeats' natal Moon.

As he saw marriage in his chart, Yeats once again proposed to his beloved Maud Gonne, and when that proposal was rejected, proposed to her daughter, Iseult. With that also denied him he proposed to twenty five year old Georgie Hyde-Lees. They were married two weeks later. Yeats used his Leo Mars in the seventh to quickly enter this new phase of his life. Uranus was in exact conjunction by transit with Yeats' Aquarian Moon in the first house at the time of the wedding. Here was a sign of deep change of feeling, even identity. And with his Moon in aspect to so many planets in his natal chart, this would reverberate throughout. Yeats had spent 28 years, an entire Saturn cycle, in love with Maud Gonne. Her refusal to marry him in the physical world—they claimed to have a spiritual marriage—provided Yeats with the emotional suffering necessary for the alchemical breakdown process to take place.

Georgie had been in love with Yeats from her childhood. Yeats discovered that his young wife could provide him excitement from a source he had never expected. A new life as husband and father began for him. Combined with the information he was receiving from the spirits, Georgie's channeling may have provided the intensity (Pluto is conjunct Venus in Yeats' natal chart) he needed to make his marriage romantically exciting for him.

The Saturn-Neptune conjunction with Yeats' progressed Sun and natal Mars all took place in the 7th house of marriage and in the sign of Leo (one of the main symbols of alchemy). The chart for the wedding day does not suggest a cozy domestic partnership, rather a relationship with sudden and electrifying communications from mysterious sources. The spirit communication allowed Yeats to enter a transformational relationship with a woman grounded in the earth of daily life.

## Gratitude to the Unknown Instructors

*What they undertook to do  
They brought to pass;  
All things hang like a drop of dew  
Upon a blade of grass.*<sup>12</sup>

*A Vision* must be read in a kind of twilight state of understanding. Yeats, in his prologue to this multi-layered description of the Moon's cycle wrote:

"Some of those readers I most value ...will be repelled by what must seem an arbitrary, harsh, difficult symbolism. Yet such has almost always accompanied expression that unites the sleeping and waking mind." <sup>13</sup>

The system presented uses the Moon's cycle for the model of the soul's evolution, and a lunar rather than linear explanation of historical periods. All phases of the cycle must be experienced and reconciled through the acceptance of wholeness.

"Sing me the changes of the moon once more:  
True song, though speech: 'mine author sung it me' <sup>14</sup>

Sing out the song: sing to the end, and sing  
The strange reward of all that discipline."<sup>15</sup>

The spirits insisted that Yeats verify the proof of their assertions in history and biography. Yeats' gives this description:

"It was part of their purpose to affirm that all of the gains of man come from conflict with the opposite of his true being."<sup>16</sup>

Yeats had attracted the notice of the spirit informants when he published *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*.

"I had made a distinction between the perfection that is from a man's combat with himself and that which is from a combat with circumstance..." <sup>17</sup> Upon this distinction the spirits built "an elaborate classification of men according to their more or less complete expression of one type or the other."<sup>18</sup>

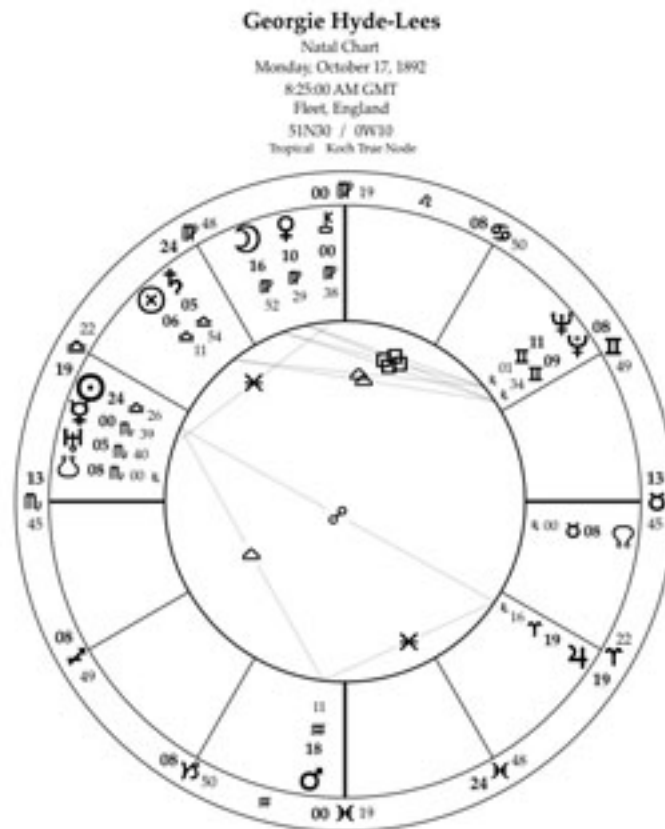
*A Vision* describes the cycle of the Moon as a double gyre, in which spheres of opposites spiral in on one another creating a diamond pattern in the center where they commingle. Yeats mentions

"Alcemon, a pupil of Pythagoras, who thought that men die because they cannot join their beginning and their end. Their serpent has not its tail in its mouth." <sup>19</sup>

This theme of working with opposites is a necessary step for the initiate in the Western Magical tradition. C.G. Jung describes this process in his work on alchemy, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. "...in the image of the uroboros (the serpent or dragon swallowing its own tail) lies the thought of devouring oneself and turning oneself into a circulatory process. The uroboros is a dramatic symbol for the integration and assimilation of the opposite, i.e., of the shadow...it is said of the uroboros that he slays himself and brings himself to life, fertilizes himself and gives birth to himself." <sup>20</sup>

## Spirit Communication

During the ten years of spirit communication, methods and signals of the messengers changed often. Georgie very soon tired of the automatic writing and Yeats took over as scribe, while she spoke the words in trance or sleep. It should be noted that in the first edition no mention is made of her participation. She had not wanted her part as channel to be revealed. Perhaps this can be explained by her conjunction of Pluto and Neptune in Gemini. The ability to channel spirit communication (Neptune in Gemini) may have been a Plutonic secret. Or we can look to her Mercury conjunct Uranus (unusual communication) in Scorpio as the reason for reticence. Then there is the issue of the conjunction between Yeats' Libra Saturn and her Libra Sun. Perhaps he did not want her to shine, or she felt that way.



The spirits announced their presence in a multitude of ways, and Yeats and his wife were treated to a variety of spirit phenomena. There was whistling as a warning to Yeats that the communication through his sleeping wife would begin. When servants complained of a 'whistling ghost' the technique was abandoned, but sudden smells were a continuing signal. Floral odors, roses and violets and the smell of incense were the most common, but sometimes a foul smell like cat's excrement would arise. Flashing lights, cracking sounds and breaths of warm air were also signals of their presence.

The spirit sources were highly fallible, and often mistook conversational comments between Yeats and his wife. For example, they were in a restaurant on one occasion, talking about a garden. The spirits misunderstood and decided that they were alone in a garden and began to communicate with Georgie, much to her distress.

There were also interruptions in the presentation of the material by hostile spirits who were called the 'Frustrators.' They would occasionally take over the dictation and throw the whole system into confusion before their plot was discovered. Yeats was forbidden to speak "of any part of the system, except of the incarnations ...because if I did the people I talked to would talk to other people, and the communicators would mistake that misunderstanding for their own thought." 21

For a man who was extremely sociable with a wide circle of literary and magical friends, it must have been quite a challenge to keep this fascinating project largely secret.

### **What the Book Contains**

*A Vision* begins with a long poem called *The Phases of the Moon*. The introduction to the book tells the story of the reception of *A Vision*, and how deeply it affected the poet's intellectual and artistic life. It then goes into a description, based on the symbol of a double cone or vortex, explaining the cycles of history and art, as well as the soul's journey.

"Twenty and eight the phases of the moon,  
The full and the moon's dark and all the crescents" 22

Finding the cone symbol difficult, Yeats turned to the Great Wheel and the Moon's cycle as he continued to revise the book. "I described the Great Wheel as danced on the desert sands by mysterious dancers who left the traces of their feet to puzzle the Caliph of Baghdad. This wheel is every completed moment of thought or life, twenty-eight incarnations, a single incarnation, a single judgment or act of thought. Man seeks his opposite or the opposite of his condition, attains his object so far as it attainable, at Phase 15 (Full Moon) and returns to Phase 1 (New Moon) again...Phase 15 is called Sun in Moon because the solar or primary tincture is consumed by the lunar....all is beauty." 23

"The thirteenth moon but sets the soul at war  
In its own being, and when that war's begun  
There is no muscle in the arm; and after,  
Under the frenzy of the fourteenth moon,  
The soul begins to tremble into stillness,  
To die into the labyrinth of itself!" 24

The twenty-eight phase lunar system becomes a structure on which Yeats categorizes the men and women he knew around him and those of the past he had chosen to study. Like Dante before him he seizes the opportunity to place his friends and enemies where they belong in a great system. Even though Yeats was an astrologer, he did not look to the relationship of the Sun and Moon in the charts of those he listed for each phase. Instead he developed a system of twenty-eight archetypes characterized by four faculties which he calls Will, Mask, Creative Mind and Body of Fate.

Here is an example of his descriptions taken from Phase 6.

“Had Walt Whitman lived out of phase, desire to prove that all his emotions were healthy and intelligible, to set his practical sanity above all not made in his fashion, to cry “Thirty years old and in perfect health!” would have turned him into some kind of jibing demagogue; and to think of him would be to remember that Thoreau, picking up the jaw-bone of a pig with no tooth missing, recorded that there also was perfect health. [Whitman] used his Body of Fate (his interest in crowds, casual loves and affections, and all summary human experience) to clear intellect of antithetical emotion...Abstraction had been born, but it remained the abstraction of community....” 25

The next sections of *A Vision* (Books II, III and IV) take the Great Wheel analogy beyond the description of personality to the larger cycles of history. Yeats explains the cycle can also be divided between the influence of Mars and Venus in the signs Aries and Taurus to the influence of Saturn and Jupiter in the signs of Aquarius and Pisces.

“These two conjunctions which express so many things are certainly, upon occasion, the outward-looking mind, love and its lure, contrasted with introspective knowledge of the mind’s self-begotten unity, an intellectual excitement.” 26

Here we have the description of Yeats’ two inspirational forces in his poetry: his passion for Maud Gonne (Mars/Venus) which ruled the first half of his adult life, and the material he received through Georgie for *A Vision* which began with his marriage in middle age (Jupiter/Saturn).

Yeats used the lunar cycle to explain the soul’s journey between lives. Here is a sample of the poet’s explanation of this delicate subject in which the soul struggles to remember what it learns from one incarnation to the next:

“I remember a beautiful young girl singing at the edge of the sea in Normandy words and music of her own composition....sang with lifted head of the civilisations that there had come and gone, ending every verse with the cry: ‘O Lord, let something remain.’”27

Book IV is called *The Great Year of the Ancients* and is based upon the complete cycle of two thousand year periods for each sign of the zodiac. The Great Year begins and ends with the precession of the equinox from the sign of Aries as the Vernal Equinox. Yeats called his last segment *Dove or Swan*, and, attempts to trace civilizations through the cycle of the last four thousand years, the Christian era and the two thousand year cycle that went before. He introduces this section of *A Vision* with his poem, *Leda*. Many of Yeats’ poems of this period contain his contrast between Pagan and Christian thought and imagery.

#### Leda

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still  
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed  
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,  
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push  
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs,

And how can body, laid in that white rush,  
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies

A shudder in the loins engenders there  
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower  
And Agamemnon dead.

Being so caught up,  
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,  
Did she put on his knowledge with his power  
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop? 28

### **Impact Upon the Poet**

Yeats received *A Vision* as he entered the waning phase of his life. The material he received allowed him to integrate his life as poet, magician, husband, father and public servant of the newly independent Ireland.

And after that the crumbling of the moon:  
The soul remembering its loneliness  
Shudders in many cradles; all is changed.  
It would be the world's servant, and as it serves,  
Choosing whatever task's most difficult  
Among the tasks not impossible, it takes  
Upon the body and upon the soul  
The coarseness of the drudge.  
Before the full  
It sought itself and afterwards the world. 29

Despite bouts with serious illness, this was a time of tremendous vitality and productive fervor for Yeats. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1923, continued his relationship with the disintegrating Golden Dawn, became a senator of the Irish Free State, and traveled widely. He published four books of poetry while receiving the spirit material: *The Wild Swans at Coole*, *Michael Robartes and the Dancer*, *The Tower* and *The Winding Stair*. The poet revised *A Vision* throughout his lifetime. Each edition contains changes in his beliefs about the material.

When I first read *A Vision*, I was often frustrated in my attempts to 'understand' it, yet the book opened Yeats' poetry to me as if a key had turned in a locked door. Upon reading *A Vision*, I was drawn to these same magical sources, including astrology, Tarot and Druidry. As astrologers, we have the opportunity to experience and appreciate first hand the rich symbolism which inspired Yeats as a writer.

A decade after the messages began, Lady Gregory, co-founder of the Irish Literary Review and Abbey Theatre said to Yeats: "You are a much better educated man than you were ten years ago and much more powerful in argument."<sup>30</sup> Yeats replied: "And I put *The Tower* and *The Winding Stair* into evidence to show that my poetry has gained in self-possession and power. I owe this

change to an incredible experience.“<sup>31</sup> This ‘incredible experience’ was the reception and creation of *A Vision* and the alchemical transformation which took place in Yeats’ life.

## END NOTES

- 1 Collected Poems, p. 211
- 2 *A Vision*, p. 8
- 3 *Celtic Twilight*, preface
- 4 *A Vision*, 1925 dedication
- 5 *Rosa Alchemica*, PART 1
- 6 *A Vision*, p. 72
- 7 *A Vision* p. 12
- 8 *A Vision* p. 12
- 9 *A Vision* p. 12
- 10 Collected Poems, p. 300
- 11 Collected Poems, p. 184
- 12 Collected Poems p. 249
- 13 *A Vision* p. 23
- 14 *A Vision*, p. 66
- 15 *A Vision* p. 61
- 16 *A Vision* p. 13
- 17 *A Vision* p. 8
- 18 *A Vision* p. 8-9
- 19 *A Vision*, p.13
- 20 *A Vision*, p. 60
- 21 *A Vision* p. 80-83
- 22 *A Vision*, p. 60
- 23 *A Vision* p. 113-114
- 24 *A Vision* p. 207
- 25 *A Vision* p. 220
- 26 *A Vision* p. 267
- 27 *A Vision*. p. 8
- 28 *A Vision* p. 8
- 29 *A Vision* p. 5

## Chart Data and Sources

### William Butler Yeats

June 13, 1865 10:40 PM LMT 23:05 GMT Dublin, Ireland 53 N 20 6W15,

Rodden Rating: AA, from Yeats’ family Bible.

Source: Quoted in Mary Greer’s *Women of the Golden Dawn*, 1995, Park Street Press. Rochester, VT.

### Georgie Hyde-Lee Yeats

October 16, 1892 8:25 am, Fleet England 51N30 0W10 source:

<http://www.yeatsvision.com/Charts.html>

This was the data for the chart which Georgie used for herself according to her biographer,

Anne Saddlemeyer, *Becoming George: The Life of Mrs W. B. Yeats* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

### **Reception of the spirit messages**

October 24, 1917 London. (I chose 2:00 PM for the time.)

Rodden Rating: A, from memory

Source: Yeats' introduction to *A Vision* in he which says: "On the afternoon of October 24th 1917, *four days after my marriage...*"

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### **BIOGRAHY**

Sarah Fuhro combines her training as an astrology counselor and flower essence practitioner in a healing practice she calls Star-Flower Alchemy. She is a Druid member of the international Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, and participates in the training of Druids. Her love of Yeats' poetry and *A Vision* led her to a Golden Dawn study group in 1976 where she began her exploration of Tarot, astrology and the Western magical tradition. She has a deep commitment to help her clients to hear the messages of the natural world through astrology and flower essences. Sarah can be reached at 508 652 9881. sarahbeagl@aol.com or <http://www.StarFlowerAlchemy.com>.