

THE PRE-RAPHAELITE LEGACY IN MODERNISM

By

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the Pre-Raphaelite legacy in modernism. It focuses on the works of three modernist writers and artists: W. B. Yeats, D. H. Lawrence and David Jones. The work of Yeats, Lawrence and Jones, as writers and artists, demonstrates key intersections between modernism and their Pre-Raphaelite precursors. Whilst preceding scholarship acknowledges the influence of single figures associated with Pre-Raphaelitism on individual modernist writers, I propose in this thesis that the sustained focus on the Pre-Raphaelite legacy for modernism reveals a rich intertextual connection which has not yet been fully appreciated or expected. This thesis traces biographical and critical interactions between Yeats, Lawrence and Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, foregrounding lesser-known elements of these associations, revealing an influence which persisted throughout their lives. After establishing Yeats's connections to the Pre-Raphaelite movement at large, the first chapter examines Yeats's enduring engagement with William Morris's ideas across his poetry, drama, critical writings and radio broadcasts. The second chapter evaluates Lawrence's use of Pre-Raphaelite paintings and figures in the context of women's emancipation in his fiction and his poetry. The last chapter explores Jones's engagement with the Pre-Raphaelites through the affiliations between their aesthetic and religious views on art and their shared Arthurianism.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandad

John Devlin

(1919-2011)

who passed away during my first year at university.
He always told me to pursue my education as far as I could.

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Contents

Introduction	1
1. 'Our more Profound Pre-Raphaelitism': William Morris and W. B. Yeats	47
Yeats's relationship with Morris	60
Nationhood, Community and Tradition	66
The Abbey Theatre and Morris's Prose Romances	95
The establishment of the Abbey Theatre	95
Morris's Prose Romances	102
Retrospective Yeats	125
2. D. H. Lawrence, Pre-Raphaelite art, and the 'Pre-Raphaelite Woman'	137
Pre-Raphaelite Formations	145
Pre-Raphaelite paintings and Motifs of Femininity	161
Ladies of Shalott	186
The Myth of Persephone	204
3. David Jones, Pre-Raphaelite	231
Jones, Pre-Raphaelitism and Aesthetic theories	245
Arts and Crafts	245
Sacramentalism	250
The Pre-Raphaelites, Jones and Arthurian Legend	279
The Holy Grail	292
Arthur in Avalon or The Sleeping Lord	305
Conclusion	319

List of Illustrations

I.1 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>Helen of Troy</i> (1863) Kunsthalle Hamburg, Germany	14
I.2. W. B. Yeats, <i>Head of a Boy</i> (1887), National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin	40
1.1. George Frederic Watts, <i>William Morris</i> , (1870), National Portrait Gallery, London	57
1.2. John Butler Yeats, <i>Sketch of William Morris</i> , (1886), National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin	61
1.3. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>Astarte Syriaca</i> , (1877), Manchester Art Gallery	88
1.4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>The Beloved</i> (1865-6), Tate Britain, London	109
2.1. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>Caricature of John Everett Millais</i> , (1851-1853), Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery	155
2.2. Sylvia Pankhurst, <i>Angel or 'herald' mascot, logo of The WSPU</i> , (1908), Royal College of Art, London	168
2.3. John Everett, Millais, <i>The Knight Errant</i> , (1870), Tate Britain, London	172
2.4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>The Blessed Damozel</i> , (1875–78), Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool	177
2.5. John William Waterhouse, <i>The Lady of Shalott</i> , (1888), Tate Britain	192
2.6. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>Proserpine</i> , (1874), Tate Britain	205
3.1. David Jones, <i>QUIA PER INCARNATI</i> (1953), Kettle's Yard, Cambridge	269
3.2. Edward Burne-Jones, <i>The Morning of the Resurrection</i> , (1886), Tate Britain, London	272
3.3. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, <i>Lancelot found in Guinevere's chamber</i> , (1857), Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery	294
3.4. David Jones, <i>Guinever</i> , (1938-40), Tate Britain	295
3.5. David Jones, <i>The Four Queens find Lancelot Sleeping</i> (1941), Tate Britain	296
3.6. Edward Burne-Jones, <i>The Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the San Graal</i> , (1895- 1896), Southampton City Art Gallery	300

3.7, Edward Burne-Jones, *The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* (1891-1896), Ponce Museum of Art, Ponce, Puerto Rico 310

3.8. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Briar Wood*, (1885 and 1890), Buscot Park, Oxford 313

Introduction

‘What we see, and how we see it, depends on the arts that have influenced us’.¹

-Oscar Wilde, ‘The Decay of Lying’.

In 1927, W. B. Yeats wrote to May Morris to give his support to the building of the William Morris Memorial Hall in Kelmscott, Oxford, informing her that her father ‘is still my chief of men’.² A few years later, in 1934, he wrote again, expressing his regret that he could not attend the centenary celebrations of Morris’s birth, adding ‘I wish I could do what you ask, for every year that passes your father grows greater in my memory’.³ Iris Barry recalled Ford Madox Ford retelling anecdotes about the ‘Great Pre-Raphaelites’ at dinners with Wyndham Lewis, May Sinclair, Ezra Pound, H.D. and T. S. Eliot.⁴ Ford also labelled his contemporaries Pre-Raphaelite, for instance, he called Pound a ‘Pre-Raphaelite poet’ and termed D.H. Lawrence’s first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911), as Pre-Raphaelite.⁵ In 1948, David Jones wrote to his friend Harman Grisewood that they ‘ought to try and go to the Tate together to see the Pre-Raphaelites while they are on’.⁶ In the early twentieth century, the Pre-Raphaelites were still very much of interest, being discussed, written about, their literary works read and re-read, and their artworks exhibited and used as a point of reference by modernist writers and artists. As shown in these vignettes, the Pre-Raphaelites and

¹ Oscar Wilde, ‘The Decay of Lying: An Observation’, in *The Collected Works of Oscar Wilde* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics 2007), pp.921-943 (p.937).

² W. B. Yeats, ‘To May Morris, April 2, 1927’, in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, ed. by Allan Wade (London: Rupert Hart-Davis 1954), pp.724-725 (p.724).

³ W. B. Yeats, ‘To May Morris, February 27, 1934’, Maine, James Augustine Healy Collection, MeWC.

⁴ Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, II (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), p.30, p.238.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.277.

⁶ David Jones ‘To Harman Grisewood, 5th October 1948’, Yale, Beinecke Library, GEN MSS 903, fol. 15.

modernists were not distinct and through their associations formed continuous artistic and social networks.

The term 'Pre-Raphaelitism' labels a movement in literature and the visual arts. The name refers to an artist, and contrary to public perceptions which focus on their paintings, literature was equally important as art within the movement. Their visual art was mostly inspired by literature and poetry, especially Dante, Shakespeare, Keats and Tennyson. Keats, Byron and Shelley were included in a list of 'Immortals' drawn up by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Holman Hunt in 1848. In Holman Hunt's *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (1905) he writes that the list 'constitutes the whole of our Creed, and that there exists no other Immortality than what is centred in their names and in the names of their contemporaries'.⁷ The list consists of their influential predecessors, or heroes, including Jesus Christ, Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, and their contemporaries such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Tennyson and Coventry Patmore. As both artists and writers, the Pre-Raphaelites were inspirational to modernists for their defiance of the boundaries between art and literature, neither being more meaningful than the other; through their use of the past and their inspiration from the medieval and Pre-Renaissance era; and for their rebellion against the artistic conventions of their time. In 1882, Oscar Wilde defined the Pre-Raphaelites as 'a number of young poets who banded together in London...to revolutionise English poetry and painting. They had three things which the English public never forgive – youth, power and enthusiasm'.⁸

⁷ William Holman Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, I (New York: Macmillan 1905), p.159.

⁸ Oscar Wilde, 'The English Renaissance of Art', in *Essays and Lectures* (London: Floating Press 2009), pp.105-148 (p.114).

The original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB), formed in 1848, comprised a group of young painters, sculptors and writers, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, William Holman Hunt, James Collison, Frederic George Stephens, Thomas Woolner and William Michael Rossetti. The brotherhood sought to modernise art by reviving the values and the practices of the medieval era, advocating a return to the traditions, simplicity and sincerity of medieval painting prior to Raphael and the Renaissance. In self-consciously terming themselves as 'Pre-Raphaelite' and as a 'brotherhood' they reiterate these medieval ideals, with its links of art, friendship and shared values, and as a means of creative collaboration. In 1921, Ford, in very similar wording to Wilde, makes the same argument about writers and artists whom he championed, when he claims that 'movements make for friendships, enthusiasms, self-sacrifice, mutual aid – all fine things! And movements are things of youth'.⁹ Wilde emphasises the revolutionary spirit of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, as an example of art which 'far from being the creation of its own time [was] usually in direct opposition to it, and the only history that it preserves for us is the history of its own progress'.¹⁰ There are thus further continuities between the Pre-Raphaelites and the modernists, who emphasise, like Pre-Raphaelitism itself, a dynamic interchange between an artistic and literary past and present.

Pre-Raphaelitism, like modernism, was a response to the experience of modernity, using the arts to make sense of modern life or as a means of proposing transformation of society. In

⁹ Ford Madox Ford, *Thus to Revisit* (London: Chapman & Hall 1921), p.64.

¹⁰ Wilde, 'The Decay of Lying: An Observation', p.942.

both cases, art explores rapidly changing life in forms appropriate to it. Yeats claimed that the 'symbolical movement' of the Pre-Raphaelites best exemplified in England the reaction 'against the rationalism of the eighteenth century' mingled with 'a reaction against the materialism of the nineteenth century'.¹¹ Through the importance placed on art and beauty, arising from past traditions and artistic heritage, Yeats continues to progress a Pre-Raphaelite resistance to Victorian materialism and to an industrial and increasingly mechanised society. In modernism and Pre-Raphaelitism there is a shared emphasis on reform and revolt. Wilde, in his quip that they had three things that the 'English public never forgive', highlights the criticism that the Pre-Raphaelites generated within their own time and since. In 1850, the Pre-Raphaelites were recognised as a movement, but only through the anger of critics and the press, who attacked their paintings for ugliness, and their use of imagery and symbolism which was seen as being close to Catholicism.¹² Millais's painting *Christ in the House of his Parents* (1849-50) was considered blasphemous, most famously through the savage criticism of Charles Dickens, particularly for its unidealized portrayals of the Holy Family. John Ruskin, a key figure for the Pre-Raphaelites, defended them in an article to *The Times* in 1851, praising their sincerity and seeing in their work ideals that he too valued: the importance of art, the value of the medieval and a reaction against many of the standards of modern society.

¹¹ W. B. Yeats, 'The Celtic Element in Literature', in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1961), pp.173-188 (p.187).

¹² Rachel Teukolsky, *The Literate Eye: Victorian Art Writing and Modernist Aesthetics* (New York: Oxford University Press 2009), p.92.

In Pre-Raphaelitism and modernism, there is a self-conscious return to the past and to inherited traditions or conventions, in order to 'make it new'.¹³ In both movements, this self-conscious engagement with the past is most evident through the use of mythology and legends. Mythopoeia is inherently tied to literature, forming a background through which to explore historical, psychological and emotional complexities. In a time of transition and in the rapidly changing environments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, artists and writers looked to the constancy of myths and classical literature and art. The use of myth also represents amongst writers and artists of both eras a continuity of concerns. As Michael Bell argues, modernist myth-making had a liberal and progressive implication which was intrinsic 'since its underlying significance was a sense of philosophical responsibility in living in a post-religious, and even in a post-metaphysical, world'; this use of myth projected 'a mode of being for the future which the past, not the merely putative past, could serve to define'.¹⁴ The use of myth in both Pre-Raphaelitism and modernism is not merely a nostalgic flight from modernity but acts as a universal way of engaging with the present, most notably in works such as Morris's *The Earthly Paradise* (1868) and *Sigurd the Volsung* (1876), James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), Yeats's poems and plays, and in the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud. Morris's use of myth and legend and the creation of his own worlds in the prose romances would be a particular influence for writers such as Yeats and, later, for C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien.

¹³ See Ezra Pound, *Make It New: Essays by Ezra Pound* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1935).

¹⁴ Michael Bell, 'Introduction', in *Myth and the Making of Modernity: The Problem of Grounding in Early Twentieth Century Literature*, ed. by Michael Bell and Peter Poellner (Amsterdam: Atlanta 1998), pp.1-8 (pp.1-2).

The Pre-Raphaelites sought an alternative to conventional ways of seeing, to get to the truth of what they were depicting, as emulated in the modernist movement. The Pre-Raphaelites initiated new ways of seeing, of feeling, expressing emotions and representing gender.

Victorian novelists, such as Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Wilkie Collins, George Eliot and Thomas Hardy, incorporated and reconfigured Pre-Raphaelite paintings into their fictional works, which, in the process, engaged readers in contemporary debates on cultural and socio-political issues, more specifically aesthetics, class and gender.¹⁵ Likewise, some modernists refashioned Pre-Raphaelite conventions and artwork and situated these within their contemporary contexts and debates, concerning similar issues relating to aesthetics, class and gender. Much Pre-Raphaelite scholarship has focused on debates relating to these themes. In particular Pre-Raphaelitism has been thoroughly explored through feminist criticism. Feminist art historians and literary scholars, such as Deborah Cherry, Griselda Pollock, Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn have highlighted the female artists of the movement and examined male-centred views of Pre-Raphaelitism. Their work explores how creativity is exclusively tied to the masculine, notions of the masculine gaze and how women, like Elizabeth Siddall, function as a sign.¹⁶ There has been some focus on the notion of Pre-Raphaelite masculinity, including Herbert Sussman's *Victorian Masculinities: Manhood and Masculine Poetics in Early Victorian Literature and Art* (1995), J. B. Bullen's *The Pre-*

¹⁵ Sophie Andres, *The Pre-Raphaelite Art of the Victorian Novel: Narrative Challenges to Visual Gendered Boundaries* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press 2005), pp. xvii-xviii.

¹⁶ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the histories of art* (London and New York: Routledge Classics 2003). Within this volume, see Deborah Cherry and Griselda Pollock, 'Woman as Sign in Pre-Raphaelite Literature: The Representation of Elizabeth Siddall', pp.128-169. Deborah Cherry, *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850- 1900* (London: Routledge 2000). Lynne Pearce, *Woman Text Image: Readings in Pre Raphaelite Art and Literature* (Hertfordshire: Simon & Schuster International Group 1991). *Cultural Politics: Pre-Raphaelites re-viewed*, ed. by Marcia Pointon (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press 1989). Jan Marsh, *Pre-Raphaelite Women: Images of Femininity in Pre-Raphaelite Art* (London: Guild Publishing 1987). Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement* (London: Virago 1989).

Raphaelite Body: Fear and Desire in Painting, Poetry, and Criticism (1998) and *Pre-Raphaelite Masculinities: Constructions of Masculinity in Art and Literature* (2014) edited by Amelia Yeates and Serena Trowbridge. On the other hand, scholars have also argued for the androgyny of the figures represented in Pre-Raphaelite art, particularly Edward Burne-Jones's paintings from around the 1870's, and literature.¹⁷

The Pre-Raphaelites are part of a nineteenth-century legacy that shapes modernist writers like Yeats, Lawrence, Ford, Eliot, Pound, H.D. and Jones, amongst others. For Yeats and his generation, D. G. Rossetti, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones were representative of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. In the mid-1850s, after the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had disbanded, another phase of Pre-Raphaelitism began, most commonly known as 'second wave' or 'phase' Pre-Raphaelitism. The painters and poets involved included Simeon Solomon, Algernon Swinburne, Morris and Burne-Jones. As an undergraduate at Oxford University, Morris had been inspired by the original Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood and had been introduced to Rossetti by Burne-Jones. In 1857 Morris joined Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Pre-Raphaelite associates, such as Arthur Hughes, in painting Arthurian murals, scenes from Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, in the Oxford Union.¹⁸ Morris also dedicated what is commonly identified as the first volume of Pre-Raphaelite poetry, his *Defence of Guenevere*, to Rossetti in 1858. Rossetti, in his vision of a community of artists, saw a union of the arts and of common creative interests, envisioning and creating

¹⁷ These include Sophie Andres, *The Pre-Raphaelite Art of the Victorian Novel: Narrative Challenges to Visual Gendered Boundaries*; Alison Smith, *The Victorian Nude: Sexuality, Morality and Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1996); Fiona MacCarthy, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber 2011), p.xix; Alison Smith, *Edward Burne-Jones* (London: Tate Publishing 2018).

¹⁸ Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time* (London: Faber and Faber 2010), pp.130-132.

with Morris and Burne-Jones effectively a second Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. This ideal of an artistic community would also be reiterated in Rossetti's partnership with Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. From the 1870s, exhibitions of this second-wave Pre-Raphaelite art, particularly Burne-Jones's, were showcased at the Grosvenor Gallery and later the New Gallery.

Certain modernist written and visual works attest to the Pre-Raphaelites being very much still in discussion, shaping modernist self-definition, perceptions, and references or allusions. Yeats and Ford used Pre-Raphaelitism as a means of self-definition. In his *Autobiographies* (1927), Yeats claims that he grew up surrounded by 'all things Pre-Raphaelite', within his Arts and Crafts surroundings of 'De Morgan tiles, peacock-blue doors and the pomegranate pattern and the tulip pattern of Morris'.¹⁹ He had always enjoyed reading Morris's works, particularly the *Defence of Guenevere* and *The Earthly Paradise*, from which 'The Man Who Never Laughed Again' seemed 'the most wonderful of tales'.²⁰ At the age of fifteen or sixteen Yeats mentions that his father had given him Rossetti's poetry to read and that he often visited Rossetti's painting *Dante's Dream* in Liverpool on the way to Sligo.²¹ In 'Art and Ideas' (1913), Yeats remembers that as a young man he felt that he would have been content to live another life and to paint, like Burne-Jones and Morris, under 'Rossetti's rule' at the Oxford Union, setting up 'traditional images most moving to young men'. For Yeats, these artists represent the adventures of an 'uncommitted life', changing all to romance,

¹⁹ W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies* (London: Macmillan 1966), p.114, p.43.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.141.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.114.

even with the knowledge that what they painted must fade from the walls.²² The murals, Yeats notes, convey traditional images connected to each artist's individual temporal reality, infusing Arthurian subject matter with romance, sensuousness and mystery. In the same essay, Yeats contemplates the Pre-Raphaelite paintings he had seen on a recent trip to the Tate Gallery, signifying a return to his earliest Pre-Raphaelite thought. He uses Burne-Jones's *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (1884) as an example of finding beauty in these paintings (and in contrast to the art criticism of friends), to seeing this beauty 'without shame'.²³

As the grandson of Ford Madox Brown and cousin to the Rossetti family, Ford chronicled his Pre-Raphaelite upbringing. Whilst his responses to the Pre-Raphaelites vary over time, veering between admiration and criticism, he does not deny his Pre-Raphaelite heritage. Ford was noted among his contemporaries for his Pre-Raphaelite background. He would talk about them with Violet Hunt, who, as the daughter of Pre-Raphaelite landscape painter Alfred William Hunt and novelist Margaret Raine Hunt, had also grown up in Pre-Raphaelite circles and had known figures such as John Ruskin and Morris. Over her lifetime, Hunt, like Ford, wrote about her childhood, the stories she heard about the Pre-Raphaelites and her admiration for figures like Ruskin. Hunt reflects on her Pre-Raphaelite background in works such as *I Have This To Say* (1926) and *The Flurried Years* (1926) which, amongst other things, detail her acquaintances or friendships with Jenny and May Morris and Margaret Burne-

²² W. B. Yeats, 'Art and Ideas', in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1961), pp.346-355 (p.347).

²³ *Ibid.*, p.347.

Jones.²⁴ In 1932, Hunt also wrote a biography on Elizabeth Siddall entitled *The Wife of Rossetti*.

Ford's works show his continued interest in his background. He wrote a biography of his grandfather, entitled *Ford Madox Brown (1896)*, *A Study of Rossetti (1902)*, *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (1907)*, and recorded his memories and impressions in *Ancient Lights (1911)*, which was published the same year as a landmark exhibition of Madox Brown and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood at the City Art Gallery in Manchester. Much later Ford wrote *Mightier than the Sword (1938)* in which he includes memories and criticisms of the Pre-Raphaelites. Ford also wrote articles about 'The Millais and Rossetti Exhibitions' (1898), 'Sir Edward Burne-Jones' (1898), and one on Hall Caine. He carries on a nineteenth-century tradition of reappraising Pre-Raphaelitism. Members of the Brotherhood, or those connected to the Pre-Raphaelite circle wrote retrospective accounts or memoirs, including Holman Hunt's *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, William Bell Scott's *Autobiographical notes (1892)* and William Michael Rossetti's *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family-Letters with a Memoir (1895)*, *Poetical Works of Christina Rossetti with a Memoir (1904)*, and *Family Letters (1908)*. W. M. Rossetti wrote of his own life in *Some Reminiscences (1906)*. After D. G. Rossetti's death, both Hall Caine in his *Recollections of Rossetti (1882)* and Theodore Watts-Dunton in *The Truth about Rossetti (1883)* reflected on their friendships and memories of him. John Mackail, Burne-Jones's son-in-law, published *The Life of William Morris* in two volumes in 1899, and Georgiana Burne-Jones published a two-volume biography of her husband, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, in 1906. Ford's

24 Joan Hardwick, *An Immodest Violet: The Life of Violet Hunt* (London: Andrè Deutsch 1990), pp.14-15.

biographies and essays were an influence for other emerging works on the Pre-Raphaelites, for example by Evelyn Waugh, the nephew of Holman Hunt, who privately published an extended essay on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and whose first book was a biography on Rossetti, *Rossetti: His Life and Work*, in 1928.

Ford's early fairy-tale *The Queen who Flew* (1894) was accompanied by a frontispiece by Burne-Jones. His fiction contains numerous allusions to the Pre-Raphaelites, as in *Parade's End* (1924-1928), which contains specific references to Rossetti's poetry and paintings, such as *Astarte Syriaca* (1877) and other portraits of Jane Morris; *When the Wicked Man* (1931), which draws on the image of the doppelgängers in Rossetti's *How They Met Themselves* (1864); and *Great Trade Route* (1937), which shows the influence of Morris on his vision of utopia.²⁵ His own ideas about living and the establishment of a rural community were inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement and Morris. Ford was defensive about his grandfather and believed that he suffered from his association with the Pre-Raphaelites. Unlike his contemporaries, Ford is emphatic, in all his works on the Pre-Raphaelite movement, that what has been termed the latter-day Pre-Raphaelitism of Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones, should not be termed Pre-Raphaelite. For Ford, they are 'Aestheticists' who 'grew to be called Pre-Raphaelites' by having an original Pre-Raphaelite, D. G. Rossetti, involved.²⁶ In this sense, Ford's point about Pre-Raphaelitism and Aestheticism pre-empts a

²⁵ Max Saunders details Ford's depiction of the doppelgänger and Rossetti's painting in his novel *When the Wicked Man*. Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, II, pp.389-393. Douglas Goldring notes that Morris's influence on Ford's vision of utopia can be traced unmistakably in his novel *Great Trade Route*. Douglas Goldring, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: The Life of Ford Madox Ford* (London: MacDonald & Co. 1948), p.50.

²⁶ Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (London: Duckworth & Co. 1907), p.11.

continued debate in Pre-Raphaelite scholarship about the label 'second phase' Pre-Raphaelitism and its evolution into Aestheticism.²⁷ Pre-Raphaelitism was, for Ford, only inclusive of the original brotherhood which 'was, of course, a return to nature – it was nothing more or nothing less' and that it was a movement of 'a revolt amidst revolts'.²⁸ He admired the Pre-Raphaelite revolt and in particular, Christina Rossetti's work. As Douglas Goldring notes, 'Much therefore, as he (Ford) objected to the nickname, "the last Pre-Raphaelite", it was in fact more apposite than he cared to admit'.²⁹

Like Hunt and Ford, Virginia Woolf was connected with the Pre-Raphaelites from an early age. Her mother Julia Stephen (neè Jackson) was a Pre-Raphaelite associate and model, who sat for Burne-Jones and Holman Hunt, while her great aunt, Julia Margaret Cameron, was a Pre-Raphaelite associate and inspired by them in her photography. Woolf's great aunt, Sara Prinsep, created a literary and artistic salon at Little Holland House, where both Rossetti and Ruskin were frequent visitors; Burne-Jones stayed at the House during 1858, working with George Fredric Watts, who was living there at the time, and also acted as an early mentor for Burne-Jones.³⁰ Woolf claimed that one of her strongest memories was visiting Holman Hunt's 'Aladdin's cave' at Melbury Road in 1905 and hearing Hunt talking of *The Light of the*

²⁷ For instance, see the introduction to *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England*, ed. by Elizabeth Prettejohn (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1999), pp. 1-14 (pp.2-3). Prettejohn sums up the debate, arguing that there are reasons and reservations for using both labels, but that they are deployed to suit the purposes of those who use them. Prettejohn suggests that there needs to be a new term to describe the development in the arts 'after the Pre-Raphaelites', p.2.

²⁸ Hueffer, *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, p.2

²⁹ Goldring, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: The Life of Ford Madox Ford*, p.50.

³⁰ The affinity between Watts and Burne-Jones was identified in the exhibition, *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: symbolism in Britain, 1860-1910*, held at the Tate in 1997.

World (1853–1854).³¹ Like Ford, Woolf was attentive to the works of Christina Rossetti, as seen in an essay 'I am Christina Rossetti' (1932), *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and her review of the 'Letters of Christina Rossetti' (1908). Whilst Woolf expresses the opinion that religion restricted Rossetti's artistic potential, her admiration is clear:

For you were not a pure saint by any means. You pulled legs; you tweaked noses. You were at war with all humbug and pretence. Modest as you were, still you were drastic, sure of your gift, convinced of your vision. [...] In a word, you were an artist.³²

Like many of her contemporaries, Woolf also read the works of Ruskin and Morris. James Joyce once commented, whilst in the process of writing *Dubliners*, that his prose reflected how he 'was taught by Father Tommy Meagher and Ruskin'.³³ Fiona MacCarthy has noted that Joyce also 'admired Morris', reading Morris's late prose romances, which he used 'as a thesaurus'. Morris's use of archaic diction was influential to Joyce and offered him stories that were symbolist, surrealist dream-sequences.³⁴

Alongside their biographical connections to the Pre-Raphaelites, the modernists were inspired by Pre-Raphaelite visual culture and their use of myth. During the 1860s, Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones incorporated more mythological subjects into their paintings and poetry, especially from classical mythology, as seen in Rossetti's painting *Helen of Troy*

³¹ Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf* (London: Chatto & Windus 1996), pp.85-87.

³² Virginia Woolf, 'I am Christina Rossetti', *The Common Reader*, (1932), <<https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/w/woolf/virginia/w91c2/chapter20.html>> [accessed 15 June 2019].

³³ James Joyce, 'To Stanislaus Joyce, September 1905', in *Selected Letters of James Joyce*, ed. by Richard Ellmann (London: Faber and Faber 1975), p. 75.

³⁴ MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*, p.x.

(1863) (Figure I.1). Rossetti's evolution from original Pre-Raphaelitism was marked by his new-found interest and experimentation with Venetian Renaissance painting in the 1860s, initiated in his painting *Bocca Baciata* (1859).³⁵ The painting, with its treatment of colour, symbolism and the female figure, announced a new style in Rossetti's art and one that would direct the rest of his career in both his painting and poetry. Rossetti uses his new style, as Elizabeth Prettejohn notes of *Bocca Baciata*, 'to enhance the sensuality of the represented figure, full-lipped and fleshy, adorned with jewels and flowers'.³⁶



I.1. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Helen of Troy* (1863) Kunsthalle Hamburg, Germany.

The figure of Helen is accentuated by the rich yellow-gold colour of her gown, complexion, hair and her bright red lips as she points to the firebrand on her necklace. The red and golden colours are repeated in the raging fire behind her. Her position as the most beautiful woman in the world, like the figure in *Bocca Baciata*, epitomises beauty itself and how her beauty is regarded as being responsible for the destruction of Troy. This new style and overt

³⁵ Tim Barringer, Jason Rosenfeld and Alison Smith, *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde* (London: Tate Publishing 2012), p.162.

³⁶ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Beauty and Art 1750-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005), p.117.

sensuality would enhance Rossetti's presentation of mythological subjects and would impact upon Burne-Jones's paintings and on Morris's poetry. Helen of Troy is a significant figure in Western poetic tradition and is frequently referred to throughout Yeats's work, showing the continuities in Rossetti's and Morris's interest in myth and legend and in their treatment of mythological figures. Mary Ellis Gibson argues that Pound's 'double goddesses', such as Aphrodite, Persephone, Astarte and Helen, and his idealization of the feminine, through 'the representation of the beautiful but fatally powerful woman', owe their particular character to the dual representation of women in Pre-Raphaelite art and poetry.³⁷ Like Yeats and Pound, H.D. was inspired the mythopoeic method of the Pre-Raphaelites, particularly by Rossetti and Swinburne, which informed her portrayal of female mythic figures in poems such as *Trilogy* (1944-46) and *Helen in Egypt* (1961). In these poems, H.D. simultaneously uses and challenges Pre-Raphaelite visuals and poetics to reclaim previously marginalised figures from myth and repositions female figures as being central to the narrative.³⁸

Elizabeth Anderson has noted H.D.'s affiliation with nineteenth-century poets, particularly Morris, through her use of tapestry as a creative practice and metaphor in her novel *The Sword Went Out to Sea* (1946-7). The title of the novel is taken from Morris's poem 'The Sailing of the Sword' in the *Defence of Guenevere* collection. Anderson argues that in *The Sword Went Out to Sea*, Morris's presence is meditated through his belongings and his

³⁷ Mary Ellis Gibson, *Epic Reinvented: Ezra Pound and the Victorians* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 1995), pp.183-184.

³⁸ See Douglas Bush's *Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry* (New York: W. N. Norton; repr. 1963), Eileen Gregory, *H.D. and Hellenism* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1997) and Cassandra Laity, *H.D. and the Victorian Fin de Siècle: Gender, Modernism, Decadence* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1996).

writings, as H.D. used a table originally owned by Morris to hold séances, whereas in her novel *White Rose and the Red*, a fictional Morris emerges.³⁹ Like Hunt, H.D. wrote a biography about Siddall in *White Rose and the Red* (1948). It is a fictional biography, predominately told through Siddall's perspective, exploring her relationships with members of the Pre-Raphaelites, including Morris and Ruskin, and how she became an iconic figure and muse of the movement. H.D. is conscious of the mythologising tendencies surrounding the Pre-Raphaelites, including her own. For both Cassandra Laity and Alison Halsall, in *White Rose and the Red*, H.D. imaginatively transposes the Imagist circle into the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood with 'Pound-as-Swinburne, Lawrence-as-Morris, and to a certain extent, Aldington-as-Rossetti' and 'H.D. playing Siddall herself.' Laity argues that H.D. attempts to return these male modernists to their Victorian 'other' selves.⁴⁰ The novel contains many intertextual references to Pre-Raphaelite literature and highlights the intertextuality between Pre-Raphaelite art and literature. For example, in the novel Morris associates Siddall with the Blessed Damozel, through quoting the line from Rossetti's poem 'She had three lilies in her hand' which in turn brings Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel* painting to Morris's mind.⁴¹ H.D. regarded Morris as her 'guardian, the godfather I never had' and acknowledges his importance for the literary development of the Imagist movement, particularly to herself and Ezra Pound, who also used to read Morris's poetry to her.⁴²

³⁹Elizabeth Anderson, 'H.D.'s Tapestry: Embroidery, William Morris and *The Sword Went Out to Sea*', *Modernist Cultures*, 12:2 (2017), 226-248 (p.235).

⁴⁰Laity, *H.D. and the Victorian Fin de Siècle: Gender, Modernism, Decadence*, p.119. Alison Halsall, 'Introduction', in H.D., *White Rose and the Red*, (Orlando: The University of Florida Press 2009), pp. xvii-xlvi (p.xxiii).

⁴¹H.D., *White Rose and the Red*, (Orlando: The University of Florida Press 2009), p.109.

⁴²Quoted in Elizabeth Anderson, 'H.D.'s Tapestry: Embroidery, William Morris and *The Sword Went Out to Sea*', p.228.

Pound shared his interest in Morris with H.D. and Yeats, where in Rapallo in 1929 they read *Defence of Guenevere* together with 'great wonder'.⁴³ Pound acknowledges this early Pre-Raphaelite influence, particularly in his early translations, which he writes were 'bogged in Dante Gabriel and in Algernon'.⁴⁴ Pound's influence from the Pre-Raphaelites in his use of myth has been acknowledged, particularly in the *Cantos*.⁴⁵ The 'Yeux Glauques' section of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) focuses specifically on the Pre-Raphaelite artists, writers, and certain works by Ruskin, Rossetti, Swinburne and Burne-Jones. The 'sea-green eyes' of the title, and the references to eyes throughout, emphasise the visual culture of Pre-Raphaelitism, a visuality which Pound accentuates in their depictions of the female body. In the poem, the model's 'faun's head' is 'a pastime for | Painters and adulterers'.⁴⁶ She is preserved through their paintings, and like Yeats, Pound references Burne-Jones's *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* at the Tate. She is placed in opposition to 'poor Jenny', which Pound quotes from Rossetti's poem 'Jenny' (1870).⁴⁷ This was the poem that was singled out for attention in Robert Buchanan's essay 'The Fleishy School of Poetry' (1871). In his condemnation of the Pre-Raphaelite poets as being immoral, 'foetid Buchanan' 'abused' Rossetti and Swinburne, as it was with their poetry that Buchanan mainly took issue.⁴⁸ Through this opposition, and attack on Buchanan, Pound displays the conflict between the spiritual and corporeal in Pre-Raphaelite art and more widely, between aestheticism and morality. Pound notes Ford's admiration for Christina Rossetti but adds that he cannot

⁴³ W. B. Yeats, 'To Olivia Shakespear, March 2, 1929', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.758-759 (p.759).

⁴⁴ Ezra Pound, 'Cavalcanti', in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. by T. S. Eliot (Canada: Penguin 1968), pp.149-200 (p.194).

⁴⁵ See Sean Pryor, *W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound and the Poetry of Paradise* (Abingdon: Routledge 2016). Daniel Tiffany, 'Kitsching *The Cantos*', *Modernism/Modernity*, 12.2, (2005), 329-37 (p.333).

⁴⁶ Ezra Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, in *Selected Poems, 1908-1959*, (London: Faber and Faber 1975), pp.98-112 (p.101), VI. 6-8.

⁴⁷ *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, VI. 20.

⁴⁸ *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, VI. 4-5.

accept Ford's opinion as she 'sets my teeth on edge'.⁴⁹ Olivia Rossetti, the daughter of William Michael Rossetti and Lucy Madox Brown, later became a supporter of Italian fascism, and a correspondent and friend to Ezra Pound, who mentioned her in his *Cantos* (76 and 78).

Not all opinions were favourable. Like Pound, T. S. Eliot came to regard Pre-Raphaelitism as an almost childlike phase of poetic development, claiming that Rossetti's 'The Blessed Damozel' put him off 'first by my rapture and next by my revolt' and by a prejudice 'against Pre-Raphaelite imagery, which was natural to one of my generation, and perhaps affects generations younger than mine'.⁵⁰ In his essay 'Andrew Marvell', Morris is rather unfavourably compared and contrasted to Marvell through a discussion of Marvell's *The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn* (1681) and Morris's *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867). Eliot also prepared to write a lecture on Morris, which did not happen. Elsewhere, he describes Morris's 'The Blue Closet' as a 'a delightful poem' and wrote an essay on the influence of Swinburne on modern poetics.⁵¹ Similarly, Wyndham Lewis's review of the 1948 Pre-Raphaelite exhibition is critical, regarding their work as trivial and sentimental. He writes that 'the Pre-Raphaelites produce a gay effect, like a bonnet-shop' and considers that more 'seriousness was attributed to this school than they in fact reveal'.⁵² He does, however, express an appreciation of Burne-Jones's *Perseus* series (1885-1888)

⁴⁹ Ezra Pound, 'The Prose Tradition in Verse', in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. by T. S. Eliot, pp.371-377 (p.373).

⁵⁰ T. S. Eliot, 'Dante', in *Selected Essays by T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber and Faber 1972), pp.237-277 (p.262).

⁵¹ T. S. Eliot, 'The Music of Poetry', Quoted in, Denis Donoghue, *The Practice of Reading* (London: Yale University Press 1998), p.94. See T. S. Eliot, 'Swinburne As Poet', in *Selected Essays by T. S. Eliot*, pp.232-327.

⁵² Wyndham Lewis, 'The Brotherhood', *The Listener*, (1948), <<https://www.unirioja.es/listenerartcriticism/edition.htm>> [accessed 16 June 2019].

which he claims he 'would far rather possess [...] than a Botticelli' and are 'alone worth visiting Whitechapel to see', conceding that it is easy to see why Salvador Dali 'has expressed much admiration for this latecomer among the Pre-Raphaelites'.⁵³ H.D. also attended the 1948 exhibition at Whitechapel, the year coinciding with the publication of *White Rose and the Red*.

In his catalogue to accompany the 1948 exhibition, Robin Ironside, a painter and assistant keeper at the Tate Gallery from 1937 to 1946, writes that in his day they should insist:

On the value of the Pre-Raphaelite art as the effective aesthetic vehicle of private passion, as the distinct revelation of an inner disturbance and enthusiasm both in its themes and in the disquieting manner of their execution, the awkward constraint of gesture and attitude in the treatment of the figure, the feverish precision of drawing and occasional almost toxic virulence of colour.⁵⁴

This centenary exhibition included works by Holman Hunt, Bell Scott, William Dyce, Madox Brown, Thomas Seddon, James Collinson, Henry Alexander Bowler, William Lindsay Windus, Robert Braithwaite Martineau, Walter Howell Deverell, John Brett, Millais, Arthur Hughes, Ruskin, Burne-Jones, Morris, Siddall, Rossetti and Frederic Leighton. As a whole, the exhibition and its accompanying catalogue, shows the workings and artistic processes both as a group and as individuals, featuring paintings, sketches, preliminary drawings, illustrations, and details of plates. Ironside was also involved with the Burne-Jones centenary exhibition in 1933. The Pre-Raphaelites inspired artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Pablo

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Robin Ironside, 'Foreword', in *Pre-Raphaelite Painters* (London: The Phaidon Press Ltd, 1948), p.18.

Picasso, Marcel Duchamp and Dali. Van Gogh very much admired the Pre-Raphaelites for their brotherhood, their realism and modernisation of religious subjects. He attended exhibitions of their work when he was living in London in the 1870s and met Millais. He was particularly influenced by Millais's *Chill October* (1870).⁵⁵ For Picasso, Duchamp and Dali, the influence was from Burne-Jones, whose work was exhibited both in England and on an international scale, at the Exposition Universelle in Paris, where in 1889, he was awarded the Legion of Honour.⁵⁶ As they were not old enough to have seen this exhibition, Picasso, Duchamp and Dali would likely have seen Burne-Jones's paintings through reproductions of his work.⁵⁷ They would have also been exposed to the work of the Pre-Raphaelites in their artistic training. There is a clear influence, again acknowledged by Lewis, from Burne-Jones on Picasso's 'Blue Period' paintings.⁵⁸ Burne-Jones's painting *The Golden Stairs* (1880) has been linked to Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase No.2* (1912) for its subject matter and the rhythmic movement.⁵⁹ Dali's inspiration from Burne-Jones can be seen in the surrealism and the psychological and sexual introspection of their pictures, as well as their use of colour. Henrietta Garnett, the granddaughter of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, argues that in some respects, the Pre-Raphaelites were precursors of the Bloomsbury Group too in 'their sexual imbroglios, their dedication to art, their bohemian lifestyle and their influence on popular culture, dress, interior design, literature and politics'.⁶⁰ Both were

⁵⁵ Carol Jacobi, *The EY Exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain* (London: Tate Publishing 2019), p.32-35.

⁵⁶ Fiona MacCarthy, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination*, p.xix.

⁵⁷ Burne-Jones, assisted by the Dalziel Brothers, had photographic reproductions made of his artwork, most notably of his *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* which was exhibited at the Exposition Universelle in 1889 and was the painting that established his reputation in Europe as an important Symbolist painter.

⁵⁸ Wyndham Lewis, 'Picasso', *Kenyon Review*, 2:2 (1940), 196-211, (p.208).

⁵⁹ John Canaday, *Mainstreams of Modern Art* (New York: Simon and Schuster 1959), p.469.

⁶⁰ Henrietta Garnett, *Wives and Muses: The Pre-Raphaelites and Their Muses* (London: Macmillan 2012), p.xv.

professional and friendship circles, and through both their artistic and personal relationships, produced work that changed public perceptions of aesthetics.

The Pre-Raphaelites are important to modernist thought through their emphasis on the interart nature of aesthetics and the arts.⁶¹ This interart aesthetic and perspective is captured in a recent tradition of scholarship about the little magazine and periodical culture which has argued that Pre-Raphaelite periodicals *The Germ* and *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* are important forerunners to the modernist little Magazine. In 1850, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood published a periodical called *The Germ: Thoughts Towards Nature in Poetry, Literature, and Art*, circulating their creative works and radical ideas through poems, criticism and pictures. *The Germ* explored the relationship between image and word and reinforced its interart nature. The poems, illustrations and the moments of narrative which Pre-Raphaelite artwork itself captures, are especially reinforced through the relationship that Rossetti, as a poet, painter and a creator of and contributor to *The Germ*, emphasises through the interconnectedness of art and poetry. This is also shown in his practice of writing poems about his paintings and inscribing lines of poetry onto the frames of paintings. Rossetti first published his poems 'My Sister's Sleep' and 'The Blessed Damozel' in *The Germ*. The medievalism of 'The Blessed Damozel', alongside poems such as Thomas Woolner's 'My Beautiful Lady' and 'Of My Lady in Death', accentuates how the values of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in visual art also impacted on their literary pursuits. The poems are visual in

⁶¹ Paola Spinozzi and Elisa Bizzotto use the term 'interart' to describe Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics and the complexity of verbal and visual interactions. I follow their use of the term. Paola Spinozzi and Elisa Bizzotto, *The Germ: Origins and Progenies of Pre-Raphaelite interart aesthetics* (Bern: Peter Lang 2012), p.11.

themselves or are about artistic themes, returning to medieval practices and to express what is 'serious and heartfelt' in literature as well as art. As the title of *The Germ* suggests, their poetry often focuses on nature or rural landscapes, enforcing 'an adherence to the simplicity of nature' and paying direct attention to the 'comparatively few works which Art has yet produced in this spirit'.⁶² The name implies a natural dissemination of their ideas and of a widespread reform advanced through the arts. As Jan Marsh has argued, *The Germ* set a future pattern of widening but coherent collaboration, including publishing works by Christina Rossetti, and recruiting other associates such as Madox Brown, Deverell, William Allingham and Arthur Hughes.⁶³

The Germ lasted for only four issues, but its influence outran its print run, providing a model for a second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism and its accompanying periodical *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, created by Morris and his circle. Rossetti had read some of Morris's poems and was thrilled by the accolade given to his work in the first issue of the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*.⁶⁴ The *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, lasting for twelve issues during 1856, was the literary vehicle for Morris and his circle at Oxford University and through which Morris published his early prose romances such as 'The Story of the Unknown Church'. The attention that the magazine paid to art and its interart approach demonstrates an obvious inspiration from its Pre-Raphaelite predecessor, *The Germ*. Marysa Demoor considers *The Germ* and *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* as 'little magazines' that share the

⁶² *The Germ*, Issue 1, <<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/pre-raphaelite-journal-the-germ#>> [Date accessed: 14 June 2019].

⁶³ Jan Marsh, *The Pre-Raphaelite Circle* (London: National Portrait Gallery publications 2005), p.10.

⁶⁴ MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*, pp.114-115.

enthusiasm and confidence of the little magazines of the early decades of the twentieth century. For Demoor, these Pre-Raphaelite periodicals are an early exemplar for their modernist counterparts, having a manifesto, establishing their publication and using magazines as outlet for their best writings.⁶⁵ Other critical works to focus on Pre-Raphaelite periodicals, such as Koenraad Claes's *The Late-Victorian Little Magazine*, (2018) and Paola Spinuzzi's and Elisa Bizzotto's *The Germ: Origins and Progenies of Pre-Raphaelite interart aesthetics* (2012), argue that it was in *The Germ*, as the first British magazine with an aesthetic manifesto, that the theories of the Pre-Raphaelites took shape, setting the precedent for future artistic and literary movements. In defining their artistic aims and not being medium specific, the Pre-Raphaelites started a process that later influenced other writers and movements which gradually became codified as modernism or avant-gardism, as seen in the self-defined manifestos of movements, including, amongst others, Imagism, Dadaism and Vorticism. Elizabeth Prettejohn's *The Art of the Pre-Raphaelites* first made a compelling case for viewing the Pre-Raphaelites as an avant-garde movement, especially in terms of their originality and their remarkably strong group identity. Prettejohn argues that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood may have had some historical importance in forming the very ideology of the avant-garde, a contribution that would, paradoxically, depreciate their status in the twentieth century.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Marysa Demoor, 'In the Beginning, There was *The Germ*: The Pre-Raphaelites and 'Little Magazines'', in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of the Modernist Magazine, volume 1, Britain and Ireland 1880-1955*, ed. by Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (New York: Oxford University Press 2009), pp.51-65 (p.65).

⁶⁶ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *The Art of the Pre-Raphaelites* (London: Tate Publishing 2000), pp.63-65, (p.65).

The increasing scholarly interest in the legacy of Pre-Raphaelitism and its impact upon later movements is part of an expansion within Pre-Raphaelite studies. Recent and previous scholarship has reconsidered geographical, international and chronological trajectories of the Pre-Raphaelites.⁶⁷ Current work in the field is exploring and reconsidering the Pre-Raphaelites's own wider interests and pursuits, for example William Waters's and Alastair Carew-Cox's *Damozels & Deities: Pre-Raphaelite Stained Glass 1870-1898* (2017), and opening up new lines of enquiry, such as John Holmes's *The Pre-Raphaelites and Science* (2018), which explores how the Pre-Raphaelites put scientific principles into practice across their works. As 2019 was the bicentenary of Ruskin's birth, there have been many critical re-evaluations as to the importance of his thought and art today, as seen in Suzanne Fagence Cooper's *To See Clearly: Why Ruskin Matters* (2019) and *William Morris & John Ruskin: A New Road on which the World Should Travel* (2019) edited by John Blewitt, which reassesses his influence on his associates. The current interest on Ruskin's influence today is also part of scholarship which seeks to examine the continued impact of the Pre-Raphaelite circle, particularly that of Morris and recently, Burne-Jones.⁶⁸ Whilst there has been plenty of critical attention paid to Morris and Burne-Jones together, out of all the Pre-Raphaelites, Burne-Jones has independently received less critical attention than others. The recent exhibition *Edward Burne-Jones: Pre-Raphaelite Visionary* (2018-2019) at Tate Britain charted Burne-Jones's journey from his Pre-Raphaelite origins to his position as one of the most

⁶⁷ See Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Modern Painters, Old Masters: The Art of Imitation from The Pre-Raphaelites to the First World War* (Yale: Yale University Press 2017). Eleonora Sasso, *The Pre-Raphaelites and Orientalism: Language and Cognition in Remediations of the East* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2018). *Writing the Pre-Raphaelites: Text, Context, Subtext*, ed. by Michaela Giebelhausen and Tim Barringer (London: Ashgate 2017). *Worldwide Pre-Raphaelitism*, ed. by Thomas J. Tobin (Albany: State University Press 2005). *Pre-Raphaelite Art in its European Contexts*, ed. by Susan P. Casteras, Alicia Craig Faxon (United States: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press 1995).

⁶⁸ *William Morris in the 21st Century*, ed. by Philippa Bennett and Rosie Miles (Bern: Peter Lang 2010). Fiona MacCarthy, *Anarchy and Beauty: William Morris and His Legacy* (London: National Portrait Gallery 2014). Alison Smith, *Edward Burne-Jones* (London: Tate Publishing 2018).

influential artists of the late nineteenth century. As the first major exhibition devoted to Burne-Jones's work since the centenary exhibition of his birth at the Tate in 1933, it reappraised and emphasised his unique visionary qualities, both as an artist and craftsman, and his belief in the redeeming power of art and beauty.⁶⁹

The connection between Pre-Raphaelitism and modernism, in terms of both art and literature, has been suggested within Pre-Raphaelite scholarship. Graham Hough in *The Last Romantics* (1949) noted that the influence of Pre-Raphaelitism 'soaked deep into the later nineteenth century, and even spread into the next age'.⁷⁰ Elizabeth Prettejohn has noted that the Pre-Raphaelites started afresh from their own principles, which is considered the most classic 'of modernist moves'.⁷¹ Elizabeth K. Helsinger remarks on the remarkable influence of Pre-Raphaelite poetry to the formation of modernist poetics whilst Prettejohn argues that that 'literary scholars have made much more progress than art historians in acknowledging the Pre-Raphaelites' legacy to modernism; it no longer seems strange, for example, to give Dante Gabriel Rossetti a central role in a history that includes Yeats, Pound, Joyce and Eliot'.⁷² In this regard, Rossetti has had the most focus both as a Pre-Raphaelite artist and poet, but also as an influence on modernist writers, something which Yeats, Pound and Eliot themselves acknowledge.⁷³ Jerome McGann, in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the*

⁶⁹ See the accompanying catalogue, Smith, *Edward Burne-Jones*, p.7.

⁷⁰ Graham Hough, *The Last Romantics* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. 1949), p.43.

⁷¹ Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, ed. by Elizabeth Prettejohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012), pp.1-12 (p.6).

⁷² Elizabeth K. Helsinger, *Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelite Arts: Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 2–3, and Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Envoi', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, pp.265-272 (p.268).

⁷³ Works on Rossetti include David Sonstroem, *Rossetti and the Fair Lady* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University 1970), David G. Riede, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Limits of Victorian Vision* (London: Cornell Press 1983), Joan Rees, *The Poetry of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Modes of Self-expression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1981), John Holmes, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Late Victorian Sonnet Sequence: Sexuality, Belief and the Self* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing 2005).

Game that Must be Lost (2000), addresses the ways in which Rossetti's work could be considered 'Proto-Modernist'. Using Roland Barthes's quote that 'Modernism begins with the search for a literature which is no longer possible', McGann argues that an essential feature of Rossetti's work began and ended explicitly 'as the quest for an art and a literature that was no longer possible'.⁷⁴ For McGann, Rossetti's artistic practices have much in common with Surrealism and as a 'conceptual artist', his practices indicate a trajectory of art that includes Marcel Duchamp.⁷⁵ In terms of literary work, McGann argues that Rossetti's methods correspond to many associated with twentieth-century modernists, as his work invents a whole new vocabulary and method of images, which anticipate the Imagist movement and materialist tradition of twentieth-century writing. In pointing out these affinities, McGann repeatedly wonders at Rossetti's disappearance from the modernist self-consciousness and his expulsion from cultural memory in modernism.⁷⁶ McGann, Prettejohn, and the recent critical work on the Pre-Raphaelite and modernist little magazine build a sense of Pre-Raphaelitism as a form of proto-modernism, which is an important concept for the thesis and there are many aspects, outlined above, that can be seen as such. However, in this thesis I focus on the shaping influence of Pre-Raphaelitism, the multiplicity of their inspiration, and its impact through modernist engagement rather than a proto-modernism. This approach focuses on the historical significance of Pre-Raphaelitism. While these parallels between Pre-Raphaelitism and modernist movements remain valid, the

⁷⁴ Jerome J. McGann, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game that Must be Lost* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2000), pp. xiii-xiv.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.7.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.30-70.

continuing influence of Pre-Raphaelitism is a more tangible indicator of their historical importance for modernism.

Scholarship has formerly argued that modernism rejected the past and inherited literary conventions, arguing for the high modernist need to discard or deny the significance of Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics in attempts to establish their own work and aesthetic practices as radical or 'new'.⁷⁷ This has often been supported by quotes from modernist writers themselves, such as Woolf's declaration that human character underwent a fundamental change 'on or about December 1910' and Stephen Dedalus's assertion in *Ulysses* that 'History [...] is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake'.⁷⁸ Although Woolf and Joyce express experiences of modernity and define a society or culture in flux, they also attest to a dissatisfaction with the past or inherited literary or aesthetic conventions. Yet their own writings, and the work of other modernists, consciously use past traditions and allude to, or acknowledge Victorian writers or influences. Some modernists sought to challenge these traditions, regarding Victorian literary or artistic conventions as inadequate to their own practices. Andrzej Gąsiorek points out that 'Modernism comprises a wide range of responses to the works of the past, some of which seek to jettison tradition in its entirety and some of which attempt to rework it in various ways'.⁷⁹ Modernism consists of both highly experimental texts and works which are less obviously radical at a formal level.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ See Marjorie Perloff's discussion of modernism and Romanticism, where Perloff argues that the modernists were looking to get back to something prior in time, even as they were making it new. Marjorie Perloff, 'Pound/Stevens: Whose Era?', in *Modernism*, ed. by Michael Whitworth (Oxford: Blackwell 2007), pp.81- 98 (p.93).

⁷⁸ Virginia Woolf, *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (London: The Hogarth Press 1924), p.4. James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions 2010), p.32.

⁷⁹ Andrzej Gąsiorek, *A History of Modern Literature* (Sussex: Wiley Blackwell 2015), p.4.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

Recent and current critical work reappraises modernism's relationship to the Victorians. In 'New Modernist Studies', Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz discuss the transformation in modernist literary scholarship in terms of the broadening of scope within the field through exploring temporal and spatial expansion. They argue for the importance of temporal expansion to the field of literary modernism, most notably reaching from the continuities and discontinuities of the late nineteenth century into the middle of the twentieth, and for scholarship which reveals modernism itself to be a more global practice by extending the historical time period to the late twentieth century or as far back as the early seventeenth.⁸¹ Similarly, Susan Stanford Friedman's *Planetary Modernisms* (2015) is concerned with expanding the frameworks of modernist studies, rethinking conceptions of modernity. Friedman argues that modernism, in her use of the term, 'is not a single aesthetic period, movement or a style' and that instead modernism is treated as an 'aesthetic domain of modernity— it helps create that modernity; it reflects it; it responds to it; it challenges it; it reformulates it'.⁸² Within modernist studies, scholars have primarily focused on a temporal expansion of modernism from the late Victorian era, around the 1880s onwards. This scholarship has mostly examined the links between modernism and Decadence which Vincent Sherry argues in *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (2015) shows modernism's awareness of decadence as a point of self-consciousness and depicts 'the coherence of an intellectual history that is also a cultural memory'.⁸³ Similarly, Cassandra Laity's *H.D. and the Victorian Fin de Siècle: Gender, Modernism, Decadence* (1996), Kristin

⁸¹ Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz, 'The New Modernist Studies', *PMLA*, 123:3 (2008), 737-748 (pp.737-738).

⁸² Susan Stanford Friedman, *Planetary Modernism: Provocations on Modernity Across Time* (New York: Columbia University Press 2015), p.4.

⁸³ Vincent Sherry, *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2015), p.88.

Mahoney's *Literature and the Politics of Post-Victorian Decadence* (2015) and Kate Hext's and Alex Murray's volume *Decadence in the Age of Modernism* (2019) have also re-evaluated the narrative of decadence and the continuities between Decadence and modernism.

Previous discussions of modernism's relationship to Pre-Raphaelitism, or figures associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, have often been through the lens of Decadence or Aestheticism. Laity argues that H.D.'s representations of female figures, such as Venus and Lilith, in *Trilogy*, are informed by Swinburne's and Rossetti's 'Pre-Raphaelite femme fatales'.⁸⁴ Howard J. Booth explores the influence of Swinburne on D. H. Lawrence in his essay "The Woodland Whose Depths and Whose Heights Were Pan's": Swinburne and Lawrence, Decadence and Modernism' in *Decadence in the Age of Modernism*. Other critical works have focused on Walter Pater, Ruskin, Christina Rossetti and modernism. These include Rachel Teukolsky's *The Literate Eye: Victorian Art Writing and Modernist Aesthetics* (2009) and Giovanni Cianci and Peter Nicholls's edited volume, *Ruskin and Modernism* (2001) which regards the influence of Ruskin on writers such as Pater, Lawrence, Pound and Lewis. Jessica R. Feldman in *Victorian Modernism: Pragmatism and the Varieties of Aesthetic Experience*, (2002) argues for Ruskin as 'a Victorian Modernist' and that to read his work is to 'enter a world of fluid commixtures in which we can observe Victorian Modernism in the making'.⁸⁵ Feldman also considers D. G. Rossetti's Victorian modernism through the mediation of domestic space and sentimentality in Henry Treffry Dunn's paintings of Rossetti's interiors and decadent art

⁸⁴ Laity, *H.D. and the Victorian Fin de Siècle: Gender, Modernism, Decadence*, p. ix.

⁸⁵ Jessica R. Feldman, *Victorian Modernism: Pragmatism and the Varieties of Aesthetic Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002), p.17.

objects in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Bedroom at Tudor House, 16 Cheyne Walk* (1872) and *Dante Gabriel Rossetti; Theodore Watts-Dunton* (1882). Anne Elizabeth Jamison's *Poetics en Passant: Redefining the relationship between Victorian and Modern Poetry* (2009) focuses on Christina Rossetti in modernism, pointing out that 'Modernism should have liked Rossetti, and modernism knew it should have liked Rossetti'.⁸⁶ These works re-evaluate the Victorian/modernist divide of previous criticism and through the discussions of Victorian, and various other 'modernisms', have widened the scope for exploring the diversities and continuities between the various literary and aesthetic styles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Whilst this preceding scholarship acknowledges the influence of single figures associated with Pre-Raphaelitism, as outlined above, little attention has been paid to the direct connection between modernism and Pre-Raphaelitism as movements and the joint inspiration from the Pre-Raphaelite artists and writers. This study attempts to expand further the temporal boundaries of modernism and the Victorian period, paying attention to the continuities and inspiration from Pre-Raphaelitism into modernism, through the works of three writers, W. B. Yeats, D. H. Lawrence and David Jones. Their work remains engaged with Victorian aesthetics and attempts to reinterpret existing or past literary and aesthetic conventions. As I shall examine later in this introduction and within the chapters of this thesis, previous scholarly criticism tracing their connection to Pre-Raphaelitism has

⁸⁶ Anne Elizabeth Jamison, *Poetics en Passant: Redefining the relationship between Victorian and Modern Poetry* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2009), p.180.

focused on their early works but this thesis expounds their three sustained lifelong engagements. Their engagements with Pre-Raphaelitism are more complex and substantial than previous studies acknowledge, incorporating a Pre-Raphaelite heritage within the context of their own times and through their individual experiments with different literary and artistic forms.

Through their distinct modes of experimentation, these three writers each represent different models of modernism. Jones is more 'highly' modernist than Yeats and Lawrence, in a manner akin to the poetry of Eliot and Pound, in terms of his self-conscious and experimental use of language, allusion, grammar and syntax. Like the modernists, the Pre-Raphaelites, as shown in terming themselves as 'Pre-Raphael' and their list of immortals, were conscious of the influences that formed their thinking and aesthetic practices. Jones is distinctly aware of all the influences extended to him by other contemporary or preceding writers, and as I discuss in the third chapter, his extensive knowledge of ancient civilisations, particularly Roman and Celtic antiquities, his use of the Latin and Welsh languages, and his medievalism are unique aspects of his experimental modernist contribution. Lawrence is more accessible in his experimentation with prose, poetic form and drama than Jones; instead his work is more radical in his challenging of established views and institutional ideals. This is shown most famously through the censorship and legal action against his novels *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *The Rainbow*, and the 1929 exhibition of his paintings in London, due to what was considered as obscenity in the explicitness of Lawrence's exploration of sexuality, sexual desire, and visual representations of the human form. For Lawrence, the focus on individual revelation is highlighted in his visual and sensory use of

language, his use of symbolism and poetic and rhetorical form. Like Lawrence, Yeats is more accessible in terms of his experimentation than Jones. Like Jones, he is conscious of his influences but he is more obviously retrospective than the other two writers, as shown in his autobiographical writings, and is more aware of his own position as a public figure. His poetic and dramatic works show the changes in his use of language and experimentation over his career. Yeats was the only one of these three figures who was writing and publishing within the Victorian era. As such, his body of work, from the late Victorian poem *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889) through to his play *Purgatory* (1938) and posthumous last poems in 1939, showcases the trajectory of modernism and the evolution of Victorian traditions into early twentieth century literature.

Through these three cases, the thesis considers modernist literary history and addresses different aspects of the movement as a whole. The thesis looks at modernism as literary history by examining the nature of the influence between two historical movements. For Yeats, Lawrence and Jones, their engagement with the Pre-Raphaelites is predominantly self-conscious, as they are actively choosing Pre-Raphaelite models and were conscious of extent of this influence and of how they present it, whether in public or private writings, as I endeavour to show across the three chapters. They either respond directly to the Pre-Raphaelites in a dialogue with them or develop the Pre-Raphaelite influence further through their works. At times, and as I explore mainly in the third chapter, this influence becomes more of an affinity between them, directly or indirectly, where they still show the same processes, preoccupations or sources as the Pre-Raphaelites in their engagements. In this

sense, modernism is interconnected with Pre-Raphaelitism through similar or related works and authors, especially through the formation of continuous artistic and social networks. For instance, Yeats retained his personal networks and his admiration for Morris from his time at Morris's Hammersmith home and Ford continues to write about his Pre-Raphaelite background, both across their lifetimes. Modernists were still continuing to engage with Victorian art and poetry but were innovating these in their own individual way, as I explore through these three cases studies.

Yeats, Lawrence and Jones use Pre-Raphaelitism as a point of reference, actively engage in a creative dialogue with Pre-Raphaelite art and paintings, make intertextual references, present their own personal links to their predecessors and rework texts through a Pre-Raphaelite lens. Although this can be considered as being less obviously radical than the formal experiments of writers such as Joyce, Woolf, Pound and Eliot, they are in themselves being innovative by continuing to work with a tradition that was considered to have been publicly out of fashion. The thesis also uses the three writers as case studies to address the question of modernism as a whole; the three writers typify different aspects of modernism through their distinct modes of experimentation, as outlined above. Collectively, through their engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism, they represent a modernism which does not seek to eliminate or reject the past as well as showing modernism to be, like Pre-Raphaelitism, an intrinsically interart movement which probes and breaks down distinctions between the arts and cultural forms.

The main focus for this study is on the second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism and figures associated with the movement, namely D. G. Rossetti, Morris, Burne-Jones and Swinburne. D.G. Rossetti's work forms the continuity between first and second phase Pre-Raphaelitism. The second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism was preoccupied with mythology and medievalism whereas the first phase of the movement was based on scientific principles of observation. Second phase Pre-Raphaelitism focuses on an imagined past, as depicted in the mythological paintings of Rossetti and Burne-Jones, the Arthurianism of Burne-Jones and Morris, and the medievalism of Morris's utopianism. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones primarily respond to the interart nature of Pre-Raphaelitism and to the Pre-Raphaelite construction of an imagined past: Yeats in his use of Irish mythology and his inspiration from Morris's utopian view of the past; Lawrence through his use of mythic figures, namely Persephone, and literary traditions such as the medieval image of the Lady of Shalott; and Jones in his medievalism, derived from the same sources as the Pre-Raphaelites. In this respect, both Pre-Raphaelitism and modernism highlight their paradoxical thinking through their imagined constructed pasts, in using the past in order to make it 'New'. In this respect, these three figures saw Pre-Raphaelitism as a valuable tradition and were self-conscious in their awareness of how they drew on it. In particular, the similarities or discrepancies between their public and private engagement with the Pre-Raphaelites reveal how self-conscious this engagement was.

The extent of the Pre-Raphaelite influence on modernism has not been previously or widely acknowledged. Whilst there have been suggestions of links between the two movements or single author studies that look at the Pre-Raphaelitism of modernist works, mainly Yeats and

Ford, there is no extant single study that specifically focuses on the Pre-Raphaelites and modernism.⁸⁷ This thesis challenges the earlier critical tradition that amplifies the hostility between modernism and Pre-Raphaelitism. It extends the range of recent criticism which examines the influence of a single figure of the Pre-Raphaelite movement for individual modernist writers by exploring the inspiration of Pre-Raphaelitism as a movement. It thus aims to extend understanding about the range of Pre-Raphaelitism and the diversity of its influence. Through this study I seek to re-evaluate the Pre-Raphaelites' shaping influence on modernism, shifting conceptions of modernist literary production and the receptions of Pre-Raphaelite art and literature in the first part of the twentieth century. As I shall explore in the thesis, this shaping influence extends into their different kinds of modernist experimentation, across cultural forms such as theatre and radio, poetics and visual and decorative art, to their social or political ideals. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones recapitulate the diverse forms of Pre-Raphaelitism and Pre-Raphaelitism's own challenges to established art are reflected in the three writers' use of different forms. The modernists drew on Pre-Raphaelitism as a way to articulate their preoccupations with sexuality, gender, politics and religion. As an imaginative resource for the modernists, the Pre-Raphaelites offered a model that helped to fashion their creative construction of the past, particularly for the utopian, mythological and medieval subjects of their works.

⁸⁷ For example, single author studies have included Peter Faulkner, *William Morris and W.B. Yeats* (Dublin: The Dolman Press 1962). Pamela Bickley, 'How They Met Themselves': Rossetti and Yeats in the 1890s', in *Yeats Annual No.14: Yeats and the Nineties, A Special Number*, ed. by Warwick Gould (Basingstoke: Palgrave 2001), pp.50-103. Elizabeth Anderson, 'H.D.'s Tapestry: Embroidery, William Morris and *The Sword Went Out to Sea*', *Modernist Cultures*, 12:2 (2017), 226-248. T. Wilson West, 'D. G. Rossetti and Ezra Pound', *The Review of English Studies*, 4:13 (1953), 63-67. Grover Smith, 'Ford Madox Ford and the Christina Rossetti Influence', *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920*, 29: 3 (1986), 287-296.

With its combination of literary criticism and art history and the consideration of a range of forms across these three writers' work, this thesis is important in re-evaluating views about the reception of a significant and highly influential Victorian art and literary movement across the early twentieth century. It reconsiders Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's lifelong relationships with their predecessors, seeking to expand knowledge about these two movements and the range and diversity of both Pre-Raphaelitism and modernism, especially in terms of the temporal and spatial boundaries of the Pre-Raphaelite influence for modernism. In doing so, the thesis explores the influence that the Pre-Raphaelites extended both as a group and as individuals, as seen for example, in the exploration of Morris inspiration on Yeats in chapter one. Through examining their influence on these three writers, the thesis explores the breadth of the Pre-Raphaelite impact on their modernism, in terms of the generational, geographical, cultural, political ideas of Yeats, Lawrence and Jones and their own individual constructions of an imagined past. They were of the generation that would have been more familiar with second phase Pre-Raphaelitism, either personally or having grown up within that time. For Yeats and Jones especially, the geographical elements of the Pre-Raphaelite influence are important to their use of mythology and heritage. For all three writers, the Pre-Raphaelites inspired their cultural and/or political principles. As I show in the three chapters, they inspired all these three figures' utopian ideals, Yeats's role as senator, Lawrence's gender politics and Jones's Christian thinking.

Yeats, Lawrence and Jones each have an active and imaginative response to Pre-Raphaelitism. As outlined above, there were writers, such as Ford, Pound, Hunt and H.D.,

who could have been potentially included in a thesis about the Pre-Raphaelite legacy in modernism, but these writers do not exemplify to the same extent as Yeats, Lawrence and Jones the close and lasting creative engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism traced in this thesis. Although Ford, the 'last Pre-Raphaelite', given his background and written works, would seem a clear choice for a thesis on the Pre-Raphaelite legacy in modernism, and is an important figure within this area of research, there has been much written on his relationship with the Pre-Raphaelites.⁸⁸ Whilst there are many references and allusions to Pre-Raphaelite paintings and literature in his works, and they were a large part of his life, he positions himself more as a critic, writing biographies, memoirs, and critical works about them rather than being shaped by their aesthetic ideals. Ford, unlike Yeats, Lawrence and Jones, was not a painter and this thesis seeks to focus on the interart nature of their works, as shaped by Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic principles. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones saw Morris, Burne-Jones and Rossetti as representative of Pre-Raphaelitism, as well as important figures in their own right, whereas Ford's position states that there was no second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism. Like Ford, Hunt and H.D. write biographies, or fictional accounts of the Pre-Raphaelites, and Pound shows his biographical engagement with them in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, and a critical interaction in his translations. Biographical and purely critical responses such as Ford's and Hunt's are not as revealing as those of Yeats, Lawrence and Jones, for whom Pre-Raphaelitism was as an imaginative resource. However, it was not only Yeats, Lawrence and Jones who responded to Pre-Raphaelitism as an aesthetic and

⁸⁸ Alec Marsh, 'Better Far: Ford and Rossetian Attitudes', *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, 13 (2014), 187-195. Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, I & II (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996). Joseph A. Kestner, 'Ford Madox Ford as a Critic of the Pre-Raphaelites', *Contemporary Literature*, 30:2 (1989), 224-239. Douglas Goldring, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: The Life of Ford Madox Ford*. Pamela Bickley, 'Ford and Pre-Raphaelitism', *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, 1 (2002), 59-78.

creative influence on their own art rather than merely as a biographical subject matter. Nonetheless, while H.D. and Pound, for instance, in *Trilogy* and the *Cantos*, do respond imaginatively to Pre-Raphaelitism, especially in their use of myth, the lifelong engagement of Yeats, Lawrence and Jones makes them particularly rich case studies for examining an imaginative response to the Pre-Raphaelites.

Yeats, Lawrence and Jones are three modernist writers whose work continues to engage with Pre-Raphaelitism across their careers. It is the aim of this thesis to examine the extent of the Pre-Raphaelite influence and how it shaped their work, and how they place themselves in dialogue with both the Pre-Raphaelites' visual art and their literature, to a greater degree than has been covered by scholars thus far. The literary and the visual are closely aligned in the works of these writers and each individually demonstrates their knowledge or interest in art history and the works of the Pre-Raphaelites. The work of Yeats, Lawrence and Jones, as interdisciplinary writers and artists, demonstrate key intersections between modernism and their Pre-Raphaelite precursors. These three figures, as both writers and artists, breakdown distinctions between the arts and emphasise the interart aesthetic, reminiscent of Pre-Raphaelitism, of the modernist movement. In the case of all three writers, the Pre-Raphaelite influences and the importance of the visual arts have been recognised and traced within their early works. For Yeats, the critical focus has been on his early poetry, essays and autobiographical writings which stress the importance of the Pre-

Raphaelites and Morris to his thoughts on the arts.⁸⁹ In the Pre-Raphaelites, Yeats found direct connections between the arts and literature. The cross-media alliance and unification of the arts was of great significance and each informed the other. Yeats espoused the intensity of Pre-Raphaelite visual art and literature and the interart nature of the movement; he claimed that ‘when alone and uninfluenced, I longed for pattern, for Pre-Raphaelitism, for an art allied to poetry’.⁹⁰ As with Yeats, critics, whose work I will be discussing in my chapter on Lawrence, have tended to focus primarily on Lawrence’s early fascination with Pre-Raphaelite literature and art, especially in his first novel *The White Peacock*. For Lawrence, painting and the visual arts were of great importance to him as a writer and artist. The Pre-Raphaelites were a point of reference in several of his works, and are important to his visual imagination, developing motifs from Pre-Raphaelite literature and literary motifs. Thomas Dilworth and Paul Robichaud have primarily focused on Jones’s early Pre-Raphaelite influences at Art School. For Robichaud, the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and Ruskin for Jones reveals important connections between his poetry and nineteenth-century medievalism, chiefly due to their shared interest in medieval authors such as Malory and Geoffrey Chaucer.⁹¹ These earlier studies have begun the process of uncovering these writers’ engagement with the Pre-Raphaelites, but there is a much longer development of that relationship to be traced. This thesis is part of a larger development, tracing these relationships by foregrounding lesser-known and unacknowledged elements of Yeats’s,

⁸⁹ Graham Hough, *The Last Romantics*. Peter Faulkner, *William Morris and W.B. Yeats*. David Pierce, *Yeats's Worlds: Ireland, England and the Poetic Imagination* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1995). Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux, *Yeats and the Visual Arts* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press 1986).

⁹⁰ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.81.

⁹¹ Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet* (London: Jonathan Cape 2017). Paul Robichaud, *Making the Past Present; David Jones, the Middle Ages, & Modernism* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press 2007), p.6.

Lawrence's and Jones's relationships to the Pre-Raphaelites, as shown in their continued acknowledgement of this influence throughout their lives and repeated return to their works.

Yeats, Lawrence and Jones follow a Pre-Raphaelite example as both artists and writers.

Yeats's interest in visual art was furthered by his own artistic training at Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, where he enrolled in 1884-1885. Yeats himself wanted to paint in the Pre-Raphaelite manner that his father had by this time rejected and was displeased with his father's new realistic portraits. Looking back on this time at Art School, he declares 'In my heart I thought that only beautiful things should be painted, and that only ancient things and the stuff of dreams were beautiful'.⁹² This sentiment is encapsulated by the artworks of the second-generation Pre-Raphaelites, particularly in the artwork and ideals of Burne-Jones. At this time Yeats's works included his portrait *Head of a Boy* (1887) (Figure I.2).



I.2. W. B. Yeats, *Head of a Boy* (1887), National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.

⁹² Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.82.

Head of a Boy displays his influence from visual Pre-Raphaelitism in its Romantic composition and use of intense and rich colours. Yeats's other surviving artworks, two pastels of Lady Gregory's home Coole Park, are currently on display in *The Life & Works of William Butler Yeats* exhibition at the National Library of Ireland. Whilst always drawing, as shown in the collection of watercolours at his birthplace in Eastwood, Lawrence began painting more seriously later in life and held an exhibition of his work in London in 1929. In his essay 'Making Pictures' (1929), Lawrence declares that he had always loved pictures, what he terms 'the pictorial act', and reflects upon his own processes, that he had learnt to paint through copying other pictures and not through any teaching or artistic training. Lawrence details his aversion to training at Art Schools, where for him art is wrongly treated 'as a science which it is not'.⁹³ Whilst the idea that you could learn to paint through copying pictures is exactly what the Pre-Raphaelites rejected, Lawrence adheres to them in his rebellion against formal artistic training that makes art devoid of life and individuality. Jones was firstly a trained visual artist before he started writing poetry in the 1920s. He trained at Camberwell Art School, from 1909-1914, and returned to his artistic training when he came back from the First World War. It was here that he was introduced to the Pre-Raphaelites and his early art school pictures bears similarities in their medieval subjects and costume. They are stylistically reminiscent of the Pre-Raphaelites (particularly of Rossetti) revealing how important the Pre-Raphaelites are to Jones's artistic development and his use of Arthurian sources and legend in both his visual and literary works. In particular, the stylistic reminiscences of Pre-Raphaelite illustration continues throughout his career.

⁹³ D. H. Lawrence, 'Making Pictures', in *Selected Essays* (London: Penguin 1950), pp.300-306 (pp.302-304).

The first chapter examines Yeats's relationship to Morris, going beyond his personal relationship with Morris and the early influence on his poetry, to explore Yeats's enduring engagement with Morris's ideas across, and through, the various aspects of his career. This will encompass not only his poetry but also his plays, essays and political writings as a Senator. Morris was Yeats's hero and remained his life-long 'Chief of Men'.⁹⁴ Morris's ideas about the importance of art within life, his tirade against Victorian capitalism and materialism, and his interest in and support for Irish independence were compelling to Yeats. Both Morris and Yeats had a wide impact within the arts and society, not only as literary figures, but through their wider involvements in the arts, as seen in Yeats's work at the Abbey Theatre and in Morris & Co., and as public speakers, lecturing on the issues that concerned them. Gradually, their individual interests and concerns evolved into political careers, in Morris's formation of the Hammersmith branch of the Socialist League and Yeats's position as a Senator for the Irish Free State. Second phase Pre-Raphaelitism encompassed other interests and wider circles; their exploration of the individual and social forms of life are testimony to the collaborative nature of intellectual, artistic and literary endeavour in the Pre-Raphaelite circle and in wider Pre-Raphaelitism. Pre-Raphaelitism's mythological and folkloric visual representations and inspirations, and especially those by Morris, promote respect for cultural and native traditions which Yeats uses to inform his Irish cultural nationalism. I will explore the nexus between myth and nationalism in connection to Morris's use of myth in Yeats's *The Wanderings of Oisín*; how Yeats works with Morris's legacy in the establishment of the Abbey Theatre and with Morris's prose romances in his dramas; and, finally, Yeats's retrospective assessments of Morris and the resonances in

⁹⁴ Yeats, 'To May Morris, April 2, 1927', p.724.

his late poetry. Morris's impact on Yeats's thought, through his links to Irish politics, his inspiration on Yeats's use of mythology in his nationalism and his influence on the establishment of the Abbey Theatre and Yeats's plays, has not been previously recognised to this extent.

In chapters 2 and 3 I investigate Lawrence's and Jones's engagement and dialogue with Pre-Raphaelitism. In both these chapters I examine how modernist writers continued the Pre-Raphaelites' engagement with earlier sources (Tennyson, Greek myth, Malory) and, in doing so, how they entered into a creative dialogue with the Pre-Raphaelites themselves. In the chapter on Lawrence, I explore his literary and artistic dialogue with his Pre-Raphaelite predecessors whose work Lawrence furthered and appropriated for his own artistic purposes, particularly how he develops and shapes this influence through the literary and visual motifs of the Lady of Shalott and Proserpine. The chapter will also evaluate how Lawrence uses these motifs, and Pre-Raphaelite artworks, to explore the representation of femininity and to question, as the Pre-Raphaelites did, patriarchal interpretations of classical figures. The chapter seeks to re-appraise Lawrence's relationships with women who shaped his responses to Pre-Raphaelitism and his association of Pre-Raphaelitism with feminism. Through the use of Pre-Raphaelite art and motifs, Lawrence explores constraints placed on women in art. In the chapter on Jones, I consider how he places himself in a dialogue with their legacy, through the affiliations between his and the Pre-Raphaelites's aesthetic and religious views on art and in his Arthurianism, particularly with reference to the Grail legend, Lancelot and the Sleep of King Arthur. The chapter traces the various components of Jones's

engagement with the Pre-Raphaelites, ranging from a multi-faceted interest in them as a group of artists and as individuals, reading their literary work and biographical accounts, his knowledge of their visual art, and his inspiration from the Arts and Crafts to his Neo-Romanticism. In this chapter, I examine Jones's artistic and cultural theories and his notion of sacramental art in relation to Rossetti's and Burne-Jones's sacramentalist views of art. This relationship between Jones's, Rossetti's and Burne-Jones's ideas of art has not been examined by scholars thus far. Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites focus on the same moments from Malory, in particular Lancelot at the Grail chapel and the death of Arthur. Aside from their shared enthusiasm for medieval authors, Jones's engagement or affinities with Pre-Raphaelite Arthurianism is deeper and more complex than has been acknowledged previously, both in his artwork and in later poems such as *The Grail Mass* and 'The Sleeping Lord' (1974).

This thesis is interdisciplinary in nature and creates an awareness of the interart nature of the Pre-Raphaelites, Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's work, and the impact that they had, not only as literary figures, but in other aspects of their careers, particularly as artists and/or in politics. The research aims to emphasise the public interest and engagement that surrounds these figures, especially the Pre-Raphaelites, Morris and Yeats, as seen from major exhibitions over the past few years, and through the resurging interest in Jones's work. In 1997, the Tate exhibition *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910* was important in regenerating interest in Burne-Jones's art, continuing to establish his reputation as a one of the most important artists of the Victorian age and as a subsequent influence on other artists. *Pre-Raphaelite Vision: Truth to Nature* (2004) at Tate

Britain was the first exhibition to focus on the deep fascination the Pre-Raphaelites had for the natural world through the detail in their works and their interest in geology. The exhibitions which have had a direct impact on this study include *The Poetry of Drawing* (2011) at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG), surveying Pre-Raphaelite works on paper and providing an insight into their artistic processes. *Pre-Raphaelite: Victorian Avant-Garde* (2012) at Tate Britain, showcased how the Pre-Raphaelites constitute Britain's first modern art movement and the radical nature of their works and vision across a range of objects, including painting, sculpture and the applied arts, tracing the movement's evolution into the Arts and Crafts. Similarly, *Pre-Raphaelites: Beauty and Rebellion* at Liverpool's Walker Gallery (2016) explored the significance of the movement to Liverpool and the connections between the artists, their contemporaries and the collectors of their art.

In considering both the ongoing legacy of these figures and their legacy impact on the twentieth century exhibitions such as *Love is Enough: William Morris and Andy Warhol* (2015) at BMAG, with Morris's Holy Grail tapestries at its centre, have been important in examining artists' use of multimedia and the role of the artist in society. *Anarchy & Beauty: William Morris and His Legacy 1860- 1960* (2014-2015) at the National Portrait Gallery was based around Morris's concept of Art for the People and showed how this has influenced successive generations and us today. It included showing the inspiration he had for Eric Gill, Terence Conran, Edward Carpenter, Lily and Elizabeth Yeats, Eleanor Marx, G. B. Shaw and John Piper, charting the impact of his ideas ranging from the Suffragettes, Arts and Crafts Guilds and the Garden City Movement to the Festival of Britain in 1951. The most recent

exhibition of Jones's work, *David Jones: Vision and Memory* (2016) at Lakeside Arts, University of Nottingham, traced the shaping and emergence of Jones's artistic career from childhood works and art school through to his involvement with Gill's Guild and the final section which featured *Briar Cup* (1949), *Aphrodite in Aulis* (1938-40), *Guinever* (1938) and *Trystan ac Esyllt* (1963). The exhibition coincided with a resurgence of interest in Jones's work and the publication of Thomas Dilworth's recent biography, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet* (2017). This thesis in turn coincides with the current reassessments of Jones's work, such as the editions published by the Modernist Archive Project, *David Jones on Religion, Politics, and Culture: Unpublished Prose* (2018) and *David Jones's The Grail Mass and Other Works* (2019).

Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's written and visual works attest to the continuous artistic and social networks between the modernists and the Pre-Raphaelites and are very much a part of the wider modernist discussion of Pre-Raphaelitism. As this thesis will show, as modernists they actively engage in an interchange between an artistic and literary past and present through their engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism and its interart aesthetics.

Chapter One

'Our more Profound Pre-Raphaelitism': William Morris and W. B. Yeats

On the occasion of the centenary celebrations of Morris's birth, Yeats wrote in a letter to May Morris that 'it seems that I knew your father "intimately". Of course I did not but his personality has grown so vivid in memory [...] I know all his works'.¹ For Yeats, Morris's strong personality had become so vivid over time as to give the impression that he knew him intimately. Dating from 1934, five years before Yeats's death, his admission of the vividness of Morris's personality to him and that he knows all of Morris's work, points to Yeats's lifelong intellectual and creative involvement with Morris and the profound impact of his literary, artistic works and his ideas on Yeats's own work. Morris was one of the most influential and best-known figures of the nineteenth century, not just as a designer and writer, but also as an artist, printer, businessman, passionate social and political reformer, environmentalist and preservationist. Morris had, for Yeats, achieved a unification of individual purpose, aesthetic vision and social concerns. Yeats wrote of Morris that 'I owe to him many truths' and would later admit that Morris 'gives me all the best stories'.² Yeats's remarks and the profundity of his admiration for Morris pose some crucial questions: Why was Morris such an important figure to Yeats? How does Yeats use Morris's work and ideals whilst also promoting his legacy?

¹ Yeats, 'To May Morris, February 27, 1934', Maine, James Augustine Healy Collection, MeWC.

² W. B. Yeats, 'Literature and the Living Voice', in *Explorations* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1962), pp.202-221 (p.221) and W. B. Yeats, 'Louis Lambert', in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1961), pp.438-447 (p.447).

Yeats's personal relationship with, and influence from Morris has long been recognised. In his *Autobiographies*, particularly 'Four Years', Yeats retrospectively defines and characterises his youth through his Pre-Raphaelite models, and affiliates himself with figures who were the friends and contemporaries of his youth, especially through his proximity to, and time with Morris. As suggested by his *Autobiographies*, Yeats first encountered Morris through his poetry, in *Defence of Guenevere* and *The Earthly Paradise*, and so, as a key figure within Pre-Raphaelitism. In 'Art and Ideas', Yeats writes that he 'had learned to think in the midst of the last phase of Pre-Raphaelitism'.³ Yeats's early Pre-Raphaelitism is well known. His fascination with the Pre-Raphaelites, and the influence extended to him from artists and writers of the second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism, namely Rossetti and Morris, is widely acknowledged and well documented. In particular, previous criticism has focused on how Pre-Raphaelite literature and aesthetics shape Yeats's early poetry and has traced the echoes of Morris in his works. In the first annual lecture on Yeats, delivered at the Abbey Theatre in 1940, T. S. Eliot argues:

The Yeats of the Celtic twilight – who seems to me to have been more the Yeats of the pre-Raphaelite twilight – uses Celtic folklore almost as William Morris uses Scandinavian folklore. His longer narrative poems bear the mark of Morris. Indeed, in the pre-Raphaelite phase, Yeats is by no means the least of the pre-Raphaelites [...] I think that the phase in which he treated Irish legend in the manner of Rossetti or Morris is a phase of confusion.⁴

Whilst Eliot is by no means complimentary of Yeats's Pre-Raphaelitism, his remarks point to the importance of the Pre-Raphaelites and Morris's poetics to Yeats's treatment of Irish

³ Yeats, 'Art and Ideas', p.346.

⁴ T. S. Eliot, 'Yeats', in *T. S. Eliot: On Poetry and Poets* (London: Faber and Faber 1984), pp.252-262 (p.256).

mythology. In a similar vein to Eliot, Graham Hough argues that while Yeats is still acknowledging his old Pre-Raphaelite influence as late as 1913 and its influence on Irish culture, Pre-Raphaelitism was for him a phase and represented 'mainly a movement of ideas'. For Hough, Yeats 'is not a very pictorial poet'.⁵ Contrastingly, in terms of Yeats's interest in the visual arts, Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux's *Yeats and the Visual Arts* argues that Yeats's relation to Pre-Raphaelitism has most often been discussed in terms of the poetry, but that for himself the connection was a matter of the visual arts. His early exposure to the Pre-Raphaelite cross-media alliance opens up a web of associations that bind his art or poetry to painting and sculpture. According to Loizeaux, Yeats makes it clear that defining his relation to Pre-Raphaelite art became a way of defining himself both as a man and as a poet.⁶

Across his autobiographical writings, Yeats defines the importance of Pre-Raphaelitism to his artistic and literary development. Yeats revelled in his Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts surroundings at Morris's house and, through his association with Morris, saw original Pre-Raphaelite works first-hand. In the drawing room of Morris's Kelmscott House in Hammersmith, Yeats describes how his 'sense of decoration was founded upon the background of Rossetti's pictures, was satisfied by a big cupboard painted with a scene from Chaucer by Burne-Jones'.⁷ These would have included one of the eight versions of Rossetti's *Proserpine* (1875), which Yeats refers to as 'Rossetti's *Pomegranate*', and the 'cupboard' (or wardrobe) that Burne-Jones had painted with scenes from Chaucer's 'The Prioress's Tale' for

⁵ Hough, *The Last Romantics*, p.217.

⁶ Loizeaux, *Yeats and the Visual Arts*, pp.1-6.

⁷ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.140

the occasion of William and Jane Morris's wedding in 1859.⁸ For Yeats to still be reflecting upon these objects over thirty years after having seen them, shows the impact they made on him, and reinforces Burne-Jones's and Morris's shared convictions about the meaningfulness of art in everyday life, a conviction Yeats himself shared. By referring to these items thirty years on, Yeats reminisces about art objects which were part of the formation of his aesthetic tastes and traditions that he continued to work with across his career.

For Pamela Binkley, Yeats's attitudes are shaped by his engagement with the aesthetic that emerges from Rossetti's fusion of poems, pictures and prose. Rossetti's belief in the essential spirituality of art would have appealed to Yeats's aesthetic, as would the mystical eroticism of his poetry and painting which captures both the beloved's physical beauty and a spiritual recognition beyond the physical towards an almost religious apprehension. In this way, Rossetti and Yeats position themselves as both artist and lover, often using mythical figures, to assume a private meaning yet also an artistic identity.⁹ Yeats's depictions of mythological female figures, Elizabeth Cullingford argues, follows the heroines of the neo-romantic and *fin-de-Siècle* movements by adopting Rossetti as a model who 'embraced a vision of woman as Priestess, Sibyl, or goddess'. Rossetti's mythic figures, such as in *Proserpine* and *Astarte Syriaca*, are invested with a power and vision of 'sinister' femininity.¹⁰ This Rossettian 'sinister' beauty is adopted by both Morris and Yeats in their portrayals of female mythic figures and is presented as a threatening and alluring power, as

⁸ Ibid., p.140.

⁹ Binkley, 'How They Met Themselves': Rossetti and Yeats in the 1890s', pp.56-79.

¹⁰ Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, *Gender and History in Yeats's Love Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993), pp.30- 32.

seen for example, in Morris's depiction of Gudrun in 'The Lovers of Gudrun' from *The Earthly Paradise* and Niamh in Yeats's early poem *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889).¹¹ Niamh's appearance is described as 'a pearl-pale, high-born lady', with lips 'like sunset', and 'down to her feet a white vesture flowed | And with glimmering crimson glowed | Of many a figured embroidery | As her soft bosom rose and fell'.¹² Her appearance is seemingly fashioned from both Rossetti's Blessed Damozel whose robe is 'ungirt from clasp to hem', as she leans over the bar 'her bosom must have made [...] warm', and Gudrun from Morris's *The Earthly Paradise*, who is described as having 'marvellous red lips' which are 'the snare of man', and as being clad in 'lordly raiment' with 'the hem of such-like hands as deal with silk and gold'.¹³ Niamh, in a similar way, becomes the embodiment of power and of both mysterious and threatening beauty, by luring Oisín away from his land and mortality. The Pre-Raphaelitism of the poem and of Yeats's portrayals of female figures, have been recognised.¹⁴ As Eliot argued, Yeats treats Irish myth as Morris treats Norse and Icelandic mythology, but in a way that both incorporates Pre-Raphaelitism and goes beyond it to incorporate Morris's political commitments and his own cultural nationalism, opening up the connection between myth and nationalism. It is in *The Wanderings of Oisín*, as I will examine later in the chapter, that Morris's influence as a poet, his treatment of myth, and the implications of his political thinking, is initially shown.

¹¹ Ibid., p.30.

¹² W. B. Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, ed. by Daniel Albright (London: J. M. Dent, Everyman 1999). ll.20-30.

¹³ D. G. Rossetti, 'The Blessed Damozel', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, ed. by William Michael Rossetti (London: Ellis and Elvey 1903), pp.232-236 (pp.232-3), 7, and 45-46. William Morris, 'The Lovers of Gudrun', in *The Earthly Paradise*, 13 edn (London: Longman's, Green and Co. 1910), pp.276-325 (p.277), 73-93.

¹⁴ See, for example, Loizeaux, *Yeats and the Visual Arts*, p.62 and Daniel Gomes, 'Reviving Oisín: Yeats and the Conflicted Appeal of Irish Mythology', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 56:4 (2014), 376-399 (p.376).

Yeats's admiration for Morris, initially as a key figure with Pre-Raphaelitism, was also as a man in his own right and for his range of talents. During the late 1880s, Yeats was a frequent visitor to Morris's Kelmscott House. Yeats's biographers, Roy Foster, Richard Ellmann, and Stephen Coote, all detail his early Pre-Raphaelite interests and his early association with Morris. Foster has noted that Morris was a 'hero' to Yeats and through his ideas about creative brotherhood, his crusade against the mass-produced values of Victorian capitalism and his promotion of the overriding claims of art upon life, provided Yeats with an example of how he had made his ideals work in constructing a successful life for himself.¹⁵ Coote argues that from his time with Morris's circle, Yeats's continual fascination with Morris's personality as 'both poet and activist, dreamer and warrior' is revealed in Yeats's later ideal of the antithetical man.¹⁶ Ellmann contends that the Yeatses were comparable in their achievement to the family of William Morris, with whom they had been friendly during the late 1880s and 1890s.¹⁷ Yeats's father, John Butler Yeats, and his brother, Jack Yeats were both painters and his sisters, Lily Yeats and Elizabeth Yeats, set up the Cuala Press, based on Morris's model at the Kelmscott Press, producing hand-printed books. Lily Yeats worked with May Morris in the embroidery department at Morris & Co during the 1880s. Yeats's contemporaries noted the extent of Morris's influence. In his obituary of W. B. Yeats in the *Evening Standard*, 30th January 1939, Oliver St. John Gogarty wrote 'He was the last of the Pre-Raphaelites. This did not spring to the eye at once, simply because it is shrouded in Celtic Twilight. And yet his master was William Morris'.¹⁸ In retelling Yeats's life, Gogarty chooses

¹⁵ Roy Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life, Volume 1: The Apprentice Mage 1865-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.64.

¹⁶ Stephen Coote, *W. B. Yeats: A Life* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1998), p.68.

¹⁷ Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (London: Penguin Books 1989), p.210.

¹⁸ Oliver St. John Gogarty, 'Evening Standard, 30th January 1939' in Dublin, National library of Ireland, Yeats Personal Papers, MS 30,899.

to do so through reference to Morris. In doing so, Gogarty reveals the extent and importance of Morris to Yeats throughout his life and career.

Despite the fact that many critics have previously noted the influence of Morris on Yeats, one of the most extensive studies of the relationship between these two figures remains Peter Faulkner's *William Morris and W.B. Yeats* (1962).¹⁹ Faulkner argues that the grounding for Morris's influence on Yeats is the 'impact of courageous personality; that of the vigorous social critic; and that of the poet and romance writer' but that the exact nature of Morris's influence has been left unexamined and is hard to isolate and confine.²⁰ It may be difficult to isolate one, or an exact, influence of Morris on Yeats, as Yeats was inspired precisely by the many facets of Morris's diverse range of achievements and how these achievements reflected Morris's humanity and personality. For Yeats, Morris is a single figure who captures so many talents and emotions; he is a dreamer and practical man, social and lonely, happy, passionate and angry, and both worldly and innocent. Throughout his writings, Yeats repeatedly refers to Morris's sense of joy and spontaneity and to his having 'more human nature than anybody else', emphasising Morris's passion and sheer energy – as Morris once claimed: 'If a chap can't compose an epic poem while he's weaving a tapestry, he had better shut up, he'll never do any good at all'.²¹ Yeats's fascination with the many aspects of

¹⁹ Other studies include David Pierce, *Yeats's Worlds: Ireland, England and the Poetic Imagination*, Elizabeth Cullingford, *Yeats, Ireland and Fascism* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd 1981) and Karen E. Brown, *The Yeats Circle, Verbal and Visual Relations in Ireland, 1880-1939* (New York: Routledge 2016).

²⁰ Peter Faulkner, *William Morris and W.B. Yeats*, (Dublin: The Dolmen Press 1962), pp.30-31.

²¹ W. B. Yeats, *Memoirs: Autobiography- First Draft*, ed. by Denis Donoghue (New York: The Macmillan Company 1972), p.24. J. W. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris: Two Volumes bound as One* (New York: Dover publications Inc. repr. 2003), p.186.

Morris's career is reflected in his own career. Both Morris and Yeats had a wider involvements in the arts, as public speakers, and political careers. Cullingford argues that Morris's influence is also felt in Yeats's utopianism, particularly his attitude towards social legislation in the Irish Senate.²² It even extended into his clothing. Yeats habitually wore blue shirts, which has often been associated with his brief interest in fascism, but was a habit he copied from Morris.²³ Yeats fashions himself on Morris's example.

Yeats's association with Morris is revealed in his avid interest in all the different aspects of Morris's career, as a poet, prose writer, social and political thinker, and for his personality. In his *Memoirs*, Yeats claims that when he first encountered Morris in person, he saw him as more of 'political and social thinker'. Whilst he knew Morris as a social and political thinker, he wishes that he had been more patient with Morris's 'working-men revolutionists' because if he had, 'I now might have come to know him as poet and artist, though I was still too obsessed with abstract ideas to measure all his worth'.²⁴ In Morris's own lifetime and in the decades after his death, Morris was most known for his poetry, and was even considered as a contender for Poet Laureate (which incidentally Yeats supported).²⁵ However, this was a position Morris would never have considered and one which did not sit with his political views. As evidenced, Yeats knew Morris's literary work intimately. From a young age he had enjoyed reading Morris's poetry, and the late prose romances, such as *The Well at the*

²² Elizabeth Cullingford, *Yeats, Ireland and Fascism*, p.26.

²³ *Ibid*, p.207. See also Coote, *W. B. Yeats: A Life*, p.533.

²⁴ Yeats, *Memoirs: Autobiography- First Draft*, p.21.

²⁵ W. B. Yeats, 'To The Editor of the Bookman, published November 1892', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.218-220, (pp.219-220).

World's End (1896), which during this time Morris had not yet written, were for Yeats 'so great a joy that they were the only books I was ever to read slowly that I might not come too quickly to the end'.²⁶ Yeats continued to read Morris's works throughout his life, although his reaction to Morris's literary works consists of a mixture of public and private admiration and repudiation. In his famous line, Yeats declares, 'To-day I do not set his poetry very high, but for an odd altogether wonderful line, or thought; and yet, if some angel offered me the choice, I would choose his life, poetry and all, rather than my own or any other man's'.²⁷ Yeats had often commented in his critical writings that he did not think highly of Morris's poetry nor regarded him 'among the greatest of the poets'.²⁸ But for Yeats, Morris did not have to be great poet in order to inspire his admiration. Yeats returns to Morris's poetry and according to Pound, would often pick Morris to read to him. In 1929, Yeats writes from Rapallo that he read Morris's *Defence of Guenevere* and some unfinished prose fragments to Pound, adding that 'I have come to fear the world's last great poetic period is over'.²⁹ At a time when Morris is considered to have been publicly out of fashion, here Yeats continues to engage with his earliest works.

He records how through these Socialist meetings, it was Morris's personality that now 'stirred' his interest, having 'discovered his spontaneity and joy and made him my chief of men'.³⁰ Hanging over Yeats's mantelpiece was George Frederic Watts's portrait of Morris

²⁶ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.141.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.141.

²⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'The Happiest of Poets', in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1961), pp.53-64 (p.64).

²⁹ W. B. Yeats, 'To Olivia Shakespear, March 2, 1929', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.758-759 (p.759).

³⁰ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.141.

(Figure 1.1) and he owned a Kelmscott Chaucer (1896), Morris's and Burne-Jones's collaborative project and printed by Morris's Kelmscott Press, which Yeats called 'the most beautiful of all printed books'.³¹ He apparently kept his Kelmscott Chaucer on display, between 'my great wooden lectern and the fire', as implied in his poem 'Presences' (1917) where it lies next to a dream procession of beautiful legendary women.³² In his personal library Yeats owned many works by Morris including *Defence of Guenevere* (1904), *The Well at the World's End* (1896), *News from Nowhere* (1891), *Useless Work Versus Useless Toil* (1886), *Art and the Beauty of the Earth* (1899), *Art and Its Producers and the Arts and Crafts of Today* (1901) and the twenty-four volumes of *The Collected Works of William Morris*, edited by May Morris, which Yeats and his wife, George Yeats, gifted to each other for Christmas in 1919.³³

³¹ His friends bought it as a gift for Yeats's fortieth birthday in 1905. W. B. Yeats, 'To John Quin, 29 June 1905', in *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats: Volume IV, 1905-1907*, ed. by John Kelly and Ronald Schuchard (New York: Oxford University Press 2005), pp.125-128 (p.125)

³² W. B. Yeats, 'Presences', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, p.204. 10.

³³ David Pierce, *Yeats's Worlds: Ireland, England and the Poetic Imagination*, p.96 and The Library of William Butler Yeats, Dublin, National Library of Ireland. Yeats owned a later edition of *Defence of Guenevere* from 1904. It may be that he did not own his own copy earlier or his father may have owned an earlier edition. The first volume of *The Collected Works of William Morris* is currently on display in the Yeats exhibition at the NLI in which Yeats and George Yeats have placed their personalised bookplates. Yeats has written that they belong to W. B. and George Yeats and were a present in December 1919.



1.1. George Frederic Watts, *William Morris*, (1870), National Portrait Gallery, London.

May Morris was instrumental in building a legacy for Morris. She edited her father's work, such as *The Collected Works of William Morris* in 24 volumes, published between 1910 and 1915, and *William Morris: Artist, Socialist, Writer* in 1936, including and publishing previously unknown fragments of his work. Critics David and Shelia Latham refer to May as the most indispensable scholar on Morris due to the introductions she provided for both these collections.³⁴ Yeats knew May Morris personally, having met her in 1887 and they continued to correspond, largely about William Morris's legacy, throughout their lives. John Quin, a mutual acquaintance of both Yeats and May Morris and collector of Morris's manuscripts, reports to her in a letter that Yeats told him 'that your introductions together were the best things yet done on your Father and his work- even better, he added, than

³⁴ David and Shelia Latham, *An Annotated Critical Bibliography of William Morris* (London: Palgrave Macmillan 1991), p.15.

Mackail'.³⁵ May Morris saw deficiencies in Mackail's *The life of William Morris* which she sought to rectify. As evidenced above, Yeats told her that he knew all of his work and in 1927, May Morris sent an appeal round Morris's circle to raise funds for her project of a Morris Memorial village hall in Kelmscott. She sent this appeal to Yeats, to which he replied that of course she could count on his support, writing 'I am exceedingly glad to be connected again, however slightly' to Morris.³⁶ In her ambition to create this memorial hall, May Morris is seeking not only to honour her father's memory but to bring together and celebrate his diverse achievements. In this letter, Yeats writes to her that 'the little drawing of the hall looks charming, just such a hall as Morris would have liked'.³⁷ The design follows a *News from Nowhere* concept of a hall with a meeting room, reading-room and recreation room. The scheme highlights the importance of place to Morris, especially his house Kelmscott Manor, and the village where he felt most at home. This sense of place and community is significant in his utopian novel *News from Nowhere*, for the 'epoch of rest' to which the protagonist and travellers return to is Morris's Kelmscott home. Here Yeats is engaging directly with Morris's legacy, and the social aspects of his vision.

In the years before his death, Yeats was still acknowledging Morris's inspiration, writing in a letter to Ethel Mannin in 1936: 'Of course I don't hate the people of England, considering all I owe to Shakespeare, Blake, Morris – they are the one people I cannot hate'.³⁸ In 'A General

³⁵ John Quinn, 'To May Morris, 4th June 1914', in *On Poetry, Painting, and Politics: The Letters of May Morris and John Quinn*, ed. by Janis Londravill (London: Associated Press 1997), pp.151-152 (p.152).

³⁶ Yeats, 'To May Morris, April 2, 1927', p.724.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.724.

³⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'To Ethel Mannin, 11 December 1936', in *W. B. Yeats: The Major Works*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008), pp.470-471 (p.470).

Introduction to My Work' (1937), in a very similar statement to what he wrote to Mannin, Yeats continues to reflect on the influence but is perhaps less publicly open in his acknowledgement of Morris: 'I owe my soul to Shakespeare, to Spenser and to Blake, perhaps to William Morris, and to the English language in which I think, speak, and write, that everything I love has come to me through English'.³⁹

Although his relationship with Morris has been explored in previous scholarship, there are still aspects of this influence that have been left unexamined. In this chapter, I will consider Yeats's enduring engagement with Morris's ideas, tracing their shared development from a private, lyrical Pre-Raphaelitism to a more social and public form of involvement. Morris's interests crossed boundaries and art forms, and as such Yeats's inspiration from Morris ranges across various forms, from his poetry, prose and critical writings, to his political legislation and lectures, emphasizing a cross-media alliance. The nexus between myth and nationalism, and Morris's engagement with Irish politics, and his influence on the establishment of the Abbey Theatre and Yeats's plays, has not been previously recognised to this extent. Morris's own writings on Irish politics have also received little attention. In following Yeats's career, the chapter will start with a biographical outline of his personal relationship to Morris and his involvement with the Hammersmith Branch of the Socialist League. It then comprises three sections, taking the following themes in a broadly chronological order: firstly, how Morris and Pre-Raphaelitism informed Yeats's depiction of mythology and his cultural nationalism; secondly, how Yeats works with Morris's legacy in

³⁹ W. B. Yeats, 'A General Introduction for my Work, in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.509-526 (p.519).

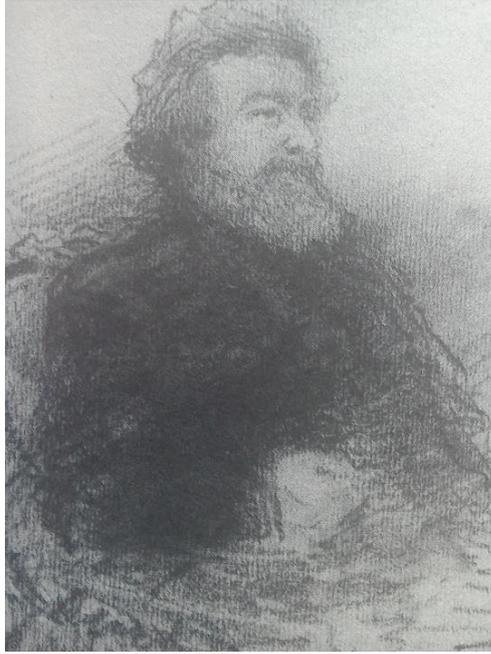
the establishment of the Abbey Theatre and with Morris's prose romances in his dramas; and finally, Yeats's retrospective assessments of Morris and the resonances in his late poetry and thought. In the last section, I suggest that Yeats's retrospective assessments of Morris occur across a range of forms and embrace new technologies of his time, including radio broadcasts.

Yeats's relationship with Morris

Yeats first met Morris at the Contemporary Club in Dublin 1886 where he had come to deliver a lecture on socialism (Figure 1.2). He was impressed by Morris's explanation of declining artistic standards and by his admiration for ancient Irish literature. He spoke to Morris about Irish poetry and mythological stories, asking Morris if he would lecture on them. Morris said that he had intended to, and would be glad to do so, except that his audience knew nothing about them.⁴⁰ Yeats later refers to this meeting in his essay 'Cuchlain of Muirthemne', stating in their discussion about old Irish stories and the battle of Clontarf, that Morris's words 'have so great authority'.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Coote, *W. B. Yeats: A Life* p.58.

⁴¹ W. B. Yeats, 'Cuchlain of Muirthemne', in *Explorations* pp.3-13 (p.8).



1.2. John Butler Yeats, *Sketch of William Morris*, (1886), National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

During the late 1880s, Yeats regularly attended meetings of Morris's Socialist League in Hammersmith. In his letters from this period, he writes that he likes 'Morris greatly', particularly how he 'talks freely about everything' and claims that he 'turned Socialist because of Morris's lectures and pamphlets'.⁴² Morris's (and the Socialist League's) support for the Irish Nationalists and Home Rule seems to have strongly appealed to Yeats. The League defined themselves as anti-imperialist, declaring that 'the foreign policy of the great internationalist socialist party must be to break up these hideous race monopolies called empires, beginning in each case at home'.⁴³ During this period, Morris was a keen observer of events in Ireland and wrote many articles on Ireland for *Commonweal*. In these he

⁴² W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, 9 July 1887', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.43-44 (p.44). and Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.146.

⁴³ Ernest Belfort Bax, 'Imperialism vs. Socialism', (1885) <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/bax/1885/02/imperialism.htm>> [Date accessed: 10 April 2017], pp.2-3 (p.3).

explores the complexities of the Irish political situation and often views the imperialist relationship in Capitalist terms, with England positioned as a master, misgoverning and exploiting the Irish nation. Morris's views are exemplified in his *Commonweal* article 'Ireland and Italy: A Warning' (1885) in which he writes 'once the Irish people have got rid of their masters, Irish and English both, there will, I repeat, be no foreigners to hate in Ireland, and she will look back on the present struggle for mere nationality as a nightmare of the charmed sleep in which Landlordism and Capitalism have held her so long, as they have other nations'.⁴⁴ Although not a socialist like his friend Morris, Burne-Jones was an ardent supporter of the Irish nationalists in the Home Rule campaigns of the 1880s and met Charles Stewart Parnell, the Irish Nationalist leader, going to the courts in 1888 to support him during his trial for allegedly condoning the Phoenix Park murders of 1882. Yeats pays considerable and eager attention to accounts of Burne-Jones, particularly to his political concerns. In a letter from 1887, Yeats writes to Katherine Tynan that he has heard that 'Burne-Jones is a furious Home Ruler, says he would be a Dynamiter if an Irishman'.⁴⁵ The attention Yeats pays to Burne-Jones's interest in Irish politics aligns with the appeal of Morris's involvement.

Yeats pays particular attention to Morris's reading of Irish poetry, reporting in his letters to John O' Leary, the Fenian leader, that 'William Morris praises much Hyde's stories in Folklore book' (the Folklore book which Yeats had edited himself) and 'that he thinks Moore much

⁴⁴ William Morris, 'Ireland and Italy: A Warning', in *Political Writings: Contributions to Justice and Commonweal 1883-1890*, ed. by Nicholas Salmon (Bristol: Thoemmes Press 1994), pp.107-110 (p.110).

⁴⁵ W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, 8th May 1887', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.34-35 (p.35).

underrated nowadays'.⁴⁶ Morris was also friends with the Irish Pre-Raphaelite poet, William Allingham, whom Yeats admired and regarded as one of his predecessors, working towards a tradition of Irish writing in English. Yeats claims that he took from Allingham his 'passion for country Spiritism', and his interest in Irish folklore precedes Yeats's.⁴⁷ The lack of knowledge about Irish literature and culture, that Yeats reports Morris's commenting on, was something that Morris and his associates at the Socialist League were trying to remedy; for example, Henry Halliday Sparling (then the editor of *Commonweal* and Morris's intended son-in-law) was editing an anthology of Irish poetry called *Irish Minstrelsy* and Yeats heard him give a lecture on 'Irish Rebel Songs' at one of Morris's Sunday Hammersmith gatherings. For the second edition of *Irish Minstrelsy* (1888), Sparling sought Yeats's advice and would feature his poem 'The Ballad of Father O' Hart'. Yeats's involvement in Morris's Socialist League occurred around the time of the writing of *The Wanderings of Oisín* and *Crossways* (1886-1889) and this environment supported Yeats and, notwithstanding the League's internationalist stance, helped foster his early and developing cultural and political nationalism. The League's sympathy towards the Irish cause reinforced and was compatible with the nationalism of John O' Leary. O' Leary was another figure who Yeats was involved with during this period and another influential figure to whom he returned throughout his life.

⁴⁶ W. B. Yeats, 'To John O' Leary, August 4 1887,' in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.47-48 (p.48) and W. B. Yeats, 'To John O' Leary, Nov. 19 1888', pp.94-95 (p.94).

⁴⁷ W. B. Yeats, 'Poetry and Tradition', in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.246-260 (p.248).

Yeats attended a performance of Morris's socialist play *The Tables Turned; or Nupkins Awakened* in 1888, sending copies of the play along with Morris's Socialist poems to his acquaintances, writing that Morris 'really acts very well'.⁴⁸ Although inspired by Morris's socialist visions and ideals, and having been asked by Morris to write on the Irish question for the *Commonweal*, Yeats adds 'though I think socialism good work, I am not sure that it is my work'.⁴⁹ Eventually, Yeats no longer attended Socialist League meetings after a fierce row broke out over the speed with which the revolution would come. Yeats, 'with all the arrogance of ranging youth' questioned why the revolution should advance with 'astronomical slowness' and argued that the required change of heart could be affected only by religion, which did not please a largely atheistic group.⁵⁰ He adds that the group's attitude towards religion vexed him, apart from Morris, who avoided the subject altogether. Afterward, Morris told Yeats over supper that he had rung the chairman's bell, not to silence him, but to close a debate in which the young man was not being understood. He also added that the necessary change of heart might come more quickly than Yeats supposed.⁵¹ Yeats, whilst maintaining his admiration for Morris, discards his medievalism, commenting that if he had continued to attend Morris's meetings 'I should have caught fire from his words and turned my hand to some mediaeval work or other'.⁵² Here Yeats seems to make a choice not fulfil this aspect of Morris's programme, even though it appeals to him. Despite this choice

⁴⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, June 20 1888', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.76-77 (p.77).

⁴⁹ W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, July 1887', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.42-43 (p.42).

⁵⁰ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.148.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.149.

⁵² Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.146.

not to take up Morris's medievalism, Yeats used mythology in a very similar way to Morris's medievalism, to exemplify cultural, artistic and social ideals.

Despite leaving the Socialist League, Yeats encountered Morris again, after the publication of *The Wanderings of Oisín* which Morris apparently told Yeats was his 'sort of poetry'.⁵³

Throughout his autobiographical writings, he repeatedly refers to this accolade from Morris and of his hopes regarding Morris's intention to review the poem in *Commonweal* (which did not happen).⁵⁴ Yeats claims that he sent his poem to May Morris, hoping that it would meet Morris's eyes, and believed that Morris would have said more about his poem, during their meeting, if he had not then caught sight of a new ornamental cast-iron lamppost and proceeded to get very heated on the subject.⁵⁵ This encounter, though presented by Yeats as a comic vignette, emphasises Morris's anger and his long rallying against the perceived ugliness of Victorian materialism and industrialism and the capitalist system that it represented. It also emphasises the ideas of Morris that would remain of lifelong importance to Yeats. Morris's works and ideas offered Yeats a utopian and socialist vision of the world which appealed to his nationalist purposes and to his ideas about art. It presented Yeats with a vision of a nation freed from materialism and modernisation, and a search for a lost organic community based upon historical or mythic ideals. This was evident, initially, in Yeats's early use of mythology and his workings with Morris's earlier epic and mythological poetry.

⁵³ Ibid., p.146.

⁵⁴ See W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, Jan 24th 1889', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.102-103 (p.102).

⁵⁵ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.146.

Nationhood, Community and Tradition

Yeats's inspiration from the second-generation Pre-Raphaelites is most evident in his treatment of mythology and mythological subjects. Morris's poetry and ideas provided the model for the Celtic Revivalism that Yeats was keen to create in his mythological and nationalist poem, *The Wanderings of Oisín*. Morris's poetry, particularly *The Life and Death of Jason* and the tales of *The Earthly Paradise*, refashions ancient legends into distinctively Pre-Raphaelite narratives. Similarly, *The Wanderings of Oisín* refashions the adventures of Oisín from the Fenian cycle of myth, telling of Oisín's adventures in the otherworld, through the three islands of Dancing, Victories and Forgetfulness, after he is lured away from his Fenian comrades by Niamh, a woman of the Sidhe.⁵⁶ Morris's treatment of mythologies, such as Jason's voyage to bring back the Golden Fleece, epitomises ancient narratives as quest tales. His refashioning of these tales partakes of Romantic sensibilities and Pre-Raphaelite intensity of visual details. His visions of the ancient world are filled with pictorial details and the decorative arts, with interiors adorned by tapestries and characters engaging in creative processes. In *The Earthly Paradise*, Morris calls attention to the artistry involved in communicating stories. In 'The Lady of the Land' and 'The Watching of the Falcon' from *The Earthly Paradise*, 'glorious hangings' of gold, reds and blues, cover the walls 'inwrought' with 'stories of the ancient time'.⁵⁷ Tapestries, within the poems, are posited as not only having a utilitarian function, but as another ancient form of creating and re-telling stories. They are emblems of narrative art within the poems, presenting visual interpretations of

⁵⁶ The Sidhe in Irish means the people of the mounds. These mounds are thought to be the homes of the Sidhe, supernatural beings or fairy people in Irish mythology. Yeats writes about the origins of the word and the variations of the word in fairy and folktales in his *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry* (1888) and *Irish Fairy Tales* (1892). See W. B. Yeats, *The Book of Fairy and Folk Tales of Ireland* (London: Bounty Books 2015), pp.11-12.

⁵⁷ William Morris, 'The Watching of the Falcon' in *The Earthly Paradise*, 13 edn., pp.154-162 (p.156). ll.213-215.

historical or mythological stories which provide a sense of history and beauty. Morris was responsible for the revival of this antique craft, particularly medieval tapestry, within the Arts and Crafts movement. Like early Pre-Raphaelite paintings, Morris's tapestries, such as *The Quest of the Holy Grail* series, capture moments within chosen narratives creating colourful, dramatic and symbolic scenes. In 'The Watching of the Falcon' the King reads down the hall the tales 'wrought' on the tapestries of the stories of Venus, the Argo and the Golden Fleece, and Circe and Ulysses. We are told that he consults these tapestries to see if they would tell him about the 'matter that he sought'.⁵⁸ Like the overall narrator of *The Earthly Paradise*, the wanderers and their hosts telling the tales are refashioning and reviving tales of the past through storytelling. The use of tapestries heightens decorativeness and provides a patterning of the tales which are emulated in the structure of *The Earthly Paradise*, with its tales organised by the months of the year.

Similarly, the descriptions in *The Wanderings of Oisín* are often visualised like tapestries and show Yeats's attraction to pictured narrative subjects and the importance of visualised narrative for his symbolic landscapes. Loizeaux argues that the decorativeness of tapestries, especially Morris's, appealed to Yeats's preference for non-mimetic art and informed his use of pattern and decorativeness in his poetry.⁵⁹ Yeats's interest in visualised narrative and tapestry would have been reinforced by the Arts and Crafts surroundings and environment of Morris's Hammersmith home and the Pre-Raphaelite emphasis on the connection between visual art and literature. The most prominent example of symbolic landscape and

⁵⁸ Morris, 'The Watching of the Falcon', ll.226-239.

⁵⁹ Loizeaux, *Yeats and the Visual Arts*, pp.57-60.

coloured pattern in the poem occurs when Oisín and Niamh are riding away from Oisín's country to the first island in the otherworld, where the moon like 'a white rose shone' and where immortal silence sleeps 'dreaming of her own melting hues, | Her golds, her ambers, and her blues'.⁶⁰ On the first island they dance in heavily Pre-Raphaelite inspired surroundings, amidst the 'damask roses' which bloom 'like crimson meteors in the gloom' and through the 'windless woods' and 'ever-summered solitudes'.⁶¹ Whilst the poem portrays, as Loizeaux suggests, Yeats's philosophical attraction to the connection between art and poetry as an ideal, he also refers to the processes of creation and to its materiality. In the poem, there are images connected to the process of sewing and tapestry; Niamh wears a dress that glowed with 'many a figured embroidery' and Grania 'walking and smiling, sewed with her needle of bone'.⁶² The process of weaving is aligned to the creation of the story and of images in Yeats's poem 'The Man who dreamed of Faeryland' (1888) where the persona dreams of 'a woven world-forgotten isle' under 'that woven changeless roof of boughs'.⁶³ *The Wanderings of Oisín* repeatedly portrays, especially on the island of Dancing, a vision of united arts and an image of life and art, where the inhabitants dance without thought.

The dream worlds of *The Earthly Paradise* and *The Wanderings of Oisín* are landscapes with symbolic potential, of a search for an Earthly Paradise, through a past or ancient world of heroic epic and sagas. Oisín's tale 'must live to be old like the wandering moon' and, like the Wanderers in *The Earthly Paradise*, Oisín seeks to keep his story alive by recounting it to St.

⁶⁰ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.152 & 162-163.

⁶¹ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.305-306 & 320-321.

⁶² Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.27 & 94.

⁶³ W. B. Yeats, 'The Man who dreamed of Faeryland', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, ll.8-11.

Patrick, as he is weakened and dying in the mortal world, with the promise of immortality having been denied.⁶⁴ The Elders of the City deem the Wanderers to be 'learned in memories of a long-past day' and bid them to tell them stories of their quest for paradise.⁶⁵ In this respect, Oisín and the Wanderers become the embodiments of a heroic and creative ideal, retelling their quests in the role of the poet and depicting the relationship between art and the world. Through the act of storytelling to an audience, both within the poem and to their readers, Morris and Yeats show how these mythologies are being remodelled for their current audience. Their cyclical nature displays how these narratives are reinterpreted over time and for future generations. As Yeats notes of the resurgence in Celtic legends, 'for every new fountain of legends is a new intoxication for the imagination of the world'.⁶⁶ The heroes of old exist sleeping on the island of Forgetfulness and even as Oisín forgets his past, his dreams are overtaken by his own cycle of Irish mythological heroes, including the 'tall' Fergus and Grania, and figures from the other cycles of Irish myth, such as the kings of 'the Red Branch'.⁶⁷ The tales themselves memorialise their protagonists' deeds and are made into examples and emblems for emulation for the singers, narrators and audiences within the poem and more widely.

In conveying their tales to a wider audience, Morris and Yeats emphasise the transnational nature of myth. This emphasis is seen most predominantly in *The Earthly Paradise* through the retellings of various mythologies and tales. Yeats's imagined national community in *The*

⁶⁴ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.12.

⁶⁵ William Morris, 'Prologue: The Wanderers' in *The Earthly Paradise*, 13 edn., pp.3-29 (p.4) ll.67.

⁶⁶ W. B. Yeats, 'The Celtic Element in Literature', in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.173-188 (p.187).

⁶⁷ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.87&89.

Wanderings of Oisín, creating a nation with an image of its own identity and community joined together through the poem's use of Irish myth, is given an international audience through its publication outside of Ireland, in London. This way, Yeats uses the nationalist aspects of the poem to seek transnational sympathies. Yeats is also insistent about the importance of legends for nationhood and his readership in Ireland; in his review of Samuel Ferguson's poetry (1886), he 'holds it the duty of every Irish reader to study those [legends] of his own country till they are familiar as his own hands, for in them is the Celtic heart'.⁶⁸ Yeats and Morris, through the poetic voices of the Wanderers and of Oisín, seek to create a communal narrative and poetic form. As such, their view of the past is not antiquarian but one which deepens the sense of utopian communitarianism and a desire to regain understanding from their readers through cultural memory. As Florence S. Boos argues, Morris and his narrator are 'aware that most records have been obliterated, they believe that tales and fragments which do survive help recreate a social or communal history of human emotion'.⁶⁹ The Wanderers and their Hosts exchange tales they have learned from their ancestors; the Wanderers' tales create more of a communal history through the coherence and familiarity of Greek myth as opposed to the polyphony of medieval legend recounted by the Hosts. In sharing these stories to their audiences, the Wanderers, the Hosts, and Oisín create a sense of social and communal history out of their emotions and restore a sense of community or kinship, a notion of great importance to Morris's artistic and utopian vision.

⁶⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson-II', in *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats, Volume IX: Early Art; Uncollected Works, Early Articles and Reviews*, ed. by John F. Frayne and Madeline Marchaterre, (New York: Scribner 2004), pp.10-27 (p.27).

⁶⁹ Florence. S. Boos, 'The Argument of "The Earthly Paradise" *Victorian Poetry*, 23:1 (1985),75-92 (p.88).

The Wanderers, despite failing in their quest, still have some form of fellowship or community and are granted hospitality by the city, where they can live out the rest of their lives. When Oisín is away from his comrades, his memories of the past and the fellowship of the Fenians are always plagued by human sadness. When he finally returns the comrades he has longed for have been dead for years. Oisín's longing for community and fellowship affects him throughout his travels; after a period of one hundred years on each island, he is disturbed by memories of his Fenian comrades. On the first island a broken lance washed up onto the shore allows Oisín to remember how the Fenians stepped on the 'blood-bedabbled plains' and on the second he recalls memories of the 'white-haired Finn'. On the third, he is haunted by dreams of the Fenians and his sadness in forgetting his fellow warriors and of the battles fought and weapons fashioned together.⁷⁰ Similarly, in Morris's *A Dream of John Ball*, written around this time in 1888, the notion of brotherhood and fellowship are vital as John Ball declares to his followers 'fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell: fellowship is life, and lack of fellowship is death: and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them'.⁷¹ The notions of fellowship and the community formed through this ideal perpetuated by Morris show their impact upon Yeats's portrayal of brotherhood or fellowship in *The Wanderings of Oisín*, as it is to the Fenian brotherhood that Oisín longs to return to. The deeds he performed were as a fellowship and are representative of his mortal life. In lacking and longing for their fellowship, he defies St.

⁷⁰ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.371 & ll.227.

⁷¹ William Morris, *A Dream of John Ball* in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, ed. by G. D. H. Cole (London: Nonesuch Press 1948) pp.198-266 (p.212).

Patrick's damnation; he will 'dwell in the house of the Fenians, be they in flames or at feast'.⁷² Fellowship, for Oisín, is in life and death.

The presentation of community is central to Yeats's cultural and political nationalism within *The Wanderings of Oisín*. Oisín, despite being physically removed from the Fenians and his country, is always part of an imagined community evoked by his memories and his hopes for returning to his nation. In this sense, the nation and community within the poem are shown to be distinguished by the styles in which they are imagined: to quote Benedict Anderson, as a community 'regardless of the actual inequality that may prevail in each' where 'the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship', making it possible for so many people 'to die for such limited imaginings'.⁷³ Yeats conjures up an image of a community as a means of identification, a nation with an image of its own identity, founded on Irish myth, using this mythology to imagine a spiritual pre-Christian world, in which equality has arisen through comradeship. Oisín's idea of nationhood is evoked through comradeship and he is willing to die for his imaginings, in order to join his comrades. The Fenians become representative of the nation and Oisín and St. Patrick are given historical and political roles, both as symbols of Ireland and of nationhood; Oisín is identified with the Celtic revival and St. Patrick as the man who brought Christianity to Ireland. In Yeats's poem, St. Patrick becomes the figure who historically led the moment when the age of heroes (as seen in the figure of Oisín) has passed and is dying. Oisín is an integral part of an imaginative culture and

⁷² Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.224.

⁷³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 3 edn. (London: Verso 2006) pp.6-7.

community. His agency as the protagonist is to rally a sense of community and be part of a cultural revival that forms an expression of national identity. In his early reviews, Yeats praises heroic poetry and heroic deeds in poetry inspired by Celtic myth and legends, like Oisín's, as a means to rally this sense of community and national identity, addressed 'to those young men clustered here and there throughout our land, whom the emotion of Patriotism has lifted into that world of selfless passion in which heroic deeds are possible and heroic poetry credible'.⁷⁴ Ireland is always present within the poem, not through specific places names, but through myth and sites associated with mythology such as Maeve's burial ground (Knockneara, reported to be in Co. Sligo). The nation and community are distinguished through Yeats's use of myth, positing Celtic myth as being the means to provide commonality.⁷⁵ For Yeats and Morris, the shared past is at once heroic and subjective. It is heroic in providing an emblem of commonality, an example which is tied to an immortal ideal of heroic deeds and presents heroic figures like Oisín and the Wanderers encountering death and arriving at a state of mind that allows for freedom and intensity of vision. It is subjective to the heroic figures themselves, either through their representation or their re-telling of their own tales. It is also subjective to Morris and Yeats as writers, whose ideals and uses of myth are tied to their own individual interests and agendas. For Yeats, this was part of nationalist agenda and for Morris, in *The Earthly Paradise* and *Sigurd the Volsung*, part of his emerging socialist and internationalist perspective.

⁷⁴ W. B. Yeats, 'The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson-II', in *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats, Volume IX: Early Art; Uncollected Works, Early Articles and Reviews*, pp.10-27 (p.27).

⁷⁵ See Daniel Gomes, 'Reviving Oisín: Yeats and the Conflicted Appeal of Irish Mythology', pp. 376-399.

The legend of Oisín depicts a golden age of the past on which Yeats believed that the future and the identity of a nation could be built. Yeats sought to create a new cultural identity for his country, taken from a shared imaginative culture of mythology, writing in 1887 'I feel more and more that we shall have a school of Irish poetry – founded on Irish myth and history – a neo-romantic movement'.⁷⁶ In this 'neo-romantic' movement, Yeats incorporates elements of early nineteenth-century Romanticism, envisioning a visionary landscape of myth in opposition to realism and materialism. Again, Morris provided a model, in tales such as 'The Lovers of Gudrun' and his epic poem *Sigurd the Volsung*, demonstrating to Yeats the refashioning of great heroic stories. Morris's distinctive way of turning myth into poetry, as seen in his attempt to galvanise old Northern mythologies in these two poems, appealed to Yeats and offered a different model than that of other Victorian writers such as Tennyson. Morris, in his use of myth, is very much aware of the relationship between his own time and the distant past. The narrator of *The Earthly Paradise* instructs the reader to forget 'six countries over hung with smoke' and 'the hideous town' and to dream of an alternative space, recreating for the reader an ancient 'nameless city in the distant sea'.⁷⁷ In *Sigurd the Volsung* Morris does not refashion myth into a conventional Victorian narrative or appeal to popular tastes, as in Tennyson's use of Arthurian legend in *Idylls of the King*. He instead seeks to completely recreate the ancient past and make an equivalent to the heroic age from which the original source material, the Volsunga Saga and the Elder Edda, was written. Morris does not moralise or actively nationalise his use of myth for patriotic purposes but rather uses it as a way to measure past values against modern civilisation. As exemplified in

⁷⁶ W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, April 1887', in *Letters of W. B. Yeats* pp.33-34 (p.34).

⁷⁷ Morris, 'Prologue: The Wanderers' in *The Earthly Paradise*, ll.1-17.

the quotes from *The Earthly Paradise*, Morris's recreation of myth offers the possibility of transformation and of utilising the values of the past in a transformed future. Simon Dentith argues that through Morris's attempt to reactivate old Northern material, *Sigurd the Volsung* is 'the most prominent nineteenth-century instance of epic primitivism, the belief that epic poetry springs from the social conditions of pre-modern, "heroic" society'.⁷⁸ In both *Sigurd the Volsung* and *The Wanderings of Oisín*, the use of the heroic epic exemplifies the social conditions of a pre-modern heroic society in contrast to the modern world. In using the heroic epic, it confronts the values that they both believe are lacking in the modern world and conflicts that have arisen through time.

The structure of *The Wanderings of Oisín* is set by a confrontation between a pagan hero and Christian saint. *The Earthly Paradise* is framed through the opposition of wanderers' retelling of medieval Christian stories and their hosts' tales of pre-Christian myth, based upon ancient tales and mythologies. Walter Pater, in his review of Morris's poetry, noted the 'pagan spirit' of *The Earthly Paradise*.⁷⁹ As noted in the biographical introduction, Morris had a lack of interest in religion; indeed, C. S. Lewis, in his essay on Morris remarked that 'he is the most irreligious of our poets'.⁸⁰ The distinct lack of religion in Morris's work appealed to Yeats's disbelief in organised religion but also led to some disagreements with Morris and the Socialist League. Yeats disagreed with the Socialist League's attack on religion. In his *Memoirs*, Yeats writes that in this debate he argued for 'the dependence of all ideas of

⁷⁸ Simon Dentith, 'Morris, 'The Great Story of the North', and the Barbaric Past', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 14:2 (2009), 238-254 (p.239).

⁷⁹ Walter Pater, 'Poems by William Morris' (1868), <https://www.uni-due.de/lyriktheorie/texte/1868_pater1.html> [Date accessed: 28th November 2019], p.309.

⁸⁰ C. S. Lewis, 'William Morris', in *Rehabilitations and Other Essays* (London: Oxford University Press 1939) pp.37-55 (p.42).

equality of wealth on Christianity'.⁸¹ Morris's writings on his visit to Dublin in 1885 show that he viewed religion as an impediment to socialism in Ireland:

When Home Rule is established the Catholic Clergy will begin to act after their kind, and try after more and more power till the Irish gorge rises and rejects them. The Protestant religious feeling being dogmatic and not political, is hopeless to deal with.⁸²

Morris's ambiguous stance on religion is at odds with Yeats's interest in religion and with his spiritual or occultist beliefs. Yeats's own use of myth, as part of the Irish Literary Revival, espoused a different form of nationalism than that of institutions like The Gaelic League, a form which was not connected to state or to religion, or to a Catholic nationalism. Instead, Yeats used Gaelic material as the basis for a revitalised Irish literature in English, and like Morris, looked to ancient pre-Christian narratives and a pre-modern past and its spiritual beliefs as a means of revivifying and remaking Irish national culture. In a 1904 lecture, Yeats envisions Ireland as a place in which they will 'preserve an ancient way of life' and will have its heroes; there will 'be an imaginative culture and power to understand imaginative and spiritual things distributed among the people'.⁸³ In his cultural nationalism, he seeks to exemplify a way of life, and a shared imaginative past and traditions, before commercialism and 'the vulgarity' upon which it was founded, but also partaking of a spirituality that Morris does not exemplify.

⁸¹ W. B. Yeats, *Memoirs: Autobiography- First Draft*, p.21

⁸² William Morris, 'Socialism in Dublin and Yorkshire', in *Political Writings: Contributions to Justice and Commonwealth 1883-1890*, pp.139-143 (p.140).

⁸³ W. B. Yeats 1904 lecture, quoted in Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*, p.104.

Sigurd the Volsung differs from the structures of *The Earthly Paradise* and *The Wanderings of Oisín* through retelling and setting the ancient narrative in its own distant past, evoking a pre-modern world where the people determine their lives by 'the way of fate' and 'the Gods were unforgotten' and 'walk with men'.⁸⁴ Morris defined the story of Sigurd as 'the Great story of the North, which should be to all our race what the Tale of Troy was to the Greeks'.⁸⁵ Here Morris indicates that *Sigurd the Volsung* was possibly his attempt at a national epic and is concerned with national origins of imaginative culture. Likewise, *The Wanderings of Oisín* nationalises myth in Yeats's attempt to form a new cultural identity and a story, as Morris expresses it, which can be claimed as 'ours'. Yeats displays the effects of nationalising myth in his essay on the poetry of Samuel Ferguson, where he writes 'of all the many things the past bequeaths to the future, the greatest are the great legends; they are the mothers of the nation'.⁸⁶ Yeats's ideas about nationhood were supported at the time by John O' Leary and drew on O' Leary's conviction that no nation could be truly independent until it had an image of its own identity, most powerfully expressed in its literature. Yeats's interest in nationality is based on the idea of the birth of the nation and on a past or imaginative culture which informs this. His culmination of myth and literature emerges as a narrative of the nation and for the nation.

⁸⁴ William Morris, *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs*, 5 edn., (London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1896). II.8-9.

⁸⁵ William Morris, *Völsunga Saga: The Story of the Volsungs and Niblungs, with Certain Songs from the Elder Edda* (1870), trans. by Eiríkr Magnússon, quoted in Simon Dentith, 'Morris, 'The Great Story of the North', and the Barbaric Past', pp.238-254 (p.238).

⁸⁶ Yeats, 'The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson-II', pp.10-27 (pp.26-27).

Morris and Yeats associate old heroic values with a vision of the future, redeemed by historical values and artistic expression. Morris claimed, like Yeats, that 'the past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make'.⁸⁷ Mythology, as a narrative and language of the past, is employed within the present and for both Morris and Yeats, has resonance for the future and utopian purposes. The myths, despite being concerned with the heroes of old, are advanced as being narratives for the people, harkening back to a society that contains their historical ideals and none of the materialism and modernisation that Morris and Yeats rejected from their own times. Yeats was hugely concerned with the future of Ireland, as was Morris. Morris supported Home Rule but was wary of Irish nationalism and its limitations. In his article 'Ireland and Italy: A Warning', Morris urges Ireland to deal with or take matters into their own hands but writes that 'it may well be that Ireland must become national before she can be international'.⁸⁸ This notion of the 'national' is precisely what Yeats was seeking to achieve through the arts, which at this time was beginning to evolve through his developing nationalism. 'We are internationalists not nationalists', Morris wrote to a correspondent, 'yet we sympathise with the Irish revolt against English tyranny'.⁸⁹ Morris rejoiced in the damage that Irish nationalism would have for the British Empire but conceded that it would do little to advance the socialist cause. He believed that the solution to Ireland's problems could only be found through international revolution. Using Italy as an example, he writes that in if

⁸⁷ William Morris, *Signs of Change*

<<https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1888/signs/chapters/chapter1.htm>> [Date accessed: 4th December 2019].

⁸⁸ Morris, 'Ireland and Italy: A Warning', pp.107-110 (p.107).

⁸⁹ William Morris, 'To James Mavor, March 26, 1885', in *The Collected Letters of William Morris: Volume II 1885-1888*, ed. by Norman Kelvin (Surrey: Princeton University Press 1987), pp.409-411 (p.410).

Ireland followed 'their revolution shall be part of the great international movement; they will then be rid of all the foreigners that they want rid of'.⁹⁰

Morris's *The Pilgrims of Hope* (1885), set in the nineteenth century, emphasises his and the League's anti-imperialist stance. When the two lovers encounter a march in London, Morris clearly criticises and mocks the notion of Empire and of imperialism. The cry emerges from 'the heart of the nation against the foe furled', from 'the ordered anger of England' and of 'the dread and the blessing of England to help the world at its need'.⁹¹ In *The Wanderings of Oisín*, Oisín and Niamh save a lady with 'soft eyes', 'sad mouth' and a face 'wrought out of moonlight vapours' who is chained and imprisoned by a demon.⁹² The lady becomes, as part of Yeats' nationalist cause, an allegory of the imperialist relations between England and Ireland. However, for Morris, whilst Home Rule would achieve national freedom, it would do nothing to alleviate the poverty that remained due to the class system. For Morris, it seemed likely that Ireland 'will have to go through the dismal road of peasant-proprietorship before they get to anything like Socialism; and that road, in a country so isolated and so peculiar as Ireland may be a long one'.⁹³

⁹⁰ Morris, 'Ireland and Italy: A Warning', pp.107-110 (p.110). See also Fintan Lane, 'William Morris & Irish Politics', *History Ireland*, 8:1 (2000), 22-25.

⁹¹ William Morris, *The Pilgrims of Hope* in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, ed. By G. D. H. Cole, (London: Nonesuch Press 1948), pp.355-408, ll.43-47.

⁹² Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.69-71.

⁹³ William Morris, 'Socialism in Dublin and Yorkshire', p.141.

Despite Morris's claims for a 'Great story of the North', *Sigurd the Volsung* is not a nationalist poem. Although Morris had not yet become a Socialist, his views about the poem seem noticeably international. Morris continues on to say that the story of Sigurd will be like the tale of Troy to 'our race first' and 'afterwards, when the change of the world has made our race nothing more than a name of what has been' it will be a story that will be to future generations what Troy has been to his present generation.⁹⁴ Morris points to the universality of myth and the ability to reformulate stories for future generations and through various means of expression. He also shows how myth is differentiated by national or ethnic heritage from a modern or contemporary viewpoint and according to the context in which the text was written. Yeats too considers the adjusting of myth through modern perceptions, writing that figures such as Helen and Deirdre 'have come out of legends and are indeed but the images of the primitive imagination in the little looking-glass of the modern and classic imagination'.⁹⁵ In this respect, the modernising influence over myth is shown by St. Patrick in *The Wanderings of Oisín* as he is placed as the figure who exercises control over Oisín through his judgements and thus over the imaginative culture of a mystical and mythical world. Morris and Yeats in their adaption of mythologies were obviously aware of the challenges posed by rewriting the distant past from a changed and modern worldview and the control that is exercised by this difference over their original source material.

⁹⁴ Morris, *Völsunga Saga: The Story of the Volsungs and Niblungs, with Certain Songs from the Elder Edda*, quoted in Simon Dentith, 'Morris, 'The Great Story of the North', and the Barbaric Past', p.238.

⁹⁵ Yeats, 'The Celtic Element in Literature', pp.173-188 (p.182).

Yeats's use of myth and its initial advancement of the political agenda of his cultural nationalism, often adopts traditional Irish literature, using female mythic and legendary figures to represent or embody the Irish cause. In nationalist discourse, there is an allegorical identification of Ireland with a woman, namely as a matriarchal figure, connected to sovereignty. The trope of Ireland as a woman most frequently appears in forms such as a mythic goddess or heroine, wherein Ireland is represented as a beautiful woman; as Mother Ireland, whose sorrows reflect the nation's plight; or as an *aisling* figure where Ireland appears to the poet in a vision or dream in the form of a woman. As such, through these representations or allegories of Ireland as a woman, the national discourses take gender and sexuality as the inspiration and implications for political action. Marjorie Howes argues that 'both the masculinist Irish nationalist and English traditions linked Ireland's colonial status to femininity; poverty, slavery and failure suppressed rather than constituted true "masculine" Irish identity'.⁹⁶ In this respect, Yeats incorporates British imperialist and Irish nationalist discourses by associating Ireland's colonial status with femininity. Throughout his work, as previous studies have traced, Yeats uses the archetypal figures such as femme fatales, queens, mythic heroines, hags and Mother Ireland, to represent the Irish nation.⁹⁷ In this way, the tradition of using the female image as a political instrument asserts a masculine and heteronormative tradition within nationalist literature and is used to align Irish nationality with a version of masculinity. But he also challenges these dialogues by actually

⁹⁶ Marjorie Howes, *Yeats's Nations: Gender, Class and Irishness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996), p.34.

⁹⁷ See Marjorie Howes, *Yeats's Nations: Gender, Class and Irishness*, pp.27-39. Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, *Gender and History in Yeats's Love Poetry*, pp.55-64.

embodying the idea of nationhood within a female figure or as an image of Irish heroic femininity.

Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites provided Yeats with a model for the depiction of mythic female heroines, most notably in *The Wanderings of Oisín* and later in *The Rose*. In response to Katherine Tynan in 1887, Yeats examines the portrayal of women in the work of the Pre-Raphaelite circle, questioning 'do you not think there is considerable resemblance between the heroines of all the neo-romantic London poets; namely Swinburne, Morris, Rossetti and their satellites?'⁹⁸ Yeats compares the writers, noting that the 'heroines of the neo-romantic school are powerful in conception, shadowy and unreal in execution'. They are placed in contrast to Tennyson's heroines, who are according to Yeats, less 'heroic than any of the others and less passionate and splendid' but are realised more 'like actual, everyday people'.⁹⁹ In spite of his critique of them, his own work and the female figures of the neo-romantic movement all share a consistent aesthetic idealisation which places a powerful emphasis upon their beauty and femininity.

Morris's and Yeats's portrayals of beauty and femininity were influenced by Pre-Raphaelitism, especially emphasised through their use of symbolism which stylistically matches Rossetti's aesthetics. Rossetti, in his poetry and paintings like *Bocca Baciata* and *Helen of Troy*, enhances the sensuality and femininity of the represented figures, particularly

⁹⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, Summer 1887', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.45-47 (p.46).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.46-47.

through the attention he pays to their features such as their hair and mouths and details of dress. In Rossetti's sonnet 'Her Gift' from *The House of Life*, the persona praises her mouth, 'whose passionate forms imply | All music and all silence held thereby' and her hair as 'deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal'.¹⁰⁰ Gudrun, in Morris's 'The Lovers of Gudrun' has 'marvellous red lips' and has 'gold' locks that are 'finer than silk'.¹⁰¹ Similarly, in *The Wanderings of Oisín*, Niamh's lips are 'like sunset' and a 'citron colour gloomed her hair'.¹⁰² In his portrayal of Niamh, Yeats follows Irish poetic traditions and uses the mythic and the traditional female personifications of Ireland, as seen for example, in James Clarence Mangan's 'My Dark Rosaleen' (1834). Niamh is a mythic, and therefore ancient symbol of Ireland and its Celtic past. Like Rosaleen, Niamh is also an *aisling* figure, who appears as the love interest and as a vision to both the poet and Oisín. Just as Niamh is repeatedly described as 'pearl-pale', the only indication of Rosaleen is of her 'white hands' but unlike Niamh, Rosaleen does not have an appearance or physicality.¹⁰³ Yeats uses Irish traditions but fuses these with Pre-Raphaelitism to create a figure who is both spiritualised and corporeal. In doing so, Yeats creates a romanticised vision of his cultural nationalism and his imagined Ireland, an idealised image that veers between the ancient past and modern reality.

¹⁰⁰ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 'Her Gifts', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.192 ll.6-8.

¹⁰¹ William Morris, 'The Lovers of Gudrun' in *The Earthly Paradise*, 13 edn., pp.276-325 (p.277), ll.73-93.

¹⁰² Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.20-30.

¹⁰³ James Clarence Mangan, 'My Dark Rosaleen', in *The Oxford Book of Irish Verse*, ed. by Donagh McDonagh and Lennox Robinson (London: Oxford University Press 1958), pp.56-58 (p.57) ll.53.

Niamh, the daughter of Aengus, (the god of youth, beauty, and poetry) and Edain (the queen who ran away to live among the Sidhe) travels across the sea to find Oisín in the mortal world, having heard of his name through the poetry of the gods. Oisín is the poet of the Fenian cycle of myth and it is through his retelling of his adventures that Niamh is presented. She becomes, like Mangan's Rosaleen, a figure of ideal love and presides in a previously unattainable world where 'music, love, and sleep await'.¹⁰⁴ It is Oisín, as a voice of the heroic age, who recounts an immortal and imaginative world of the mythological and legendary gods, and of creativity. She actively seeks Oisín after having heard tales of his wisdom, fame and poetry. However, whilst Niamh is evoked by and through poetry, she is not the unattainable beloved or muse like Rosaleen. She is an important part of instigating the action in the poem, as she tells the chained lady 'I bring deliverance'.¹⁰⁵ Later in the poem, she becomes an emblem of sorrow and acknowledges that Oisín will never be content. Yeats gives this tradition, as shown in the portrayals of Niamh and the chained lady, a sense of physicality and sensuality through the use of Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics and ideals of beauty.

Yeats tentatively notes in the same letter that 'I have a notion, but am not sure, that Rossetti's are a more spiritual version of the same type as Swinburne's and Morris's'.¹⁰⁶ He furthers this notion by claiming that during his time with the Rhymers Club, 'Woman herself was still in our eyes, for all that, romantic and mysterious, still the priestess of her shrine,

¹⁰⁴ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.103.

¹⁰⁵ Yeats, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, ll.78.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.46.

our emotions remembering the *Lilith* and the *Sibylla Palmifera*'.¹⁰⁷ The two Rossetti paintings that Yeats specifically mentions depict a duality in Rossetti's work between spiritual and physical beauty and desire. In *The Rose* collection, like Mangan's 'My Dark Rosaleen', Yeats writes love poetry to the rose, his implied beloved and through this, his country, which is modelled in the guise of a woman. Much like Rossetti, the personas of the poems who address the Rose present a state of adoration which is both physical and spiritual.¹⁰⁸ The subjects of the two Rossetti paintings and their accompanying sonnets, 'Body's Beauty' and 'Soul's Beauty', are mythological women: *Lady Lilith* depicts the figure of Lilith, the sorceress and original wife of Adam from Talmudic tradition and *Sibylla Palmifera* has associations with the figure of the Sibyl in classical mythology, gifted with secret knowledge of the future. The figure in *Sibylla Palmifera* and 'Soul's Beauty' is literally sitting in 'her shrine', positioned between love and death and 'terror and mystery'.¹⁰⁹ The speaker sees beauty 'enthroned' and praises the figure as 'Lady Beauty' known by her 'flying hair and fluttering hem'.¹¹⁰ The figure's presence is evoked, again, through specific motifs and visualisation which alludes to the fascination with and the experience of the beautiful.

In Yeats's 'The Rose of the World' (1893), the speaker only notes certain aspects of a female presence within the poem through focusing on certain physical features, 'her wandering feet', 'red lips' and 'lonely face'.¹¹¹ The Rose is the embodiment of eternal and spiritual

¹⁰⁷ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.302.

¹⁰⁸ Bickley, 'How They Met Themselves': Rossetti and Yeats in the 1890s', p.75.

¹⁰⁹ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 'Soul's Beauty', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.215, ll.1-2.

¹¹⁰ Rossetti, 'Soul's Beauty', ll.3-11.

¹¹¹ W. B. Yeats, 'The Rose of the World', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, p.5, ll.2-15.

beauty, existing before the Christian account of the creation of the world as the archangels 'bow down' and made the world to be 'a grassy road' before her wandering feet.¹¹² The evocation of the spiritual, here through the agency of women, places the Rose in symbolic centrality, combining his aesthetics and occultist beliefs with his cultural nationalism. The Rose becomes Yeats's emblem of ideal femininity, and mythological beauty, the poetic muse and the inspiration for nationalist action. The spiritual aspect of the Rose also occludes religion and politics. Like the works of the artist Chiaro dell' Erma in Rossetti's *Hand and Soul*, where the artist's soul and artistic inspiration appears in the form of a beautiful woman, *Sibylla Palmifera* and 'Soul's Beauty' are directed towards a spiritual ideal of art. Lilith, however, is defined as 'Body's Beauty' and as a figure absorbed by her own beauty, visualised in the painting at her toilette. Rossetti, within the painting and sonnet elaborates the motif of her 'enchanted' and 'golden' hair which 'draws men to watch the bright web she can weave'.¹¹³ Through these motifs and visualisation the Lilith figure becomes the epitome of the femme fatale, invested with both danger and allure and sexual agency. Like the repeated motif of Lilith's hair, the description of Niamh as 'pearl-pale' is repeated throughout Yeats's poem and becomes a recurrent stylisation of the body and appearance. In this sense, Niamh and Lilith become art objects, encouraging the viewer and reader to the spectacle and pleasure of looking at their images.

¹¹² Yeats, 'The Rose of the World', ll.11-15.

¹¹³ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 'Body's Beauty', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.216, ll.4-14.

Yeats adopted Rossetti's images of goddesses in his own portrayals of mythological women. Rossetti's mythic figures, such as in *Pandora* (1871), *Proserpine* and *Astarte Syriaca*, are invested with a power and vision of "sinister" femininity.¹¹⁴ These later depictions of mythological women impact upon Morris's and Yeats's retellings of ancient legends or myths and the portrayal of heroines who are not part of the English-language literary tradition. The three examples of Rossetti's depictions of mythological women, in the paintings and accompanying sonnets, are invested with a power and depicted, following Yeats's terms, as heroic and splendid figures. The fleshiness and sensuality of the figures challenge Victorian patriarchy and matriarchy. Although these too are masculinist portrayals of the female image, Rossetti's paintings present images of women who are aware of their own power and sexuality. As mentioned in the Introduction, there is a wider Pre-Raphaelite influence on H.D.'s, Pound's and Yeats's use of mythology, especially from Rossetti's later works, Swinburne's poetry, and Burne-Jones's representations of female mythic figures. In *The Cantos* (1925-72), Aphrodite stands with 'golden | Girdle and breast bands, thou with dark eyelids | Bearing the golden bough of Argicida'.¹¹⁵ The sultriness of Pound's depiction of Aphrodite with her 'golden girdle', 'breast bands' and 'dark eyelids' is redolent of Rossetti's *Astarte Syriaca* (her mythical equivalent) which in turn recalls the pose of Botticelli's *Venus*. Similarly, in *Trilogy*, H.D. groups together the Greek, Roman, and Syrian names of the goddess, 'Venus, Aphrodite, Astarte'.¹¹⁶ The goddess of love is portrayed by the Pre-

¹¹⁴ Cullingford, *Gender and History in Yeats's Love Poetry*, p.32

¹¹⁵ Ezra Pound, *The Cantos*, in *Selected Poems, 1908-1959* (London: Faber and Faber 1975), pp.113-192, (p.115), I, 76-78.

¹¹⁶ H. D., *Trilogy*, in *H. D.: Collected Poems, 1912-1944*, ed. by Louis L. Martz (Manchester: Carcanet Press 1984), p.558, 10, 10.

Raphaelites in her various guises, notably by Rossetti in his paintings and accompanying sonnets, *Venus Verticordia* (1864-8) and *Astarte Syriaca*.



1.3. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Astarte Syriaca*, (1877), Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester.

Rossetti's *Astarte Syriaca* (Figure 1.3) is the most obvious example of power invested within the mythological figure, the goddess of love gazing down from the canvas at the viewer as a worshipper in submission. The figure's enduring presence is evoked through the elemental imagery of the sun and moon and by the two angelic figures that frame the picture, presenting an iconic vision of femininity. They are emblems of beauty and figures that inspire adoration. Like Rossetti, Niamh is both heroic and splendid, inspiring action through her beauty but is also presented as having her own power and sexual agency. In this respect,

following the Rossettian image of goddesses, Yeats eroticises the image of the goddess, and therefore connects his nationalist images to desire, both sexual desire and the desire to die for a cause. The conceptions of beauty that Yeats's Rose of the world embodies are associated with the mythological beings that personify them, specifically Helen and Deidre. In this respect, the speaker, like the artist in Rossetti's *Helen of Troy*, places beauty as being responsible for the tragedy within the mythologies, as for those 'red lips' Troy fell and Usna's children died. Through the image of Helen of Troy, Yeats further implies that women are being blamed for Ireland's plight and creates a duality in his depiction of women between a spiritual figure who embodies Ireland, carrying forward ancient traditions, and a duplicitous, unpatriotic figure who is deceitful and has betrayed her nation. This image of Ireland emerges in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) where Davin, Stephen's friend who is an Irish nationalist, tells the story of the peasant woman who is a 'type of her race and his own' who 'through the eyes and voice and gesture of a woman without guile, call[s] the stranger to her bed'.¹¹⁷ Davin suggests that women should be blamed for Ireland's plight. Joyce, who was especially critical of Yeats's allegorical depictions of women and of the Irish Literary Revival, uses nationalist rhetoric to create a history of Ireland as one of female betrayal.

Rossetti repeatedly refers to women's 'sovereign' beauty.¹¹⁸ Yeats's and Morris's female mythological figures are of a dream-like and immortal status and possess a sovereign beauty

¹¹⁷ James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, (New York & London: Norton 2007), p.160.

¹¹⁸ For example, see Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 'The Moonstar', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.191.

and power. These figures are connected to the land and are presented as being loved, revered or feared. The connection between femininity and nationhood is made by both Morris and Yeats, through placing the female figure in a position of power as a queen, goddess, or as a woman willing to sacrifice herself or her happiness in service of her nation. This image of femininity, used to reflect the nation's struggle for independence, becomes a means of recovering a Romantic image that promotes ancient traditions. However, these images do not constitute utopianism for women, as the promotion of the feminised concepts of nation and the symbolic centrality of the image of women, women's bodies are defined as a place over which power is contested. Yet Cullingford argues that Yeats, as a 'disciple of William Morris, would have seen the poetic recovery of the goddess as a project compatible with advanced socialist and feminist thought'.¹¹⁹ Yeats's recovery of Irish myth offered images of pre-Christian life compatible with the mythical and Rossetian images which were incorporated into the turn-of-the century movement for women's emancipation and the suffrage campaigns. In this respect, the goddess figure can also be seen as inspiring women to nationalist action and, through utopian politics, as a means of self-representation for women who were a part of Yeats's circle, such as Maud Gonne and her nationalist women's organisation, Daughters of Erin. Gonne defined herself through the image of Cathleen ni Houlihan, the symbolic Mother Ireland figure, which will be explored later in the chapter.¹²⁰ As seen in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Joyce rewrites the idea of the

¹¹⁹ Cullingford, *Gender and History in Yeats's Love Poetry*, p.42.

¹²⁰ Gonne played the title role in Yeats's and Lady Gregory's play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* when it was first performed at St. Theresa's Hall in Dublin 1902. Members of the Daughters of Erin and the Irish National dramatic company acted in the play. Gonne also defines herself with this trope. In her autobiography, she writes 'Then I saw a tall, beautiful woman with dark hair blown on the wind and I knew it was Cathleen ni Houlihan' and 'I heard a voice say: "You are one of the little stones on which the feet of the Queen have rested on her way to Freedom."' Maud Gonne, *The Autobiography of Maud Gonne: A Servant of the Queen*, ed. by A. Norman Jeffares and Anna MacBride White (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press repr.1994), p.9.

sovereignty myth, using the image of adultery to suggest political and cultural betrayal of Ireland, through these feminised national symbols who are blamed for letting English invaders in.¹²¹

Niamh is connected to the land through Yeats's appropriation of mythology for nationalist purposes, but she is also placed in an imaginative, dream-like realm, away from the land that is represented by Oisín. Signy, in *Sigurd the Volsung*, has the gift of prophecy, which she is both revered and feared for. She foresees in her marriage to the King and the future of the land, she 'will bear the lords of the earth, | And the wrack and the grief of my youth-days shall be held for nothing worth'.¹²² Like Rossetti's Lilith and the Lady of Beauty in 'Soul's Beauty', the 'beautiful damosel' in Morris's 'The Lady of the Land' sits 'throned on ivory', holding a comb and mirror.¹²³ Her name as the 'Lady of the land' ties her specifically to the land and to her kingdom, but as the queen she has 'no folk' at her 'command', who might once 'have bought a kingdom with a kiss'.¹²⁴ She is physically restricted to her land, trapped on the island by her father's promise, and entices the wanderer with the promise of 'love and sovereignty' for freedom from her oppressed state.¹²⁵ She is shown to be an enduring power that embodies the notion of a nation but Morris also points out the restrictions placed on her by the actions of the male figures. Her father traps her by a promise to the goddess Diana before her birth and the wanderer promises to set her free, only to break it

¹²¹ See Caitriona Moloney, 'The Hags of "Ulysses": The "Poor Old Woman," Cathleen Ni Houlihan, and the Phallic Mother', *James Joyce Quarterly*, 34: 1-2 (1996-1997), 103-120 (pp.110-111).

¹²² William Morris, *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs*, ll.55-56.

¹²³ William Morris, 'The Lady of the Land', in *The Earthly Paradise*, 13 edn., pp.141-146 (p.143). ll.177-186.

¹²⁴ Morris, 'The Lady of the Land', ll.366-368.

¹²⁵ Morris, 'The Lady of the Land', ll.389.

out of fear from seeing her as a dragon. Whilst associated with a 'sinister' femininity and presented as being tempted to this fate through their beauty, Rossetti's *Proserpine* and *Pandora* are figures that are, in their original stories, led into temptation and wronged through the actions of the male figures. Proserpine is abducted by Pluto to become the Queen of the Underworld and Pandora is given a casket by Jupiter and is forbidden to open it. Similarly, Niamh is made present in the poem only through Oisín's retelling and is abandoned by him, left in the otherworld.

For Yeats, however, Morris's heroines have a 'greater range of characterisation' than Swinburne.¹²⁶ This is evident in Morris's treatment of the classical mythological figure, Medea. Morris's depiction follows Pre-Raphaelite notions of beauty, as she is a 'lovely queen' with 'golden' hair and presents a Rossettian 'sinister' femininity through her role as a sorceress.¹²⁷ Medea uses her powers to win the Golden Fleece and slay Pelias for the love of Jason but also to revenge herself on Jason. In consulting another sorceress, Circe, Medea is warned that her most inhumane and vengeful acts will be most remembered. But Morris also portrays her humanity, as a figure subjected to external powers. She is betrayed by Jason, after having brought 'him unto fame' and her reward is a 'lonely life made terrible and hard'.¹²⁸ Yeats identifies 'Morris's chief woman' as Gudrun, and taking Yeats's reference as being to Gudrun from *The Earthly Paradise*, he distinguishes her from his other poetic figures whilst simultaneously placing her in comparison to the other heroines of the neo-Romantic

¹²⁶ Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, Summer 1887', p.46.

¹²⁷ William Morris, *The Life and Death of Jason*, in *William Morris's Prose and Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1920), pp.313-588 (pp.404-405). ll.34-48.

¹²⁸ Morris, *The Life and Death of Jason*, ll.1088-1090.

movement.¹²⁹ Gudrun as a mythological figure is refashioned in a similar way to Medea and as shown in the previous quotes, is aestheticised too as a beautiful woman. Gudrun is portrayed as both having an active agency and as also being subjected to fate. She is left by Kiartan, the man she loves but cannot marry, and is told by Bodli, another suitor, that Kiartan is marrying Refna, which leads to her marriage to Bodli. In her grief and suffering from Kiartan's betrayal, she seeks revenge and goads her brothers and Bodli to ambush and kill Kiartan upon his return to Iceland. In later life, when asked by her son by Bodli, which of her husbands she loved the most she cries with 'hands stretched out for all that she had lost: | 'I did the worst to him I loved the most'.¹³⁰ Gudrun is a Pre-Raphaelite heroine, whose tale is told under more sympathetic terms, exploring her heightened fear, love, ambivalence and regret. Niamh, like Gudrun, has an active agency and encapsulates heightened emotions, but for Niamh, it is a heightened sense of sorrow which is created through her awareness of Oisín's growing discontent with her world.

Yeats acknowledges in his response to the women in Pre-Raphaelite art that 'for one thing, they are essentially men's heroines, with no separate life of their own'.¹³¹ Yet Yeats, having identified with and seeking to create a 'neo-romantic movement' inspired by Irish myth, was emulating this style, as seen most obviously in his use of Irish tradition. The speaker of 'To Ireland in the Coming Times' (1892) asserts his place in a masculine tradition within a national literature, alongside the poets Mangan and Davis and Ferguson, and a national

¹²⁹ Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, Summer 1887', p.46.

¹³⁰ Morris, 'The Lovers of Gudrun', in *The Earthly Paradise*, ll.152-153.

¹³¹ Yeats, 'To Katherine Tynan, Summer 1887', p.46.

brotherhood, claiming '*Know that I would accounted be, | True brother of a company, | That sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong*' for the '*red-rose-bordered hem of her*'.¹³² The Rose's presence, in comparison to Rossetti's sonnet 'Soul's Beauty', is invoked through the reference to her dress for which the speaker is willing to sacrifice his life for. The Rose then represents Ireland as a woman in distress, embodying an idealised beauty, to be protected and venerated by her followers. She is also an ideal that embodies a nation's fight for independence and is created by the brothers of the company. In this context, the Rose, as a nationalist symbol, becomes essentially one of the 'men's heroines, with no separate life of their own', precisely what Yeats criticises Morris, Swinburne and Rossetti for. The Pre-Raphaelite depictions of mythic heroines and Morris's distinct refashioning of myth and the heroic past, as a way to exemplify values lacking in his own times, appealed to Yeats's Celtic revivalism and offered values based upon lost historical ideals. Both poets use myth and the arts to challenge the structures that inform society. Yeats continued to adapt and work with mythologies throughout his career, most noticeably in his dramas. In this way, Morris's ideas about the role and impact of art would be significant to Yeats's establishment of an Irish national and literary theatre.

¹³² The italics are in the original. W. B. Yeats, 'To Ireland in the Coming Times', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, pp.70-71 (p.71). ll.1-7.

The Abbey Theatre and Morris's Prose Romances

The establishment of the Abbey Theatre

In his article 'A People's Theatre: A Letter to Lady Gregory' (1919) Yeats retrospectively considers how he and Lady Gregory sought to refashion ancient tales through drama and create a 'people's theatre', that would be 'in relation to Ireland as a whole'.¹³³ They sought to 'bring the old folk-life to Dublin, patriotic feeling to aid us, and with the folk-life all the life of the heart'.¹³⁴ In 1897, Yeats discussed and planned the establishment of a national theatre with Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn, remarking that their three-year experiment would 'show whether the country desired to take up the project, and make it a part of national life'.¹³⁵ These discussions led to the formation of the Irish Literary Theatre, with Yeats as a founding member. It would be the centre for the Irish literary and cultural revival, through its promotion and staging of national, heroic and mythological dramas. Moreover, the Abbey Theatre, founded in 1904, was developed from the Irish Literary Theatre and National Dramatic Society by Gregory and Yeats, and created with the intention 'to bring upon the stage the deeper emotions of Ireland'.¹³⁶ It staged dramas by the writers of the Literary Revival and associates of the Abbey Theatre, including J. M. Synge, Lady Gregory and Yeats. The foundation of the Abbey, like his plays, was based upon Irish myth and history, as seen in its logo of Queen Maeve and her Wolfhound. This reaffirms Yeats's earlier 1887 quote on a movement 'founded on Irish myth and history'.

¹³³ W. B. Yeats, 'A People's Theatre: A Letter to Lady Gregory', in *Explorations*, pp.244-259 (p.244).

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.252.

¹³⁵ W. B. Yeats, 'Samhain: 1901,' in *Explorations*, pp.73-84 (p.73).

¹³⁶ Lady Gregory and W. B. Yeats, 'Manifesto for the Irish Literary Theatre' (1897) <<https://www.nuigalway.ie/abbeytheatreminutebooks/theatre/>> [Date accessed: 4 December 2019].

In the *Samhain* (1901-1908), a publication which chronicles the formation of the Abbey Theatre and Irish dramatic movement, Yeats claims that 'the truth is that the Irish people are at that precise stage of their history when imagination, shaped by many stirring events, desires dramatic expression'.¹³⁷ Yeats's claim for dramatic expression and unity under a nation's imaginative culture is also extended throughout his early writings on the theatre, in essays such as 'The Theatre' (1900), in which he claims that the theatre is the 'art of the people' and an art created for the people.¹³⁸ In his original attentions for the formation of a national theatre, the influence of Morris's socialist attitudes to art are revealed. Yeats echoes Morris's own statements about the unification of the arts and society, especially in Morris's call for an 'art for the people' in his lectures.¹³⁹ In 'The Art of the People', Morris claims that he wishes 'people to understand that the art we are striving for is a good thing which all can share, which will elevate all; in good sooth, if all people do not share it there will soon be none to share; if all are not elevated by it, mankind will lose the elevation it has gained'.¹⁴⁰ In the same way, Yeats's theatre aspired to create a redefined sense of national identity, transcending political differences that divided the nation and providing a sense of unity and elevation through art.

Through their emphasis on the shared value of art, both Yeats and Morris distinguish between an art of the people and what Yeats terms the 'theatre of commerce'.¹⁴¹ They both

¹³⁷ Yeats, 'Samhain: 1901,' p.74.

¹³⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'The Theatre', in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.165-172 (p.168).

¹³⁹ William Morris, 'The Beauty of Life', in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, pp.538-564 (p.544).

¹⁴⁰ William Morris, 'The Art of the People', in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, pp.517-537 (p.528).

¹⁴¹ Yeats, 'The Theatre', p.169.

protest the notion of commerce and a system suppressing art and increasing the number of people who have no share in art, thus losing an art done by and for the people. Morris had a dislike for Victorian theatre and for formalised plays but had an interest in medieval mystery plays, having already experimented with allegorical dramatic forms in *Love is Enough* (1872) and poems like 'Sir Galahad, a Christmas Mystery' in *Defence of Guenevere*. Yeats maintained that the opponent to contemporary drama was commercial theatre and that this theatre, and the naturalism and realism exhibited in its plays, failed to engage with the audience's emotions or imagination. Through his establishment of the Abbey Theatre, Yeats attempted to create non-naturalistic drama based on Irish myth and legend. Yeats seeks a 'theatre of art', as an escape from the theatre of commerce, through the staging of their plays which 'will be most part remote, spiritual, and ideal'.¹⁴² Moreover, in issue two of *Beltaine* (1899-1900), the periodical of the Irish Literary Theatre which was later changed to *Samhain*, Yeats asserts that his belief in the decline of spiritual and intellectual energies in English drama originates from the convictions of Ruskin and Morris and the 'commercialism and materialism on which these men warred'.¹⁴³ Here he explicitly links his intentions of staging spiritual and mythic plays to Morris's vision and to the lost values that they both sought from the pre-modern past. At this time, Yeats's intentions express the importance of theatre as a communal form of art, pursuing and promoting an art that was aesthetically and morally distinct from that of England.

¹⁴² Yeats, 'The Theatre', p.166.

¹⁴³ W. B. Yeats, *Beltaine: The Organ of the Irish Literary Theatre*, Number Two, February 1900 (London: At the Sign of the Unicorn), pp.5-6. Birmingham, Cadbury Library, PN 2001. B4.

Yeats and Gregory's *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (1902) had a profound impact on nationalist feeling. Through the use of drama, the cause of art is used for the cause of the people and a tradition and cultural memory appropriates the anti-imperial struggle and fight for independence. *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* was performed during the opening season of the Abbey Theatre in 1904 and was also performed at the Abbey during Easter week 1916, reinforcing the play's literary and cultural impact and the importance of its political agenda. In 'Poetry and Tradition' (1907), Yeats claims that, around the time of *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, he was still new from the influence of Morris and that he 'dreamed of enlarging Irish hate, till we had come to hate with a passion of patriotism what Morris and Ruskin hated'.¹⁴⁴ The play enlarges hate through a passion of patriotism that the figure and speeches of Cathleen inspire and reinforces the resistance towards the British Empire and imperialism. Cathleen claims that she was forced to wonder due to their possession of her fields and by the 'many strangers in the house'.¹⁴⁵ Her speeches convey a symbolism that communicates both patriotic and nationalist sympathies. In Cathleen's conveyance of these sympathies, she again articulates her experiences under colonial oppression, for example the symbolism of her 'four beautiful green fields' refers to both territorial reclaiming of land and to the four provinces of Ireland.¹⁴⁶ The symbolism in her answers then places 'her in the position of an artist' whose symbols communicate an aesthetic and cultural inspiration for the nation; alluding to Yeats' own position as a poet and his notion of a national literature that unifies the nation and its people under his aesthetic programme.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ W. B. Yeats, 'Poetry and Tradition', p.248.

¹⁴⁵ W. B. Yeats, *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, in *Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats* (London: Macmillan 1952), pp.75-88, ll. 140-146.

¹⁴⁶ The four provinces of Ireland are Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connacht. W. B. Yeats, *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, ll. 146.

¹⁴⁷ Stephanie J. Pocock, 'Artistic Liminality: Yeats' *Cathleen ni Houlihan* and *Purgatory*', *New Hibernia Review*, 12: 3 (2008), 99-117 (p. 105).

Morris, although supporting the Irish nationalists, shows dislike to the idea of hatred and patriotism, as seen in *The Pilgrims of Hope*, and his articles. He writes:

For my part I do not believe in the race-hatred of the Irish against the English: they hate their English *masters*, and well they may; and their English masters are now trying hard to stimulate race-hatred among their English brethren, the workers, by this loud talk of the integrity of the Empire and so forth.¹⁴⁸

The patriotism of the play and its representation of folk-life in the revolutionary year of 1789 reinforces the values of Morris's hatred of the notion of Empire, industrialism and his insistence on the need for revolution, as shown in *The Tables Turned*. Yeats dreamt of enlarging the hates of the Irish nationalists into the more comprehensive hatred of modern civilization represented by Morris. Morris denounces the stimulation of hatred – what the play eventually led to in its use as nationalist propaganda. Yeats later questioned the propaganda of his own early works and how his works are attached to nationalist imaginings. In 'Man and the Echo' (1939) the persona asks, 'Did that play of mine send out | Certain men the English shot?' and 'Could my spoken words have checked | That whereby a house lay wreaked?'¹⁴⁹ The play in question is *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*. Yeats expresses remorse and anxiety over whether his words, and the cultural and mystic nationalism of the play, helped provoke the younger generation into action that led to the 1916 Easter Rising. The emphasis on 'that play' and 'spoken word' in particular reinforce the power of dramatic expression.

¹⁴⁸ Morris, 'Ireland and Italy: A Warning', p.110.

¹⁴⁹ W. B. Yeats, 'The Man and the Echo', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, pp.392-393 (p.263), ll.11-16.

Morris's emphasis of the cause of art as the cause of the people is directly expressed in his play *Tables Turned or Nupkins Awakened: A Socialist Interlude*, performed and printed in *Commonweal* in 1887. Members of the Socialist League, including Morris, May Morris and H. H. Sparling, acted in the play, which was staged to raise funds for the Socialist League and *Commonweal* and to promote the socialist message. Yeats attended a performance of the play in 1888 and was clearly keen to have Morris's opinions on drama; he often mentions having asked Morris for his views about drama and writing plays in his critical writings, such as in the essay 'The Theatre' and in his letters. Although Yeats was not a socialist, Morris's play was written and performed before his own dramas and the formation of the Irish Literary Theatre, and perhaps offered him a perspective into the use of drama for a political and social cause and the impact of drama as a social and communal form of art. The ideal of drama as a communal form is also prominent in the fact that *The Tables Turned* was written for an amateur performance. The staging was simplistic and for stage illusion used distinctive symbols for the characters, which whilst this may be in part to do with funding for the play, Fiona MacCarthy notes was 'the twentieth-century Modernist view', with Morris dressed in a pair of clerical bands and black stockings to symbolise his role as the Archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁵⁰ Yeats would also take a symbolic and simplistic approach to staging, which derived from a range of sources including Gordon Craig's writings and theatre designs, and through his later interest in the Noh play, of which *At the Hawk's Well* and *The Dreaming of the Bones* are an example. Denis Bablet argues that Craig's art was 'act of suggestion, of evocation, which gave free play to the audience's imagination' of which every part of the

¹⁵⁰ MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*, p.564.

play would come together in unity and harmony.¹⁵¹ Yeats was hugely inspired by Craig's symbolism and anti-naturalism in the theatre, including the reduction of stage scenery to fundamental elements, the symbolic use of colour, the use of masks, and the symbolic, restrained style of the actors. His dramatic means for these Noh plays, are masks, musical instruments, the folding and unfolding of cloths and dance. In his stage directions for *At the Hawk's Well*, Yeats details his use of the stage's 'bare space', with the black cloth (to be folded and unfolded) showing 'a gold pattern suggesting a hawk' and next to the Guardian of the Well 'lies a square blue cloth to represent a well'.¹⁵² Although there are few technical and formal parallels between Yeats's plays and Morris's play, what they both highlight in terms of staging is a visual emphasis and a striving towards simplicity in drama. These elements of their dramas show further their rejection of commercial theatre. This is particularly evident in Yeats's more overt symbolism and its spiritual connotations. *Tables Turned* is a topical play, alluding to current affairs such Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, and is a combination of medieval mystery and morality plays and satire, directed against social and political injustices.¹⁵³ Both Yeats and Morris utilise the dramatic form for political ends. *Tables Turned* anticipates many of the themes of *News from Nowhere*, with part one taking place before the revolution and part two after the revolution which 'has Turned the

¹⁵¹ Denis Bablet, *The Theatre of Edward Gordon Craig*, trans. by Daphne Woodward (London: Eyre Methuen Ltd 1981), p.40. Yeats and Craig were friends and collaborators. Yeats attended performances of Craig's productions of *Dido and Aeneas* and *The Masque of Love* in which he was inspired by the scenery and use of screens and cloths, his inspiration having been taken from Japanese art. Yeats was enthusiastic about Craig's ideas and writings on the theatre. He read Craig's periodical *The Mask* and published several pieces in it about the theatre and the work of the Abbey Theatre. Yeats was the only person that Craig gave a set of screens to for his plays at the Abbey Theatre. Yeats also worked and was friends with Gordon Craig's sister, Edith Craig. They were both key members of a theatre society called the Masquers and together they created an Arts and Crafts periodical called *The Green Sheaf* (1903). See Katherine Cockin, *Edith Craig and the Theatre of Art* (London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama 2017). See also, Edward Gordon Craig, *On the Art of the Theatre* (London: Heinemann 1911) and Edward Gordon Craig, *Craig on Theatre*, ed. by J. Michael Walton (London Methuen Drama 1991).

¹⁵² W. B. Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, in *Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats*, pp.207-220 (pp.207-208).

¹⁵³ Jo George, 'The Aristophanes of Hammersmith: William Morris as Playwright', *The Journal of William Morris Studies*, 20: 2 (2013), 16-29 (p.16).

Tables'.¹⁵⁴ The revolution brings about Morris's vision of an earthly paradise and one of useful work, promoting the value of simple life and genuine community that recurs throughout his later prose romances.

Morris's Prose Romances

Morris's prose romances, *News from Nowhere* (1890), *The Wood beyond the World* (1894), *The Well at the World's End* (1896) and *The Waters of the Wondrous Isles* (1897) emerged in the 1890s, after Yeats had left Morris's circle. Nevertheless, Yeats evidently continued to follow Morris's career. In his consideration of the romances, Yeats groups together the last three romances and occasionally brings in *News from Nowhere*, as the only late prose romance which is explicitly in the form of a utopia. The later romances offer an image of fulfilment whereas *News from Nowhere* offers a dream which is ultimately left unfulfilled. *News from Nowhere*, unlike the other prose romances, is dreamt of from a starting point in modern, Victorian England. Nonetheless, all these romances portray a shared vision of beauty, offering the possibility of transformation, and enhancing the importance that Morris places on the natural world and humanity's relationship to nature. In writing his late romances, Morris returned to a form he had used in the 1850s. Yeats works with Morris' prose romances (both the later and early romances), adopting motifs from Morris's work in his drama, in the transformation of Cathleen in *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, the character of Deirdre in *Deidre*, the image of the well and the tree in *At the Hawk's Well* and the haunting

¹⁵⁴ William Morris, *Tables Turned or Nupkins Awakened: A Socialist Interlude*, (London: Office of the Commonweal 1887), p.22, l.465. Birmingham, Cadbury Library, PR5080. T2.

of the two lovers in *The Dreaming of the Bones*. The most influential of Morris's romances for the plays are *The Well at the World's End*, *The Waters of the Wondrous Isles* and an early prose romance *A Dream*. The transformation of Cathleen and the character of Deirdre reveal Morris's influence from the late prose romances in his portrayal of women. Both *At the Hawk's Well* and *The Dreaming of the Bones* portray the importance that Morris places on natural and mystical landscapes in his romances, a significant aspect of Yeats's Irish utopianism.

Alongside Yeats's workings with the prose romances in his dramas, I shall consider his critical and personal responses to Morris's romances in two essays entitled '*The Well at the World's End*' (1896) and '*The Happiest of Poets*' (1902). These essays draw upon aspects of Morris's work that inform Yeats's dramas and are an important stage for his later workings with Morris's legacy. They explore the late prose romances in some detail, focusing upon Morris's passionate espousal of beauty, life and nature. *The Well at the World's End* was an especial favourite of Yeats's and was the book where 'there is scarcely a chapter in which there is not some moment for which one might almost give one's soul'.¹⁵⁵ In his essay '*The Well at the World's End*', written in tribute to Morris upon his death in 1896, Yeats concentrates on Morris's love of beauty and perfection and the uniqueness of his vision within the prose romances. As Yeats argues, Morris would have that the world share his joy and his desire to reveal and create 'little details of happiness'.¹⁵⁶ Throughout the two essays, Yeats connects

¹⁵⁵ Yeats, '*The Well at the World's End*', in *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats, Volume IX: Early Art; Uncollected Works, Early Articles and Reviews*, pp.319-321 (p.321).

¹⁵⁶ Yeats, '*The Well at the World's End*', p.321.

Morris's utopianism to his temperament and how his happiness, joy and anger were directed towards values he sought to change. One of the aims of art is, for Morris, to increase happiness, giving the world earthly happiness, hope and beauty. In his prose romances, Morris offered Yeats 'a beauty that would wither if it did not set us at peace with natural things, and if we did not believe that it existed always a little, and would someday exist in its fullness'.¹⁵⁷ Morris presents fantastical and utopian transformations of the past, social life and the natural world: spaces where beauty, simplicity and abundance function as aspects of everyday life and are implicitly obtainable through transformation in Morris's own time. Morris, through his portrayal of transformations and the act of writing these romances, proposes art as a means of transformation, aligned with a rediscovery of aesthetic values.

As with much of Yeats's workings with and consideration of Morris's legacy, he notes Morris's opposition to materialism and to Victorian attitudes to art, design, and manufacturing standards. In his personal copy of *The Well at the World's End* (first edition 1896, 2 vols.), Yeats has folded the corners of certain pages, suggesting that these passages had a particular relevance for him. One of these marked passages is at the very beginning of Ralph's journey. Likewise, in his essay '*The Well at the World's End*', Yeats uses the same example to discuss Morris's mode of creation and craftsmanship. The Monk warns Ralph that he can see from Ralph's face that he is 'set on beholding the fashion of this world, and most like it will give thee the rue.' Then Ralph questions the Monk, 'Wilt thou tell me, Father, whose work was the world's fashion?' and he further questions, 'Forsooth, did the

¹⁵⁷ W. B. Yeats, 'The Happiest of Poets', pp.53-64 (p.64).

craftsman of it fumble over his work?’ These questions embarrass and anger the Monk, who replies ‘but I tell thee, who knoweth, that there are men in this House who have tried the world and found it wanting’. Ralph then replies with ‘Father, did the world try them, and find them wanting perchance?’¹⁵⁸ For Yeats, this encounter is a renouncement of the world and displays Morris’s vision of a ‘perfect life’ and fashioning of an earthly paradise.¹⁵⁹ Amanda Hodgson maintains that Morris by no means offers a vision of an earthly paradise as an escapist ideal; he implies, in the late romances, that an ideal should be sought and applied to the world if it is to be life-giving rather than attenuating or destructive.¹⁶⁰ Morris’s vocabulary in the example given by Yeats, including ‘fashion’ and ‘craftsman’, depicts images of shaping and creating, of physical and artistic processes of creation which are, again, no escapist ideal. As shown here, the image of creation is life-giving and tied to biblical and artistic images of the creator who creates both *ex nihilo* (Genesis 1) and shapes and transforms existing materials (Genesis 2). Yeats here points to Morris’s notion of craftsmanship, an image connected to materiality and to the creation of art that transforms existing materials rather than *ex nihilo*. Artistic and creative processes show the power of transformation and overcome limitations of reality whilst also portraying shared beauty. Whilst Morris’s prose romances are works of the imagination, they exhibit a concern towards the material world and to the rediscovery of aesthetic values and transformative possibilities. Yeats exemplifies Morris’s artistic and utopian vision of art as part of every day and the revival of ancient crafts, writing that he saw all about him ‘passions so long separated from the perfect that it seemed as if they could not be changed until society had been changed [and] tried to unite

¹⁵⁸ William Morris, *The Well at the World’s End*, I (London: Longmans, Green & Co 1896), p.40.

¹⁵⁹ Yeats, ‘*The Well at the World’s End*’, p.320.

¹⁶⁰ Amanda Hodgson, *The Romances of William Morris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1987), p.194.

the arts once more to life by uniting them to use'.¹⁶¹ Whilst both Morris and Yeats believed in the centrality of art to life, Yeats focuses on immaterial and spiritual ideals of art, which his *Noh* plays exemplify. In some ways, through the example of Ralph and the Monk, Yeats reveals the tensions between materiality and the otherworldly within both his own work and Morris's.

In his later essay, 'The Happiest of Poets', Yeats returns to Morris's late romances in which he found 'a dream of natural happiness', a vision of the natural world in its perfect form and of beautiful things created without strain.¹⁶² Here, Yeats defines Morris's sense of happiness as being like nature in its profusion, in abundance, in making and doing things and 'the image of a perfect fullness of natural life, of an Earthly Paradise'.¹⁶³ In these terms, Morris is distinguished from Rossetti as being among 'the worshippers of natural abundance', through celebrating the naturalness of images, of the Well and the Tree, rather than the 'frenzy' and intensity of supernatural and 'impossible' beauty in Rossetti's work.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, Yeats writes it 'is as though Nature spoke through him at all times in the mood that is upon her when she is opening the apple-blossom or reddening the apple or thickening the shadow of the boughs'.¹⁶⁵ Here, he points to Morris's unique view of nature, through the imagery of abundance and growth, as a simple delight and richness in the natural world, and also to his exploration of humanity's relationship with nature. Morris pays particular attention to the

¹⁶¹ W. B. Yeats, 'Ireland and the Arts', in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.203-210 (p.204).

¹⁶² Yeats, 'The Happiest of Poets', p.55.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.54.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.54-64.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.59.

abundance of nature and to the cultivation of the land as a plentiful source of wellbeing. The names of the places and people themselves are associated with naturalness in his prose late romances, in the title the Lady of Abundance in *The Well at the World's End*, the name Birdalone in *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, and in the isles on which she lands. One Isle is 'The Isle of Increase Unsought' where 'everything waxeth of itself without tillage, or sowing or reaping, or any kind of tending'.¹⁶⁶ On her first trip to the 'Isle of Nothing', Birdalone encounters a barren wasteland but on her return the Island, after some time, it has become prosperous and presents a communal life of self-sufficient living. She becomes for them and the future generations of the Isle 'their own very lady and goddess, who had come from the fertile and wise lands to bless them' in 'her loveliness'.¹⁶⁷ Equally, the Maid in *The Wood beyond the World* is worshipped by the Bears for her beauty and through her abilities becomes their God. In their customs, she will be the 'Mother of their nation & tribes' and is associated with fertility, as she promises them increase in the land.¹⁶⁸ Yeats in 'The Happiest of Poets' picks out the instance of the Maid from *The Wood Beyond the World*, who can revive and bring the flowers back to life. As she speaks 'the faded flowers that hung about her gathered life and grew fresh again' and as all the flowers revive themselves, there 'she stood amidst of the blossoms, like a great orient pearl against the fretwork of the goldsmiths'.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ William Morris, *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, (Bristol: Thoemmes 1994), p.65.

¹⁶⁷ Morris, *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, p.296.

¹⁶⁸ William Morris, *The Wood Beyond the World* (New York: Dover Publication Inc., 1972), p.190.

¹⁶⁹ Morris, *The Wood Beyond the World*, pp.215-216.

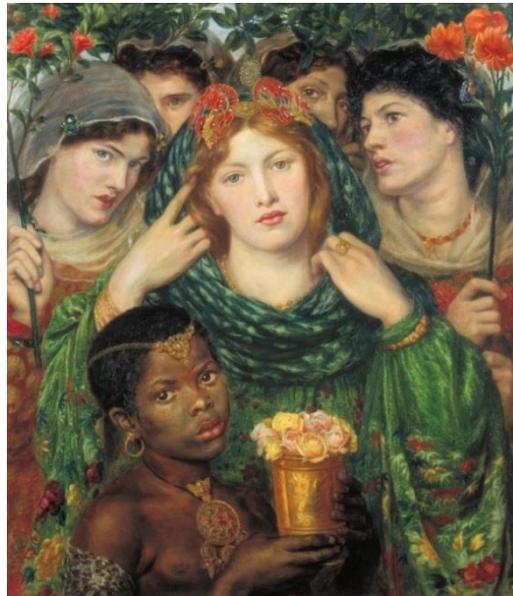
In *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, Cathleen's transformation into a young girl 'with the walk of queen' has a fantastical quality which Yeats points out in 'The Happiest of the Poets' when he focuses on the transformation of the Witch-wife and the Birdalone's and Habundia's mirroring of appearances in *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*.¹⁷⁰ Like Cathleen, the Witch-wife transforms from an old and seemingly unremarkable woman into a young beautiful woman, but unlike the Witch-wife and Birdalone, Cathleen's appearance is not described. Her transformation is staged but occurs off-stage. The play, as seen in Cathleen's transformation, emphasises the regeneration and potential of hidden beauty, and enacts rather than just reflects a vision of nationhood defined by patriarchal conceptions of nationalism, distinguishing Yeats's patriarchy from Morris's relative feminism. Yet through Cathleen's transformation, Yeats follows Morris in offering a female-centred myth.

Yeats argues, in the same essay, that all of Morris's 'good' women are of Habundia's 'kin'; they accept their destiny, the 'changes and chances of life' like the changing of the seasons, and show 'the hope of motherhood and the innocent desire of the body'.¹⁷¹ The female characters are, again, repeatedly noted for their beautiful appearances and Birdalone especially, for the love she inspires through her beauty. The same is also true for Morris's male protagonists, as Ralph is noted for his beautiful appearance in *The Well at the World's End*. Whilst the female protagonists exhibit a consistent Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic idealisation

¹⁷⁰ Yeats, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, ll.347-348. By 1902 Yeats had become a leading dramatist, co-director and manager for the Irish National Dramatic Society with Douglas Hyde and Maud Gonne as vice-presidents, and amalgamated with the Irish National dramatic company, founded by Frank and William Fay. Maud Gonne and her nationalist women's organisation, Inghinidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Erin), had a huge interest in drama and involvement in the staging of *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, with Gonne in the title role.

¹⁷¹ Yeats, 'The Happiest of Poets', p.57.

akin to the mythological female figures in his earlier work, Morris, in the prose romances, accentuates more of a natural beauty connected to healthfulness. Yeats claims that when he thinks of Morris's 'good women' he sees Rossetti's painting 'The Bride' when he 'painted for once the abundance of earth and not the half-hidden light of his star'.¹⁷² Rossetti's painting *The Beloved* ('The Bride') (1865-6), derived from *The Song of Solomon*, (Figure 1.4) depicts the bride and her attendants as the bride unveils herself, and her beauty, before the viewer and her lover.



1.4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Beloved* (1865-6), Tate Britain, London

She transfixes the viewer through a visual address, with her direct gaze and the power of her beauty which is emphasised by the rich colours of the picture. Through Yeats's connection of the painting to Morris's imagery, it becomes an image of abundance, Rossetti's unusual

¹⁷²Ibid., p.56.

composition emphasising the richness of the colours and green of the bride's robes and the imagery of flowers. But Morris's female protagonists are granted more independence in the prose romances than Yeats suggests. Birdalone, for example, is self-sufficient in her environment, making her own shoes and clothes; she sews her shoes with 'oak-leaves done in them, and flowers, and coney, and squirrels' and she sits 'covered by a lap of the green gown which her needle is painting' as she embroiders her green gown 'with roses and lilies, and a tall tree springing up from amidmost the hem of the skirt, and a hart on either thereof, face to face of each other'.¹⁷³ Like the Bride in Rossetti's picture, Birdalone and Ursula wear green dresses embroidered with natural imagery, and Morris focuses on the visual richness and details of clothing, as well as the creation of the garments, which Birdalone creates amidst nature whilst sitting in the woods. *News from Nowhere* presents a society before the Revolution and a vision of gender and sexual equality achieved afterwards. The women in *Nowhere* are described as being 'comely', it was 'pleasant indeed to see them, they were so kind and happy-looking in expression of face, so shapely and well-knit of body, and thoroughly healthy-looking and strong'.¹⁷⁴ Morris focuses on beauty but a beauty that signifies health and is achieved through self-determination, pleasurable labour and a harmonious sense of community.

In further comparison to Morris's portrayal of women in his mythologies and late prose romances, Yeats's Deirdre, in the play *Deirdre*, is noted for her beautiful appearance and for

¹⁷³ Morris, *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, pp.12-14.

¹⁷⁴ William Morris, *News from Nowhere*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1970), p.11.

the love she inspires through her beauty. However, her beauty is regarded as a curse. Reading Yeats's plays in relation to ideas of nationhood, his portrayal of Deidre is a symbol of ancient Ireland with her curse of beauty being reflective of the Irish cause, while King Conchubar is the image of imperialist forces, associated with bargaining and commerce. In relation to imperialist feminising discourse and challenging it, Yeats embodies the idea of nationhood within the figure of Deidre, as an image of heroic femininity and defiance, portraying a personal independence reflective of a nation's hope for independence. Gordon Wickstrom argues that Yeats 'intends Deidre to be re-deemed from total disaster by the knowledge that in her death she and her love will become the stuff of a tragic poem'.¹⁷⁵ In this respect, like Cathleen ni Houlihan, she becomes or embodies the spirit of Ireland meant to inspire the nationalist and cultural revival of tradition. Her tragedy inspires literature and with it the literature of a nation. Yeats claims that in 'the abundant fountain' of Gaelic Legends, Deidre is 'alone among women who have set men mad' and 'had equal loveliness and wisdom'.¹⁷⁶ Deidre, the heroine from the Ulster cycle, is again connected to the land by Yeats through an act of self-sacrifice and he places her beauty, like that of Helen of Troy, as being responsible for the tragedy of the tale. In his notes to the play, Yeats equates the Deidre legend with the fall of Troy: 'Deidre was the Irish Helen, and Naisi her Paris, and Concobar her Menelaus'.¹⁷⁷ Deidre claims that she is determined to 'spoil this beauty that brought misery' and 'houseless wandering on the man I loved' but is deterred from doing so.¹⁷⁸ As Richard Allan Cave argues 'Yeats's Deidre is a strong woman, but she conceals that

¹⁷⁵ Gordon Wickstrom, 'Legend Focusing Legend in Yeats's "Deidre"', *Educational Theatre Journal*, 30: 4 (1978), 466-474 (p.470).

¹⁷⁶ W. B. Yeats, 'The Celtic Element in Literature', p.186.

¹⁷⁷ W. B. Yeats, *Deidre*, in *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats*, ed. by Russell K. Alspach (London: Macmillan 1966), pp.389-397 (p.389).

¹⁷⁸ W. B. Yeats, *Deidre*, in *Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats*, II.360-361.

strength behind a performance of the antithetical subservient stereotypes that the men in the play require her to be'.¹⁷⁹ For Deirdre, as to some extent for Birdalone, gender is a conscious masquerade and both protagonists are aware of their beauty which they use to enact their defiance to patriarchal structures, thus portraying a heroic individuality. The masquerade acts as a signifier of the body as Deirdre claims that 'it was for him, to stir him to desire, I put on beauty; yes for Conchubar'.¹⁸⁰ Similarly, Birdalone looks 'on the fairness of her body, and a great desire took hold of her heart that it might be loved as it deserved by him whom she desired'.¹⁸¹ In comparison to Morris's depiction of Birdalone and previous mythological figures, Medea and Gudrun, Deirdre is confined by the actions of the male figures, but in her defiance, she becomes a spirit of independence, both in and outside the ideas of nationhood. Her response to King Conchubar's demands challenges his expectations, 'Though, if I were less worthy of desire, I would pretend as much; but, being myself, it is enough that you were master here. Although we are so delicately made, there's something brutal in us, and we are won by those who can shed blood'.¹⁸² Upon finding Deirdre dead, after having committed suicide upon learning of Naiose's death at his hands, Conchubar affirms, 'She has deceived me for a second time'.¹⁸³ Through the image of independence and sacrifice, the notion of masquerade functions as political representation.

¹⁷⁹ Richard Allen Cave, 'Revaluations: Representations of Women in the Tragedies of Gregory and Yeats' *Irish University Review*, 34: 1 (2004), 122-132 (p.124).

¹⁸⁰ W. B. Yeats, *Deirdre*, ll.322-323.

¹⁸¹ Morris, *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, p.277.

¹⁸² Yeats, *Deirdre*, ll.669-674.

¹⁸³ Yeats, *Deirdre*, ll.753.

By the time of his play, *At the Hawk's Well*, and through his interest in Japanese Noh drama, Yeats's ideas about the people's theatre had changed, with his claim that he had invented a form of drama that was 'distinguished, indirect and symbolic' and one that would have 'no need of mob or Press to pay its way – an aristocratic form'. The Noh, along with Craig's rejection of realism in stage design and moving towards a Noh-like minimalism, offered Yeats a form of drama through which to express mastery and unity in a fusion of dance, music, mask, costume and language.¹⁸⁴ For Yeats, the Noh form showed him elements that he was trying to achieve through the arts, providing a cross-media alliance through which to present Irish mythologies; it offered an ancientness, of both form and the reworking of myth, and the presentation of both the bodily and the supernatural in one space.¹⁸⁵ *At the Hawk's Well* was first performed privately in 1916 in the drawing room of Lady Cunard's London House and through this new form and distancing technique, Yeats sought to communicate an art that portrayed the essential reality of human life and the depths of the mind. Yet despite Yeats distinguishing his type of audience and his privileging of the individual in the arts, he writes 'I love all the arts that can still remind me of their origin among the common people'.¹⁸⁶ Yeats's subject matter, regardless of his aristocratic attitude, is still rooted in an art of the people, in the myths and legends he used to create a communal sense of national and artistic identity. Yeats's *At the Hawk's Well* continues his dramatisation of mythology set in the Irish Heroic Age and centres around the images of the well and the dry tree, and works with the Irish past and mythologies, Noh tradition and Morris's *The Well*

¹⁸⁴ Eileen Kato, 'W.B. Yeats and the Noh', *The Irish Review*, 42 (2010), 104-119 (pp.105-107) and Daniel Albright, 'Pound, Yeats, and the Noh Theater', *The Iowa Review*, 15: 2 (1985), 34-50.

¹⁸⁵ W. B. Yeats, 'Certain Noble Play of Japan', in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.221-237 (p.221). Yeats and Pound studied the Noh between 1913-1916, when they stayed at Stone cottage together.

¹⁸⁶ Yeats, 'Certain Noble Play of Japan', p.223.

at the World's End. Critics have noted the connection between the play and Morris's prose romance, conveying the heroic quests to drink the waters of immortality at the well where the heroes encounter the guardian of the well.¹⁸⁷

The images of the tree and the well are important to Yeats in his essay 'The Happiest of Poets' and become emblems to Yeats of Morris's ancient and transformative vision. The prose romances offered Yeats a fantastical vision of the natural world freed from materialism and modernity, and of a world rejuvenated by natural images and past traditions, shown particularly in the enchanted water and the dry tree in *The Well at the World's End*. These images, taken from tradition and from tales such as Lancelot and the Holy Grail, represent the past age and provide energy for Yeats. They are images of transformation and its possibilities, as the water of the well transforms and rejuvenates the individual and the Dry Tree, an image of a ruined land, becomes green. As previously shown, Yeats argues for Morris's emphasis on the natural, not the supernatural. Morris's symbol of the well is one that offers health, vitality and fulfilment rather than being posited as an unattainable and spiritual ideal.

In *The Well at the World's End*, the Knights of the Dry Tree wear on a green coat 'an image of a tree lifeless' wrought in gold, the heraldry of knights joined together by, and to protect,

¹⁸⁷ For example, Yoko Sato, "At the Hawk's Well": Yeats's Dramatic Art of Visions', *Journal of Irish Studies*, 24 (2009), 27-36 and Irena Nikolova, 'Yeats's Revision of the Quest in at the Hawk's Well: Towards an Allegorical Interpretation of the Signs in the Play', *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 23: 2 (1997), 77-87.

the guardian of the well.¹⁸⁸ The Dry Tree is part of the journey to the well and acts as a test after Ralph and Ursula have travelled the dry desert devoid of water. The 'huge and monstrous tree' sits midst a 'dreary theatre', like 'one of those theatres of the ancient Roman folk', surrounded by the bodies of people who have died on the quest to the well and have been killed by drinking the poisonous pool of clear water at the bottom of the tree. The tree is described by Morris as leafless and 'lacking twigs', and 'its bole upheld but some fifty of great limbs, and as they looked on it, they doubted whether it were not made by men's hands rather than grown up out of the earth'.¹⁸⁹ At the start of Yeats's play, the musician calls to the eye of the mind 'a well long choked up and dry' and 'boughs long stripped by the wind', and these remain the central images throughout the play.¹⁹⁰ Interestingly, Morris's tree, with its morbid theatricality, becomes a central theatrical image on Yeats's stage. Yeats's interpretation does not have the physicality of Morris's tree as it is the musician who instructs the audience to imagine its presence. Here, Yeats also emphasises the theatricality of the mask, and its origins in Classical and Noh theatre. The mask, for Yeats, creates a heroic type, which is at once both distant and stirs profound emotions. In a similar way, Yeats's well and tree, like the mask, are both distant and yet stir profound emotions and become an intellectual and emotional symbol.¹⁹¹ Like Morris's image of the dry tree and its threatening presence, Yeats presents the dry tree as restricting the waters of immortality from flowing as 'the withered leaves of the Hazel half choke the dry bed of the well'.¹⁹² The Old Man also uses the twigs to make fire.

¹⁸⁸ Morris, *The Well at the World's End*, I, p.20.

¹⁸⁹ Morris, *The Well at the World's End*, II, (London: Longmans, Green & Co 1896), pp.83-84.

¹⁹⁰ Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, II.2-3.

¹⁹¹ W. B. Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, in *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats*, pp.415-419 (p.416).

¹⁹² Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, p. 209, II.23-24.

Both representations of the tree are images of sparsity and barrenness, but in Morris's romance it is placed in stark contrast to the abundance of the well which is overflowing with 'sweet' water gushing forth from a hollow' as 'clear as glass'. On the well are the words and warning: 'DRINK OF ME, IF YE DEEM THAT YE BE STRONG ENOUGH IN DESIRE TO BEAR LENGTH OF DAYS: OR ELSE DRINK NOT; BUT TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND THE KINDREDS OF THE EARTH HOW YE HAVE SEEN A GREAT MARVEL.' There is also a cup to use to drink the waters inscribed with 'THE STRONG OF HEART SHALL DRINK FROM ME'.¹⁹³ This is a contrasting image to Yeats's well, which is choked up and dry, while Cuchulain thinks, at first, that there is no well as all he can see is 'a hollow among stones half-full of leaves'.¹⁹⁴ Again, Yeats's well is symbolically and imaginatively represented, this time by a blue cloth placed on the stage. For Yeats, both the tree and the well are an image of bareness and sparsity with no promise of life or immortality. Thus, Yeats revises the pattern of Morris's medieval prose romances and of the quest narrative through a spiritual symbolism to represent a hero who fails in their quest. Heather Martin perceives comparisons between Yeats's play and the quest of the Holy Grail remarking that 'the similarity between the dry well and the boundless spring which dries up in Lancelot's presence can hardly be accidental'.¹⁹⁵ However, Morris's use of the heroic quest in the romance becomes a way to show how actions can change the world and to transform what is found wanting. Like that of the wanderers from *The Earthly Paradise*, Ralph's journey is one that is pursued in search for an ideal, but unlike them, Ralph never fails in his quest and returns home triumphant. Ralph's quest is not particularly a spiritual one but is a quest that represents an ideal that is obtainable, the well of the world's

¹⁹³ Morris, *The Well at the World's End*, II, pp.92-93.

¹⁹⁴ Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, II.107.

¹⁹⁵ Heather C. Martin, *W. B. Yeats: Metaphysician as Dramatist* (Canada: Gerrards Cross 1986), p.19

end, and once attained is practically applied to benefit the people and communities as he returns home to Upmeads. In this respect, Yeats revises the rhyme told by the captain to Ralph, about the possibilities of transformation that can be achieved by courage and by hope:

The Dry Tree shall be seen
On the green earth, and green
The Well-spring shall arise
For the hope of the wise.
They are one which were twain,
The Tree bloometh again,
And the Well-spring hath come
From the waste to the home.¹⁹⁶

In Morris's vision, the dry tree still has the potential to grow and revitalise hope and beauty. In his own copy of *The Well at the World's End*, Yeats has marked out the page with this rhyme on it. For Yeats, Morris could see more than any other 'the Earthly Paradise that shall blossom at the end of the ages' and to Yeats, he did not offer, as others did, beauty as a solitary vision.¹⁹⁷ Morris's vision throughout his literary works was one 'found after so many perils and many labours in the world' but in his later romances it became prominently 'found for the world's sake'.¹⁹⁸ The Sage of Swevenham, in *The Well at the World's End*, warns Ralph and Ursula: 'I will say this much unto you; that if ye love not the earth and the world with all your souls, and will not strive all ye may to be frank and happy therein, your toil and peril aforesaid shall win you no blessing but a curse'. His speech advocates beauty for the

¹⁹⁶ Morris, *The Well at the World's End*, II, p.224. *The Well at the World's End*, Dublin, National Library of Ireland, Yeats Library, YL 1394/1-2.

¹⁹⁷ Yeats, 'The Well at the World's End', p.320.

¹⁹⁸ Yeats, 'The Well at the World's End', p.320.

world's sake and he bids them to 'be no tyrants or builders of cities for merchants and usurers and warriors and thralls' but rather bids them 'to live in peace and patience without fear or hatred, and to succour the oppressed and love the lovely, and to be the friends of men'.¹⁹⁹ The Sage's speech emphasises the concern that this romance has with the establishment of an ideal community, based upon a shared beauty and equality amongst humanity. Although Yeats is drawn towards this idea of shared beauty and communal life, the Old Man and Cuchulain are completely removed from community of any kind and are faced with a bleak natural landscape at odds with Morris's abundance of nature. Morris, however, does not suggest that the answer to the dismays of civilisation is a retreat into isolation or into an individualistic paradise. Ralph and Ursula, nearing the end of their journey to the well, and over the course of the winter, live in isolation in a cave, far away from the communities and towns that they have encountered throughout their travels. They contemplate living a secluded existence but are destined to return to these communities and through the vitality, immortality and fame that the waters of the well bring, to benefit them.

The Old Man and Cuchulain wait for the waters of the well, kept away by the guardian of the well, who presides over the well as a hawk. Like Morris's Sage of Swevenham, the Old Man reflects wisdom by informing Cuchulain of the dangers of the guardian and the curse that she can inflict upon anyone who looks into her eyes. However, he is also bitter, having been denied the immortality and the youth he has been waiting and watching for fifty years. As he

¹⁹⁹ Morris, *The Well at the World's End*, II, p.43. Yeats uses this example in the essay and the page which the speech is on is folded down in his personal copy of Morris's book.

asks Cuchulain, 'why should that hollow place fill up for you, that will not fill for me?'²⁰⁰ By contrast, the Sage found the well in his old age and partook of drinking the waters, teaching its lore to the people who seek it. He actively encourages Ralph and Ursula in their pursuit while the Old Man is desperate for his share if the waters emerge. Ralph, Ursula and the Sage are successful in their pursuit and drinking of the waters and achieve immortality and vitality, whereas the Old Man and Cuchulain (like the Wanderers of *The Earthly Paradise*) both fail in their quests for immortality. It also leads to Cuchulain being cursed. In both narratives, the guardians of the wells perform a similar role, determining the fates of Ralph and Cuchulain and setting out the quests of the heroes. They have both drunk the waters of immortality. The Lady of Abundance is a part of Ralph's journey to the well and he later finds that his fate was predetermined by her before he embarked on his quest. Yeats's guardian, however, diverts the seekers of the well from the waters, enticing Cuchulain into a fight with Aoife and 'the fierce women of the hills' to take his life, and also providing the background story to Yeats's *On Baillie's Strand* (1904).²⁰¹ The guardian is a 'Woman of the Sidhe herself', there to 'allure or to destroy', and a curse falls upon those who meet her eyes.²⁰² She is reminiscent of the Lady in Morris's 'The Watching of the Falcon' with her power to decide fate and grant the wishes of those who watch the falcon daily. The King, however, makes the wrong choice which leads to his downfall and ruin. In *At the Hawk's Well*, the guardian of the well beguiles and ultimately curses Cuchulain through dance, moving like a hawk, and puts the Old Man to sleep.

²⁰⁰ Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, ll.111-112.

²⁰¹ Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, ll.242-243.

²⁰² Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well*, ll.162-164.

The importance of landscape and spirituality in *At the Hawk's Well* is significant to *Dreaming of the Bones*. *The Dreaming of the Bones*, like *At the Hawk's Well*, adopts the Noh form and the tradition of a ghostly encounter, through a depiction of the young man who was part of the 1916 Easter Rising at the General Post Office. In this instance, the Noh form would have attracted Yeats through its manifestation of the supernatural and the importance placed on location. The young officer is confronted by the ghosts of Diarmuid and Dervorgilla, who through their affair, were deemed to have invited Henry II into Ireland and were afterwards held responsible for the country's long history of servitude. The ghosts offer to protect the Young Man from being found and executed. Dervorgilla seeks to be absolved of her guilt for the Anglo-Norman invasion and asks whether the Irish people could forgive her, as she declares 'If someone of their race forgave at last | Lip would be pressed on lip'.²⁰³ But repeated throughout the play is the refrain: 'O never, never shall Diarmuid and Devorgilla be forgiven'.²⁰⁴ Diarmuid and Dervorgilla, however, confront a representative of modern nationalism and bring a ghost-ridden past into confrontation with a violent present. In them, Yeats highlights the material, spiritual and cultural conflicts and devastation wrought through colonisation. Yeats sums up the themes of this play through his statement that, looking back, he had three interests: 'interest in a form of literature, in a form of philosophy, and a belief in nationality. None of these seemed to have anything to do with the other, but gradually my love of literature and my belief in nationality came together'.²⁰⁵ *The Dreaming of the Bones* was written in 1919 but was deemed was so politically challenging (and Yeats knew it would be when writing it) that it was not performed in Dublin until 1931. The

²⁰³ W. B. Yeats, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, in *Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats*, pp.433-445, ll.236-237.

²⁰⁴ Yeats, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, ll. 235 and 238.

²⁰⁵ W. B. Yeats, 'If I were Four- And- Twenty', in *Explorations*, pp.263-280 (p.263).

'hatred' that Yeats mentions earlier in his work is evident in the play's confrontation of the past and present. Diarmuid and Dervorgilla, appearing before the young man (as an Easter Rebel), are not redeemed or forgiven, they are eternally punished, as remnants of cultural memory, for the crimes against their nation.²⁰⁶

The convent of *The Dreaming of the Bones* is freed from material concerns and searches beyond modernity for lost ideals and spirituality. It is a haunted place of spiritual power where one can 'dream back' and the ghosts can recapture their past. Yeats notes that 'The conception of the play is derived from the world-wide belief that the dead dream back, for a certain time, through the more personal thoughts and deeds of life'.²⁰⁷ In this respect, the play shows affinities with Morris's early prose romance 'A Dream' (1856) which communicates the dream that the narrator has and, as with Diarmuid and Devorgilla, includes the two ghostly lovers, Ella and Lawrence, who are all 'the people of dreams'.²⁰⁸ Bethany J. Smith has noted that the line 'All changed, changed utterly' from 'Easter 1916' is taken directly from this early prose romance and therefore suggests that around this time Yeats was perhaps re-reading or certainly thinking about Morris's works.²⁰⁹ In 1919, Yeats also wrote 'If I were Four-And-Twenty', in which he reflects on the political atmosphere in Ireland at the time, that when he was a young boy and Morris had come to Dublin to lecture on socialism, the people of Dublin had 'condemned Morris's doctrine without examination',

²⁰⁶ Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, 'Dreaming And Dancing: W. B. Yeats's Use Of Traditional Motifs In "The Dreaming Of The Bones" (1919)', *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*, 8:1 (2002), 57-75.

²⁰⁷ Yeats, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, in *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats*, p.777.

²⁰⁸ Yeats, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, ll.198.

²⁰⁹ Bethany J. Smith, "Changed Utterly": Narrative Transformations in William Morris and W. B. Yeats's "Easter, 1916", *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews*, 23:4 (2010), 231-237 (p.231).

but adds that Morris's work was reread with interest after the 1916 Easter Rising, 'Now for the most part they applaud it without examination' and 'that will change, for the execution of Connolly has given him many readers'.²¹⁰ The line of 'Easter 1916' which Smith argues is taken from Morris's early prose romance, appears in Morris's story to mark the transformation of a nurse and soldier into Ella and Lawrence and implies, again, the transformative aspect of Morris that Yeats returns to.

Yeats had previously explored the tale of Diarmuid and Devorgilla in his short story 'Hanrahan's Vision' from the *Stories of Red Hanrahan* (1904) where they are also depicted as two ghosts asking for forgiveness after seven centuries. Their punishment in both of Yeats's texts, like that of the lovers in Morris's early prose romance 'A Dream', is that they are doomed to haunt the landscape and endure a passion that can never be consummated. Like Devorgilla, Ella seeks absolution for her 'sin' of having sent Lawrence to his death over a century ago, as she had asked him to prove his love and courage by sleeping in the cavern of the red pike.²¹¹ He accepts but asks that if he does not return, she will go and seek him out even if it ends in death. Before he leaves, they both pray that if their natural lives are shortened by this quest that they will be granted many more lives and that during these lives they may meet again. When he does not come back the next day she follows him to the cave and meets her death. As Hugh, one of the four men telling the story of Ella and Lawrence within the dream, exclaims, 'I wonder what their love has grown to now; ah! They love, I

²¹⁰ Yeats, 'If I were Four- And- Twenty', p.268.

²¹¹ William Morris, 'A Dream' in *William Morris's Prose and Poetry*, pp.13-29 (p.24).

know, but cannot find each other yet: I wonder also if they ever will'.²¹² In comparison to Diarmuid and Devorgilla, Ella and Lawrence continually dream back to more personal thoughts and deeds of life, as Ella says to Lawrence when they meet again some years after their deaths 'for the time is short, and our bodies call up memories, change love to better even than it was in the old time'.²¹³ Ella and Devorgilla are seemingly wracked with guilt but Ella knows that they will have one last true meeting before the end of all and are granted rest after a hundred years of separation; when they finally meet in the house of the four men and embrace, they become ashes. On the other hand, Diarmuid and Dervorgilla are not separated from each other and they are granted no such peace. They are presented as remnants of cultural memory and for their significance as perceived by Irish tradition. The Young Man that he had 'almost yielded and forgiven it all' and in this way, the play encourages sympathy with the ghosts but not forgiveness.²¹⁴

The Dreaming of the Bones not only highlights Yeats's workings with Morris's story but also the continuance of Morris's environmentalism within Yeats's thinking. As the ghosts and the young man ascend the mountain to look down on the devastation wrought on Ireland by British imperialism, they perceive places considered with tradition, outside of colonisation, the 'Aran Islands, Connemara Hills, | And Galway in the breaking light'. These places portray Yeats's reverence for the Celtic past combined with a Morris-inspired sense of beauty. This sense of beauty is shown through the young man's pride in the pre-industrial landscape

²¹² Morris, 'A Dream', p.19.

²¹³ Morris, 'A Dream', p.21.

²¹⁴ Yeats, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, II. 205.

before him, as 'we have neither coal, nor iron ore, | To make us wealthy and corrupt the air'.²¹⁵ But the young man cannot forgive such devastation. Yeats's nationalism aligns itself to Morris's hopes in his 'Under an Elm-tree, Or, Thoughts in the Country-Side' (1889), published in *Commonweal*, where Morris sits under an elm-tree watching the swallows and starlings, whilst meditating on a new life and equality which would permit humanity to have a shared and common beauty, built out of the example of the past. As he looks out from under the shadow of the elm-tree at the surrounding countryside his thoughts turn to 'man in the past' and 'nature in the present', to 'a country-side worth fighting for if that were necessary, worth taking trouble to defend its peace'.²¹⁶ Yeats follows Morris's ideals and exemplifies his values in his 1904 utopian lecture where Ireland 'is going to become a country where, if there are few rich, there shall be nobody poor' and it 'will always be in the main an agricultural country'.²¹⁷ He portrays, as in 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree' (1888), the west regions of Ireland, which are to him, representative of Irish culture and of his personal memories, promoting a vision of a folk Ireland in which the landscape remains untouched by urban or modernising influences. Again, this places a further geographical division between the values of ancient and modern Ireland. The echoing of the Morris story, and Yeats's workings with cultural memory and contemporary politics, the Easter Rising, further highlights Yeats's concern for the responsibility of shaping the legacy that figures public

²¹⁵ Yeats, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, ll.244-257.

²¹⁶ William Morris, 'Under an Elm-Tree, Or, Thoughts in the Countryside', *Commonweal*, (1889).<
<<https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1889/commonweal/07-elm-tree.htm>> [date accessed 4 December 2019], (vol.5, No. 182, pp.212-213).

Yeats's essay 'The Happiest of Poets' was a preface to an 1912 edition of Morris's 'Under an Elm-Tree'.

²¹⁷ W. B. Yeats (1904) quoted in Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*, p.104. Yeats's emphasis on agriculture in Ireland is also shown in his designs for the currency of the Irish Free State, which during his time as Senator, he was elected chair of the coinage committee. He chose the images of animals and the harp for the coins which caused an outcry for the lack of religious imagery.

memory, a memory which re-emerges, over the centuries, of the spirits of the lovers in 'A Dream' and seven-hundred year seeking of redemption from Diarmuid and Devorgilla. Morris's political and social criticisms were still a re-emerging influence for Yeats and over the next two decades, he would continue to reflect on Morris's legacy. As Yeats, like Morris, became an increasingly public figure, he continued to reflect upon Morris in his own autobiographical writings, with his legacy in his political career as a senator for the Irish Free State and in his late poetry of the 1920s and 1930s.

Retrospective Yeats

From 1922-1928, Yeats was appointed as a senator of the Irish Free State, advising the government on matters concerning education, literature and the arts. Yeats's early socialism had a significant and lasting influence on his later political attitudes. He always defended personal freedom but disliked cultural elitism, approving of Morris's integration of the aesthetic and the practical and of art's importance to everyday life.²¹⁸ In his senate speeches, Yeats maintained attitudes derived from Morris's artistic perspective on socialism and his views concerning education. Morris, as public figure and social thinker, passionately espoused in his lectures and written articles his views on education and the arts and how the two could be joined in a utopian improvement of social and artistic standards. Like Morris, Yeats advocated educational facilities for the poor and that the State should provide the necessities of life for all its citizens. In his article 'The Dull Level of Life' (1884) Morris advocates a universal education, one which will enable the development and fostering of

²¹⁸ Cullingford, *Yeats, Ireland and Fascism*, pp.16-23.

individuality and talent against the mass oppression of commercialism. He promotes an education which will 'be both more liberal, and wiser for all' and will have the function to develop 'any gifts which children or older people have towards science, literature, the handicrafts or the higher arts, or to anything which may be useful or desirable to the community'.²¹⁹ In his Senate speeches on the 'Condition of Schools' Yeats, after having expressed his concern for the suitability of school buildings and the welfare of the children in regards to clothing, food and cleanliness, adds that he has two clear principles, both reflective of Morris's ideas in his article. The first is that 'We ought to be able to give the child of the poor as good an education as we give to the child of the rich' and the second, 'that the child itself must be the end in education'.²²⁰ His principles for education also portray Yeats's growing disillusionment with nationalist ideals and State nationalism when he claims that in the modern world there 'is a tendency to subordinate the child to the idea of the nation. I suggest that whether we teach either Irish history, Anglo-Irish literature or Gaelic, we should always see that the child is the object and not any of our special perquisites'.²²¹

These ideals are expressed in his poem 'Among School Children' (1926) which was occasioned by a visit to St. Otteran's School in Co. Waterford, a school of which Yeats seems to have been particularly supportive. At the school, Yeats is conscious of the arbitrary role he

²¹⁹ William Morris, 'The Dull Level of Life', in *Political Writings: Contributions to Justice and Commonwealth 1883-1890*, pp.28-31 (p.30).

²²⁰ W. B. Yeats, '43. Condition of Schools', in *The Senate Speeches of W. B. Yeats*, ed. by Donald R. Pearce (London: Faber and Faber 1960), pp.106-112 (p.111).

²²¹ Yeats, 'Condition of Schools', p.112.

has for the children, as they stare in 'momentary wonder' at a 'sixty-year-old smiling public man' inspecting the conditions of their school.²²² The children learn to cipher, sing, 'study reading-books and history', to cut and sew and to 'be neat in everything | In the best modern way'.²²³ Here, Yeats's use of the 'modern' suggests both a modern approach to an educational system that teaches a variety of useful tasks and a criticism of the modern state which is devoid of the arts, of culture, and the creative individuality that both Morris and Yeats value. This modernity is placed in contrast to the mythological 'Ledaean body' that the persona imagines, as an image of the heroic age and of beauty, in relation to Helen of Troy, as the daughter of Leda. It also marks a distinction between Yeats as the public man and Yeats the poet and thus between the external and spiritual nature of the individual, of 'two natures blent' into a sphere of 'youthful sympathy'.²²⁴ The poet then rejects any sort of education (associated in the poem with Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras) that eliminates any part of existence. Life gains meaning as it becomes part of a greater wholeness, providing a sense of unity and fulfilment as depicted through the image of the tree in the final stanza. In his image of the chestnut tree, Yeats singles out the individual parts, the leaf, blossom and bole, which work together to create an organic whole. The tree also refers to an organic community and recalls Yeats's senate speech 'The Child and the State' (1925) in which the image of the tree marks a state and nation and represents growth. His use of natural imagery, despite being a reference to the image of tree as state in the political philosophy of Edmund Burke, is also reminiscent of Morris and his use of natural imagery and of growth in relation to the people. Like Morris's vision of pleasurable labour, artistic community and

²²² W. B. Yeats, 'Among School Children', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, pp.261-263 (p.261), ll.7-8.

²²³ Yeats, 'Among School Children', ll.3-6.

²²⁴ Yeats, 'Among School Children', ll.9-14.

individuality, labour 'is blossoming or dancing where | The body is not bruised to pleasure soul | Nor beauty born out of its own despair'.²²⁵ Life, beauty and useful labour are encapsulated in the blossoming tree as fruitful and organic and in Yeats's image of the dancer as artistic effort, integrity and self-fulfilment. For Yeats, in a closing statement reminiscent of Morris's social criticisms and what Yeats emphasises in his prose romances, education should 'prepare for an Ireland that will be healthy, vigorous, orderly, and above all, happy'.²²⁶

The importance Yeats placed on culture and cultural community bears further resonances of Morris's principles, and re-emerges in his senate speeches, in his interest in the improvement of the arts and the relationship between art and industry in Ireland (especially 'Stained Glass'). It is there in his campaigns to preserve and protect ancient monuments and historical buildings in Ireland and for the perseveration of cultural artefacts, especially ancient and medieval Irish manuscripts. In his senate speech 'Irish Manuscripts' (1923), he claims that this early literature is 'of great importance to culture' and to scholars, and that these works have been the 'chief illumination of my imagination all my life.' He also notes that they should build up idealism in Ireland, an idealism of labour and thought which will enhance the country's reputation, but adds that these manuscripts and scholarship are 'not a work of propaganda'. He cannot deny the importance of propaganda but he does not take any pleasure from seeing his name 'spelt in a way that makes it look very strange to me at

²²⁵ Yeats, 'Among School Children', ll.39-41.

²²⁶ W. B. Yeats, 'The Child and the State', in *The Senate Speeches of W. B. Yeats*, pp.168-174 (p.174).

the top of this resolution'.²²⁷ Yeats's later poetry often portrays a gathering disillusionment with the social and political realities of a newly independent land that fell short of his imagined and cultural ideals. Indeed, he later remarked that 'I am no Nationalist, except in Ireland for passing reasons; State and Nation are the work of intellect'.²²⁸

Yeats's work for the State and Nation continues to tell of the influence of Morris on Yeats as a social and political thinker. The influence of Morris is revealed, as Cullingford argues, not only in Yeats's attitude towards social legislation of the Irish Senate and his support the workers in the Dublin Lock-Out of 1913 but also in his desire for art galleries and a concern for a public share in art.²²⁹ Before and during his years on the Senate, Yeats fought and campaigned to keep the Hugh Lane pictures in Dublin. Firstly, he had supported Lane's plans to build a gallery in which to house his collection and was appalled by the public opposition to Lane's plans. After Lane's death, he fought for Lane's wish, defending his unsigned will that the pictures should permanently reside in Dublin. He argued that if they should be hung in the Municipal Gallery the people should have a possession 'which in future generations would draw people to Dublin, and help in enriching the city and the whole population by bringing those pilgrims'.²³⁰ Works of visual art, mostly in his late poems, prompted some profound reflections upon his personal and poetic experiences and like Rossetti, he continues focusing on the link between poetry and the visual arts. He meditates on a single work of art or upon the experience of time of history and the modern world through art, as

²²⁷ W. B. Yeats, 'Irish Manuscripts', in *The Senate Speeches of W. B. Yeats*, pp.42-45 (pp.43-45).

²²⁸ W. B. Yeats, 'A General Introduction for my Work, in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.509-526 (p526).

²²⁹ Cullingford, *Yeats, Ireland and Fascism*, p.26.

²³⁰ W. B. Yeats, 'The Lane Pictures', in *The Senate Speeches of W. B. Yeats*, pp.46-49 (p.49).

seen for example in Rossetti's 'The Burden of Nineveh.' One such poem is 'The Municipal Gallery Re-visited' (1937) which is both public and private in Yeats's meditation on his lifelong work for Ireland. The persona is surrounded by the 'images of thirty years' and these are images of both acquaintances and personal friends who have died and through these paintings 'Ireland's history in their lineaments trace'.²³¹ It is again through natural imagery that Yeats presents his work with his friends as 'John Synge, I and Augusta Gregory thought, all that we did, all that we said or sang | Must come from contact with the soil'. For the persona, it was those three alone in 'modern times' who portrayed the 'dream of the noble and the beggarman'.²³² The reader is presented with images of naturalness and the alignment of art and life and of art and life to nationality; the portraits present to the persona a lost organic community, joined by a shared inspiration from historical and mythic values.

Likewise, 'The Circus Animals' Desertion' (1939) is a self-expression and assessment of his own art, a deconstruction of the images within his early poetry and of his own poetic image and career. He evaluates his use of mythological figures, Oisín and his Pre-Raphaelite 'fairy bride' and Cúchulainn, recurring from his early poetry throughout his work, to his work at the theatre where the 'players and painted stage took all my love'.²³³ The speaker questions where these 'masterful images' began, presenting the imaginative, mythological images and inspiration which are contrasted to the images of materiality surrounding them, the 'mound

²³¹ W. B. Yeats, 'The Municipal Gallery Re-visited', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, pp.366-368 (p.366), ll.1 and 36.

²³² Yeats, 'The Municipal Gallery Re-visited', ll.27-33.

²³³ W. B. Yeats, 'The Circus Animals' Desertion' (1939), in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, pp.394-395 (p.395), ll.8 and 23.

of refuse', the 'old kettles', bottles, cans, irons, rags and 'the till'.²³⁴ The imaginative world is then presented as an escapist ideal from the images of the materialism and modernity that Yeats, like Morris, had always sought to denounce. His art has now been reduced to earthly symbols in the 'foul rag and bone shop of the heart'.²³⁵ Yeats references the materials used in making paper, emphasising the material processes of printing. These materials combined create art and beauty, just as Morris had created the Kelmscott Press with the intention to make handcrafted books. In comparison to Morris, it is an individual beauty which is shared from 'the heart' and rises above, and criticises, the material concerns from which these imaginative ideas originated. However, it should also be noted that in reflecting upon these images, Yeats is reminiscing upon his life and work in old age, whereas Morris never grew to be old.

Yeats, as a public figure, poet and dramatist, was intrigued by the possibilities of reaching new audiences and this is evident in his radio broadcasts during the 1920s and most prominently in the 1930s. His broadcasts cover talks about his own poetry, readings of his poetry, recordings of his stage plays and more generally modern poetry and the Irish literary movement. His broadcasts played an important part in the dissemination of his work and they portray his hope that radio might produce a new cultural community, uniting its listeners, particularly Irish audiences, in a shared appreciation of the historical and literary heritage which his work re-imagines and reshapes.²³⁶ An ideal cultural community was

²³⁴ Yeats, 'The Circus Animals' Desertion', ll.26-31.

²³⁵ Yeats, 'The Circus Animals' Desertion', ll.33.

²³⁶ Emilie Morin, 'W. B. Yeats and Broadcasting 1924-1965', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 35:1 (2015), 145-175 (p.152).

something that Yeats had always strived to achieve throughout his career. On the other hand, some difficulties with radio also led him to feel that he had lost the community of his live poetry readings. His broadcasts reveal his personality and personal influences. One of his surviving broadcasts from 1932, in which he reads four of his poems, including 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree', on BBC radio, begins with a reflection of his reading with Morris:

I remember the great English poet William Morris coming in a rage out of some lecture hall where somebody had recited a passage out of his *Sigurd the Volsung*, "It gave me a devil of a lot of trouble," said Morris, "to get that thing into verse!" It gave me a devil of a lot of trouble to get into verse the poems that I am going to read, and that is why I will not read them as if they were prose.²³⁷

Whilst this, again, is a comic anecdote about Morris's temperament, it also implies Morris's influence on Yeats as a poet. Yeats implies that both himself and Morris regarded poetry as a craft and posits the poet as a craftsman, shaping their material into verse and laboring over the importance of rhythm and sound in their lyrics. In reminiscing of his memory of Morris's public reading of *Sigurd the Volsung* (he also refers to this in his broadcast *Modern Poetry* and Yeats apparently did his own re-reading of *Sigurd* in 1937), Yeats casts himself and Morris as public poets and as such, a poet whose vision is integral to life and the arts.²³⁸ Yeats describes the poem's 'remote beauty' and its poignancy; in 1933, Yeats reports that he has been reading *Sigurd* to his daughter, Anne, and to George Yeats, pointing to the scene of Sigurd's birth and his nursing. Yeats notes that this particular passage he had 'never been

²³⁷ W. B. Yeats, 'Reading of Poems' (1931) in Colton Johnson (ed.) *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats, Volume X: Later Articles and Reviews* (New York: Scribner 2000) pp.224-229

²³⁸In a letter from May Morris to Yeats in 1937, she tells him that 'I am glad to hear of your re-reading of Sigurd: It is not only the splendour of the poem that carries one on and on but the dexterity (I won't pause for a better word) of the weaving together of all the broken fragments of a lost epic, making of them something understandable and welcome to modern minds. I think it *is* an achievement!'. May Morris, 'To Mr. Yeats, 17 October 1937', in *Letters to W. B. Yeats, Volume 2*, ed. by Richard J. Finneran, George Mills Harper and William M. Murphy (London: Macmillan Press 1977), p.595

able to read without tears' as it is 'so great in the pathos of its joy'.²³⁹ *Sigurd the Volsung* remained a poem that Yeats would continually consider and turn to throughout his life.

Yeats is clearly aware that 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree' is one of his most famous lyrics, adding 'if you know anything about me you would expect me to begin with it. It is the only poem of mine that is very widely known'.²⁴⁰ He furthers his personal connection to the poem by recounting how it was created. This supports his belief that 'a poet writes always of his personal life' veiled behind 'phantasmagoria'.²⁴¹ In this instance, it is not phantasmagorical, as Yeats addresses his audience directly and communicates the influences on the poem. 'Innisfree' is a solitary and individualised paradise, a psychic creation based upon the persona's individual reminiscences of Innisfree in Lough Gill which seeks to be completely removed from social experience. Through its dissemination on the radio, the escapist solipsism of 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree' is turned into a social experience and accentuates Morris's communitarian vision of beauty. The vision of natural happiness and freedom from materialism and industrialism is typified in Yeats's 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree' which like the prologue to *The Earthly Paradise* is an attempt to make an earthly paradise through the rejection of urbanisation. Adrian Paterson notes that it is possible to divine the text as being in tribute to Morris, 'born out of Morris' London' and to the medieval ideal of a 'lake-isle'

²³⁹ W. B. Yeats, 'To Olivia Shakespear, Oct 24, 1933', in *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, pp.815-816 (p.816) and W. B. Yeats, 'Fighting the Waves', in *Explorations*, pp.370-391 (p.375).

²⁴⁰ W. B. Yeats, 'Reading of Poems', in *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats, Volume X: Later Articles and Reviews*, ed. by Colton Johnson (New York: Scribner 2000), pp.224-229 (p.224).

²⁴¹ Yeats, 'A General Introduction for my Work', p.519.

which is present in some of Morris's texts.²⁴² Given the date when Yeats's poem was written and his written records of Morris having read *The Wanderings of Oisín*, it is possible that Morris knew Yeats's poem himself. If this is the case, then perhaps Yeats's 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree' might have, in turn, had some influence on Morris's *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*. The persona stands on the 'pavements grey', presumably in nineteenth-century London, dreaming of a small lake-isle in the west of Ireland, an area of Ireland particularly representative, for Yeats, as the roots and origins of Irish culture.²⁴³ Morris conjures up images of pre-industrial London in the Prologue to *The Earthly Paradise*, where there is a 'dream of London, small, and white, and clean' and of 'clear Thames bordered by its gardens green'.²⁴⁴ Morris repeatedly attempts to reimagine London back into an earlier condition whereas the persona of Yeats's poem turns their back on the city altogether. The speaker's vision of Innisfree is a secluded place, where the speaker will have 'some peace' and live in a small cabin of wattles and clay. The poem evokes a sense of stillness and serenity, complemented by the sounds of nature that the persona conjures, of the bee, cricket and linnet and the sounds of the 'lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore', similar to the Prologue of *The Earthly Paradise*.²⁴⁵ The urban environment of London in 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree' is evocative of the 'grim' and 'grey' surroundings of Morris's present times in *The Pilgrims of Hope*. This urban environment is contrasted with the naturalness of Yeats's imagined Innisfree and the natural imagery Morris uses in connection to the people, 'So the hope of the people now buddeth and groweth' and 'around them the street-flood ebbed

²⁴² Adrian Paterson, 'On the Pavements Grey': The Suburban Paradises of W. B. Yeats and William Morris', in *Irish Writing London: Volume 1 Revival to the Second World War*, ed. by Tom Herron (London: Bloomsbury 2013), pp.34-54 (p.40).

²⁴³ W. B. Yeats, 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree', in *W. B. Yeats: The Poems*, p.60, ll.11.

²⁴⁴ Morris, 'Prologue: The Wanderers', in *The Earthly Paradise*, ll.5-7.

²⁴⁵ Yeats, 'The Lake-Isle of Innisfree', ll.5-10.

and flowed'.²⁴⁶ Morris's emphasis on nature and his reaction against urbanisation evolve through his late prose romances, where the fantastical visions follow on from *The Earthly Paradise*, and hark back to a tradition of life that existed before commercialism and industrialisation, presenting explorations of fantasy worlds without physical boundaries. This is reiterated in the statement made by Morris during the writing of his late romances, in 'How I became a Socialist' (1894) that apart 'from the desire to produce beautiful things, the leading passion of my life has been and is hatred of modern civilisation', a statement which would have appealed to the young Yeats.²⁴⁷

The Pre-Raphaelite depictions of mythic heroines and Morris's distinct refashioning of myth and the heroic past provided Yeats with a model for his revival of Celtic myth. Through using Morris as a model, Yeats refashions myth to measure past values against modern civilisation, especially in terms of their shared utopianism and anti-industrialism. Yeats valued the synthesis in Morris's artistic vision, individual personality and social or political concerns. However, Yeats made a choice not to follow Morris's medievalism. Although Yeats's later political thought changed through his aristocratic affiliations, his early socialist involvement left a lasting impact on Yeats's work with social and political legislation for the Irish Free State. Despite Yeats's rejection of socialism, particularly for its materialist concerns and denial of religion and the spiritual, Yeats adapted Morris's socialist thoughts into his cultural nationalism, for instance into his establishment of the Abbey Theatre. Elements of Morris's prose romances, which Yeats so admired, were refashioned into in his plays. Even though

²⁴⁶ Morris, *The Pilgrims of Hope*, ll.61-165.

²⁴⁷ William Morris, 'How I Became a Socialist', in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Victorian Age, Volume E*, ed. by Julia Reidhead (London: W. N. Norton and Company 2012), pp.1522-1525 (p.1524).

Yeats later publicly criticised Morris's poetry, he continued to promote Morris's legacy through his own literary and political works and to read him with pleasure and intense feeling long after he had ceased to be fashionable. Morris's diverse range of talents, the intensity of his vision and his sheer hopefulness left a lasting impression on Yeats, proving to be a lifelong influence both as a representative of Pre-Raphaelitism and in his own right.

Chapter Two

D. H. Lawrence, Pre-Raphaelite art, and the 'Pre-Raphaelite Woman'

D. H. Lawrence is a figure who is not obviously associated with the Pre-Raphaelite circle nor his works with Pre-Raphaelitism. In 'Introduction to these paintings' (1929), written to accompany the exhibition of his artwork at the Warren Gallery in London, Lawrence vividly set out his views on painting and art history. In his discussion of instinctual awareness and the imaginative life in art history, Lawrence sees the 'imaginative glow' retained in the painting of Watteau, Ingres, Poussin, and Chardin and the 'life of the individual' in Titian, Velasquez and Rembrandt.¹ However, for Lawrence:

After this, and apart from landscape and water-colour, there is strictly no English painting that exists. As far as I am concerned, the pre-Raphaelites don't exist; Watts doesn't, Sargent doesn't, and none of the moderns.²

Given his attitude towards them here, how can Lawrence possibly be influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites and engage with their work? Certainly, Lawrence's paintings are visually distinct from Pre-Raphaelite painting, propounding the instinctual and vital qualities of his artistic technique and vision. Lawrence's attitude towards the Pre-Raphaelites is often inconsistent and outwardly changes across his career, beginning with an early enthusiastic response to one which becomes less evident. His denial of the Pre-Raphaelites, here nearing the end of his career, demonstrates the many changes and contradictions in his writings and his views. Although Lawrence repudiates their existence in terms of his visual aesthetic, the Pre-Raphaelites shaped his artistic vision and their influence pervades his literary works, most

¹ D. H. Lawrence, 'Introduction To His Paintings', in *Selected Essays* (London: Penguin 1950), pp.307-346 (pp.317- 318).

² *Ibid*, p.318.

evidently in *The White Peacock* (1911), *The Trespasser* (1912), *Sons and Lovers* (1913) and *The Rainbow* (1915). As with Yeats, his imaginative engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism is an ongoing presence in his work. I suggest that the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites can be felt throughout Lawrence's work, from the rich visual and artistic heritage in *The White Peacock* to his much later poetry and novels, such as *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), which continue to draw upon Pre-Raphaelite literary and visual sources.

This inspiration from the Pre-Raphaelites emerges and develops across Lawrence's career, through his use of Pre-Raphaelite literary and visual motifs, his treatment of mythologies, and his anti-industrialist stance. As with the Pre-Raphaelites, the literary and the visual are closely aligned in Lawrence's work, not just through his references to specific paintings or literature, but also through his use of language and imagery. For Lawrence, painting and the visual arts were of great importance to him as a writer and as an artist, both when creating as a painter a picture living 'with the life you put into it' and when experiencing 'a form of delight that words can never give' as the viewer of the work.³ Lawrence's vision refers to both visual perception and ontological concerns that are present and combined within his writing and painting. In his metaphysical and utopian meditations, Lawrence celebrates the expression of the individual self and reflects upon the nature of being within the surrounding universe. His intensity of perception is heightened by the primacy of paintings, and a 'visionary awareness' which is also present in the utopian element that runs throughout his work.⁴ Comparably, there is a utopian and visual element which runs throughout the work of

³ Lawrence, 'Making Pictures', pp.300-306 (pp.303-304).

⁴ Lawrence, 'Making Pictures', p.304.

Ruskin and Morris.⁵ Lawrence follows Ruskin, Morris, and the Pre-Raphaelites through a revolt against modernity, signified by his espousal of a return to nature, and his stress on the importance of Life.

As with the critical literature concerning W.B. Yeats's Pre-Raphaelitism, critics have tended to focus primarily on Lawrence's early fascination with Pre-Raphaelite literature and art, especially in his first novel *The White Peacock*. *The White Peacock* features references to specific Pre-Raphaelite works, or ones associated with Pre-Raphaelitism, including Millais's *The Knight Errant*, Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose*, Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel*, and John William Waterhouse's *Lady of Shalott*. In his close engagement with nineteenth-century painting, Lawrence also includes references to G. F. Watts's *Hope and Mammon* in *The White Peacock*. Watts was connected to the Pre-Raphaelites socially rather than aesthetically. By aligning Watts with Pre-Raphaelite artists, Lawrence places Pre-Raphaelite work in dialogue with other paintings of the time, using them in parallel and exploring thematic connections between Watts's two paintings and Pre-Raphaelite imagery and symbolism. Waterhouse was born in 1849, during the years of the formation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, but would later embrace Pre-Raphaelite subjects and inspirations in his own artwork. In this respect, Waterhouse was engaged in reshaping and continuing Pre-Raphaelitism into the early twentieth century and was often mistaken for and labelled as a Pre-Raphaelite.

⁵ In his rejection of industrial society, Lawrence has been placed in a tradition of nineteenth-century writers including Morris, and the influence from Ruskin has been acknowledged on Lawrence's writing as a word-painter. See Eugene Goodheart, *The Utopian Vision of D. H. Lawrence* (London: University of Chicago 1963), pp.7-8 and Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society*, (London: Hogarth Press 1958), pp.201-204. George P. Landow, 'Lawrence and Ruskin: The Sage as Word-Painter', *D.H. Lawrence and Tradition*, ed. by Jeffrey Meyers (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985), pp.35-50.

Critics have argued that *The White Peacock*, and its female protagonists, are self-consciously modelled on the aesthetic style of the Pre-Raphaelites. Jack Stewart, in *The Vital Art of D. H. Lawrence: Vision and Expression*, argues that Lawrence worked towards his own vision through a sensibility 'saturated in English Pre-Raphaelitism, Georgianism, and Aestheticism, as well as French Realism, Symbolism, and Impressionism'.⁶ For Stewart, Lawrence's painterly descriptions of the landscapes show the vitality of the natural world through a 'Ruskinite fidelity to nature, minutely depicted' and the sensuous detail of Pre-Raphaelitism.⁷ Both Jack Stewart and Karen Sproles explore Lawrence's references to particular Pre-Raphaelite paintings in his depictions of women in *The White Peacock*. Sproles argues that the Pre-Raphaelite depictions of women are passive and are reflective of a male spectator, and that life and desire are displaced into the depiction of the natural world around them. For Sproles, Lawrence's early works show the male characters' displacement of sexual desire onto nature through the romantic posture and composition of the female Pre-Raphaelite subject.⁸ Stewart also suggests that some of the other descriptions in *The White Peacock*, beyond the Pre-Raphaelite paintings specifically mentioned, refer to other Pre-Raphaelite paintings and compositions, particularly Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Astarte Syriaca*.⁹ Lawrence's references to Rossetti's paintings and compositions continue throughout his works, particularly in *Women in Love* (1920). *The White Peacock* contains Lawrence's most direct references to Pre-Raphaelite paintings and literature in his fiction and his initial engagement with the Pre-Raphaelite motifs of the Lady of Shalott and the

⁶ Jack Stewart, *The Vital Art of D. H. Lawrence: Vision and Expression* (USA: Southern Illinois University 1999) p.9.

⁷ Jack Stewart, 'Landscape Painting and Pre-Raphaelitism in *The White Peacock*', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 27-28 (1997-99) 3-25 (p.10).

⁸ Karen Z. Sproles, 'D. H. Lawrence and the Pre-Raphaelites: Love Among the Ruins', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 22 (1990), 299-305 (p.299).

⁹ Stewart, 'Landscape Painting and Pre-Raphaelitism in *The White Peacock*', p.13.

myth of Persephone. For this reason, *The White Peacock* will act as a foundational text for the chapter which will provide the basis for showing how Lawrence continues to engage with Pre-Raphaelitism and how he develops and shapes these literary and visual motifs. As a very early text of Lawrence's, it sets out the key themes and motifs that he would continue to draw on and develop across his career.

From his first fictional works, such as *The White Peacock*, right the way through to his last, Lawrence repeatedly uses and develops motifs from Pre-Raphaelite literature and literary motifs that were of importance to the visual art of the Pre-Raphaelites. These motifs include the figures of the Lady of Shalott, Sleeping Beauty, Persephone, and the Blessed Damozel. In terms of Lawrence's use of Pre-Raphaelite motifs, Judith Farr argues that Lawrence's repeated use of the Sleeping Beauty, in connection to the portrayal of his mother in his work, would have come 'through the popular Victorian tradition of Sleeping Beauty paintings and poems with which, as a young "Pagan" student of Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites, Lawrence was familiar'.¹⁰ I will follow up, later in the chapter, on the gestures towards Pre-Raphaelite influences in relation to these figures made by critics Maria Aline Ferreira, Andrew Radford and Margot K. Louis. Overall, there has been little consideration of Lawrence's influence from the Pre-Raphaelites, or writers from the Pre-Raphaelite circle, in his portrayal of the myth and figure of Persephone. Critics tend to overlook Lawrence's use of Pre-Raphaelite literature, especially his continued imaginative engagement with Rossetti's and Swinburne's poetry, and what the Pre-Raphaelite depictions of these literary and

¹⁰ Judith Farr, 'D. H. Lawrence's Mother as Sleeping Beauty: The "Still Queen" of His Poems and Fictions', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 36:2 (1990), 195-209 (p.197).

mythological works offered to Lawrence. While these extant studies and articles have addressed Lawrence's engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism, they focus solely on a single work by Lawrence or on his earlier works, such as *The White Peacock*. In this chapter, I will re-evaluate the relationship between Lawrence and Pre-Raphaelitism and go beyond the consideration of his early works or a single work, examining his development of recurring Pre-Raphaelite motifs and ideals in works ranging from *The White Peacock* to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

Lawrence engages with Pre-Raphaelite depictions of women in the context of women's emancipation. His representations of emancipation through art and sexual freedom chimes with the Pre-Raphaelites, engaging in debates that were contemporaneous within their own times. In this respect, Lawrence aligns himself with the Pre-Raphaelites and treats them as literary and artistic precursors to whom he responds, through his use of their paintings in his fiction and his treatment of the figures of the Lady of Shalott and Persephone, as I will explore in this chapter. In his representations of these two figures, Lawrence both continues the Pre-Raphaelite tradition of reflection on the original source material (Tennyson, Homeric hymns) and seeing these figures through the lens of Pre-Raphaelite art. Lawrence simultaneously keeps to and challenges the Pre-Raphaelites. The female characters in his fiction, and his depictions of the Lady of Shalott and Persephone, reflect a process of identification, in which they have Pre-Raphaelite labels imposed on them by male characters, to self-identification, in which they articulate their own experiences through Pre-Raphaelitism. In this way, it shows Lawrence's particular emphasis on individual revelation

and a sympathetic response to the Pre-Raphaelites' own portrayals of femininity and self-expression. In another way, Lawrence repudiates Pre-Raphaelitism in terms of exposing the limits and abuses of the male characters' and artists' treatment of women by having them articulate their attitudes in terms that recall Pre-Raphaelite paintings.

In 1912, Lawrence wrote to his Eastwood neighbour, Sallie Hopkins, that as a writer he wanted to 'do my work for women, better than the suffrage'.¹¹ Growing up, Lawrence was exposed to news of the women's suffrage and to the proto-feminism of his mother, Lydia Lawrence, and women friends in Nottinghamshire. Lydia Lawrence was treasurer for the Women's Co-operative Guild which supported the suffrage. Eastwood had its own branch of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and its leaders often spoke in Nottingham. Lawrence's friends and collaborators, Jessie Chambers, Louie Burrows, Helen Corke, Blanche Jennings, and Alice Dax were all involved in some ways in the suffragist movement.

Lawrence's work reflects anxieties about women's roles and sympathy for women with ideas of what he saw as being 'better than the suffrage'. As Elizabeth M. Fox argues 'Lawrence was, we might say, never a feminist, but always ready to employ feminist tactics and never able (or willing) to escape feminist influence, though always resistant to it'.¹²

Despite much feminist criticism of Lawrence and Lawrence's later ideas about gender, Lawrence, as Elaine Feinstein argues, intended to be a 'spokesman for women' and many

¹¹ D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1979), p.490.

¹² Elizabeth M. Fox, 'Edwardian Feminisms and Suffragism', in *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, ed. by Andrew Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2018), pp. 192-201 (p.200).

highly intellectual women knew and respected Lawrence's insights into their problems.¹³ There have been numerous feminist studies, most notoriously Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970), which attacked Lawrence for misogyny and phallogocentric ideals.¹⁴ Millett's account of Lawrence's work disregarded any of his work prior to *Sons and Lovers*, and his background, particularly his relationships with women, his often-positive attitude towards women in his own autobiographical writings, and the strength of his female protagonists. In his later critical writings, Lawrence also looked beyond the fixity of gender and argued for its fluidity, that all people are both male and female.¹⁵ Lawrence's biographers and critics, such as Elaine Feinstein, Andrew Harrison and John Worthen, have shown the importance of Lawrence's female network to his life and in the shaping of his literary career. However, what has been unobserved is how these networks lead him to engage in and share his interest in Pre-Raphaelitism. Through these relationships, Lawrence's engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism is strongly linked with left-wing politics and the movement for women's emancipation. Lawrence frequently associated Pre-Raphaelitism with feminism, to an extent which has not been recognised. He used Pre-Raphaelite paintings and motifs in a way that enabled him to explore female self-expression, sexuality, and the constraints placed on women in art. In this chapter, I am not arguing for Lawrence as a feminist nor am I following

¹³ Elaine Feinstein, *Lawrence's Women: The Intimate Life of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Harper Collins 1993), p.9.

¹⁴ Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (London: Virago Press 1977). Other key texts of feminist criticism of Lawrence include Simon De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. by H. M. Parshley (London: Vintage 1997), Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge 1993). Rebuttals of feminist critiques of Lawrence include Peter Balbert, *D. H. Lawrence and the Phallic Imagination: Essays on Sexual Identity and Feminist Misreading* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 1989), Hilary Simpson, *D. H. Lawrence and Feminism* (Kent: Croom Helm Ltd 1982), and Carol Siegel, *Lawrence Among the Women* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1991). Marianna Torgovnick provides an overview of previous feminist critiques of Lawrence and of feminist admiration for Lawrence. Whilst addressing the complexities surround the debate, Torgovnick argues for a more positive feminist re-evaluation of Lawrence's work and his relationships with strong women, especially Frieda Lawrence. Marianna Torgovnick, 'Feminism' in *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, pp.294-303.

¹⁵ See D. H. Lawrence's 1925 essay, 'Art and Morality'.

feminist criticism which attacks Lawrence as a misogynist; what I wish to offer is a more nuanced view of Lawrence's portrayal of and interactions with women through his engagement with the legacy of Pre-Raphaelitism.

The chapter will start with a biographical outline of Lawrence's initial interactions with Pre-Raphaelitism, through his friendships with women in his early life in Nottinghamshire, and his contemporaries, including Ford, Pound and Hunt. It then comprises three sections, taking the following themes in a broadly chronological order across each section: firstly, how Lawrence uses Pre-Raphaelite paintings in the context of women's emancipation in his fiction; secondly, how Lawrence presents the figure of the Lady of Shalott in his works; and finally, the representations of Persephone in his poetry and later fiction.

Pre-Raphaelite Formations

Before discussing Lawrence's work in detail, I shall outline his initial engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism and how his response to Pre-Raphaelitism was shaped by his contemporaries, firstly, through his friendships with women in his early life in Nottinghamshire, and secondly, through his personal and professional relationship with Ford, and the critical reviews of his work by Pound and Hunt. Lawrence's interest and response to the Pre-Raphaelites are not only shown through his direct references to paintings and literary works in his fiction and in his other writings, but in dialogue with his women friends, Jessie Chambers, Helen Corke, Blanche Jennings and Louie Burrows. Their correspondence with Lawrence and their later

writings about him reveal their shared interests in reading and art and his discussions with them.

Jessie Chambers, Lawrence's childhood friend, wrote in *A Personal Record* (1935) about their time together and charts Lawrence's literary development. Lawrence was encouraged by the Chambers family's interest in books and reading. His period of reading and discovery of books with Jessie was an important time for both of them. In *A Personal Record*, Chambers details their reading, firstly the novels of writers such as Theodore Watts-Dunton, Walter Scott and George Eliot. They also read poetry together and Chambers claims that 'he must have read almost every poem to me at one time or another'.¹⁶ These included poets who had inspired the Pre-Raphaelites, such as Blake, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth and Tennyson, Chambers adding that the poems Lawrence read to her 'time after time were "The Lotus Eaters" and "The Lady of Shalott" which he somehow hinted applied to me'.¹⁷ She notes his interest in Pre-Raphaelite poetry and poetry of the Pre-Raphaelite circle. They read together Ruskin's work, Christina Rossetti's poetry, and Meredith's poetry and prose, in which *Love in the Valley* had a 'special significance for him', while he gave her many times Rossetti's 'The Blessed Damozel' to read.¹⁸ When he left for Croydon, Lawrence repeatedly sent her Swinburne's poetry, particularly *Atalanta in Calydon*, directing her to the lyrics of the choruses.¹⁹ She also adds that Lawrence always discussed art and had on one occasion taken a book of Aubrey Beardsley's prints to show her. Louie Burrows, a friend of both Jessie

¹⁶ Jessie Chambers, *D. H. Lawrence: A Personal Record* (London: Frank Cass & co. repr.1965), p.99.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.95.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp.101-110.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.119.

Chambers and Lawrence (and later Lawrence's fiancée), recalls that when she first met them both together their continual talk about art and artists 'seemed strange & showy, all on the surface with much talk – of Rossetti or Carlyle'.²⁰ As evidenced from both Burrows's remarks and Chambers's memoirs, Lawrence was clearly engaging with and responding to nineteenth-century literature and art. Chambers and Burrows note his fascination both with the poetry to which the Pre-Raphaelites responded, crucially 'The Lady of Shalott', and with works of the Pre-Raphaelites and their circle, particularly Rossetti. Jessie Chambers claims in *A Personal Record* that during this time and from his reading and discussion, *The White Peacock*, was 'taking shape in his mind'.²¹ Importantly, she notes that their discussion of their books 'was not criticism at all, but a vivid recreation of the substance of our reading'.²² Lawrence was engaging both intellectually and imaginatively with this reading and in his dialogue with friends who actively shared and encouraged these interests in Pre-Raphaelite works.

Lawrence's letters from 1908-1911, whilst he was living and teaching in Croydon, show how his response to Pre-Raphaelitism was shaped by his women friends. His letters from this period, the ones in which he most directly responds to Pre-Raphaelitism, are addressed to Blanche Jennings, Helen Corke and Louie Burrows. In these Lawrence details attending

²⁰ Louie Burrows papers, Nottingham, University of Nottingham Archive, p.22.

²¹ Chambers, *D. H. Lawrence: A Personal Record*, p.107.

²² Lawrence's biographers, Andrew Harrison and John Worthen, corroborate this account of Lawrence's early reading using Jessie's *Memoirs*. Jessie's account provides an important source in detailing Lawrence's early reading and the influences that shaped his work. Andrew Harrison, *The Life of D. H. Lawrence: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell 2016), pp.11-12. John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years 1885-1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992), pp.120-122.

exhibitions that include Pre-Raphaelite artists, such as John Everett Millais, and other artists of the same generation, including Frederic Leighton. Lawrence writes to Burrows after attending an exhibition at the Royal Academy in February 1909 and admiring the work on display, claiming that 'the winter collection is magnificent'.²³ He lists all the paintings featured, including Millais's *Sir Isumbras at the Ford*, *In Perfect Bliss* and *Lingering Autumn*, and admires Leighton's *The Garden of Hesperides* which he also calls 'magnificent'.²⁴ His letters from 1909 also show that he was familiar with the collections of Pre-Raphaelite art and the art of Pre-Raphaelite associates at the Tate Gallery and National Gallery, taking Jessie Chambers to visit in 1909, and offering to take Burrows and Jennings around the galleries on their visits to London. Lawrence often focuses on individual works of Victorian painting, for example writing to Jennings about Watts's *Mammon* and *Love and Death*, of which he writes that 'its beauty lies in the aesthetic unknowable effect of line, poise, shadow, and then in the blurred idea that Death is shrouded, but a dark, embracing mother, who stoops over us, and frightens us because we are children'.²⁵

Like Yeats, Lawrence shows a heightened awareness of and deep imaginative response to Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite works, particularly with works by D. G. Rossetti and, for Lawrence, Tennyson, who featured on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's list of immortals.²⁶ Tennyson was a significant contemporary influence for the Pre-Raphaelites. His poetry appealed to their interart aesthetic. This is demonstrated through their illustrations for the

²³ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 9 February 1909' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.112-113 (p.113).

²⁴ Ibid, p.113.

²⁵ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Blanche Jennings, 20 January 1909' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.106-111 (p.107).

²⁶ Holman Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, I, p.159.

Moxon edition of Tennyson's poems in 1857, and as I discuss later in the chapter, their painterly depictions of poems such as 'The Lady of Shalott'. Lawrence's letters, from around the time he was writing *The White Peacock*, show his knowledge of Rossetti's poetry, particularly poems such as 'Sister Helen' and 'The Blessed Damozel'. In a letter to Blanche Jennings in 1908, Lawrence talks about a name that to him 'sounds Rossettian'. Again, he begins another letter to Blanche in the same year, with 'Hail, Blessed Damozel, you are genius'.²⁷ His fascination with 'The Blessed Damozel' poem and painting (as he would later depict in *The White Peacock*) is confirmed in a remark made by Professor Ernest Weekley, one of his university teachers, and recorded by Freida: 'I am sure he is a poet I could see it in his face, when I referred to the "Blessed Damozel"'.²⁸ In another letter, this time from 1910, Lawrence tells Helen Corke, a fellow schoolteacher who he had met in Croydon, that 'Somewhere I have got the ballad of "Sister Helen" – Rossetti's – beating time' and he quotes Rossetti's verse in his letter, writing: 'Nay, of the dead what can you say, Little Brother? Or again, O Mary, Mother Mary, Three days to-day between Hell and Heaven, and again What of the Dead between Hell and Heaven, Little Brother?'.²⁹ As suggested by both Lawrence's reference to Rossetti's 'The Blessed Damozel' and his reciting of 'Sister Helen', Lawrence seems to be interested in exploring the tensions between a mystical and physical body, between death and life, human and divine love and the relationship between art and the world. In a letter to Frederick Atkinson in 1910, Lawrence contemplates the title of his novel (*The White Peacock*) and in doing so, quotes Tennyson's *The Princess*, 'Now droops the

²⁷ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 9 October 1908' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.79-81 (p.81).

²⁸ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Blanche Jennings, 13 May 1908' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.51-54 p.51.

²⁹ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Helen Corke, 11 May 1910' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.159-160.

milkwhite peacock like a ghost', as an influence.³⁰ In quoting the lines from Tennyson, Lawrence is creating further intertextual links to Victorian works about the nature of femininity, a femininity, as he portrays it in the novel, which is self-conscious and subject to the masculine gaze. In 1911, Lawrence tells Louie Burrows that he has been reading William Morris's 'Defence of Guinevere', adding that he is 'rather fond of Morris. That should please you'.³¹ This suggests Burrows's own interest in Morris's work and as seen from his previous letters about exhibitions in London, her interest in Pre-Raphaelite art. Unlike Yeats, Lawrence makes few direct references to Morris in his non-fiction and fiction, so this is one of the few instances where Lawrence explicitly states his liking for Morris's work. Morris's influence is shown instead through engagement with literary forms (utopias) and his ideas about art and society.

A number of women that Lawrence knew well, including Jessie Chambers, Louie Burrows, Helen Corke and Blanche Jennings, were independent women, working as schoolteachers, like himself. Chambers and Burrows had been fellow students with him on the same course at Nottingham University College. Blanche Jennings, who Lawrence met through Alice Dax, was also involved in Alice's socialist circles in Eastwood. Lawrence also attended these meetings and joined the Eastwood Debating Society, delivering a lecture entitled 'Art and the Individual' (1908). However, around 1910, he lost most of his interest in socialism, leaving for a similar reason that Yeats left Morris's Socialist League. Both Yeats and Lawrence

³⁰ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Frederick Atkinson, 24 June 1910' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.166-167 (p.167).

³¹ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 29 August 1911' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.298-299 (p.298).

left these socialist circles due to the inhospitalities they faced towards their religious sentiments. Lawrence's involvement with socialism came at a time when he was experiencing a crisis in his Christian faith and his interest in socialism revolved around ideas of the freedom and equality of all humans when freed from the control of religious systems. Like Yeats, Lawrence rejected what he saw as the materialist aspect of socialism and sought an individual religious or spiritual experience, one that lay outside of Christianity. For Lawrence, the focus was increasingly on individual revelation. Andrew Harrison and John Worthen have noted the importance of Lawrence's involvement in these socialist circles, especially at a time when he was exploring new intellectual pursuits.³²

Many of Lawrence's women friends were writers and artists who encouraged him in his own writing, and actively shaped his writing as critics and collaborators.³³ Lawrence obviously respects and values the opinions of the women who were his friends and confidantes, such as Jessie Chambers and Louie Burrows, who he often asked to read and critique his literary works. Indeed, Jessie Chambers sent Lawrence's poetry, which she was copying for him, to Ford Madox Hueffer at the *English Review* in 1909, when Lawrence had refused to send them due to being cautious about publication. In 1928, Lawrence credited Chambers as the person who had launched his literary career. He also collaborated with women writers, with

³² Andrew Harrison, *The Life of D. H. Lawrence: A Critical Biography*, p.24 and John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years 1885-1912*, p.184.

³³ Carol Siegel argues that women writers who were his contemporaries saw Lawrence as an important contributor to women's literary traditions and that his support for female writers was extraordinary, like Amy Lowell, H. D. and Rebecca West. Siegel also argues for the importance of Lawrence's collaboration with women writers and friends, taking their opinions of his work very seriously. Carol Siegel, 'Lawrence and Female Authors / Memoirists', in *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, pp.275-284.

Louie Burrows on the short story 'Goose Fair' (1910) and later in 1924, with Mollie Skinner on the novel *The Boy in the Bush*. Like Jessie Chambers, Louie Burrows allowed Lawrence to use her name as a pseudonym for a short story he entered to a competition for the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*. Burrows submitted 'The White Stocking', Chambers entered the story 'A Prelude' and Lawrence entered 'A Fragment of Stained Glass' under his own name. The manuscript of *The White Peacock* shows his collaborative efforts, as it was copied out and edited by Jessie Chambers, Helen Corke, Agnes Holt and Agnes Mason, with these fair copies incorporated into the final manuscript.

During his time living in Croydon, Lawrence would have encountered Pre-Raphaelitism and members of the Pre-Raphaelite circle through the works of his contemporaries, most notably through his association and friendships with Ford Madox Hueffer and Violet Hunt. Lawrence was encouraged and supported by both Hueffer and Hunt in his writing. Hueffer had introduced Lawrence to many figures in London literary circles, such as Pound and Yeats, whom he regards alongside Pound as a 'celebrity'.³⁴ Lawrence also introduced Jessie Chambers to these literary figures, taking her to meet Hueffer, Hunt and Pound. In her *Personal Record*, Chambers recounts her meeting with Hueffer and Hunt, especially noting the portrait of Hueffer which he informs her was painted by his grandfather. Lawrence also met Hueffer's uncle, William Michael Rossetti at a party hosted by Hunt and Hueffer in 1910.³⁵

³⁴ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Jessie Chambers, 11 September 1909' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, p.138.

³⁵ Lawrence writes that he 'talked a little while to a weird great-uncle of Hueffer's' (who is only identified as W. M. Rossetti by the other guests referring to him as 'Uncle William'). From Lawrence's account it can be deduced that he did not know

As with Yeats, the Pre-Raphaelite influence on Lawrence did not escape the notice of his contemporaries. In a letter to Lawrence, Hueffer gives Lawrence his support for *The White Peacock* and encourages him to send it to a publisher, advising him to send it to the firm of William Heinemann. He claims that the novel is 'of the school of Mr. William De Morgan'.³⁶ Heinemann was also De Morgan's publisher and had recently published De Morgan's novels *Somehow Good* in 1908 and *It Never Can Happen Again* in 1909, and so Hueffer's comparison to *The White Peacock* was to Lawrence's advantage. De Morgan novels, such as *Somehow Good*, and Lawrence's *The White Peacock* are comparable in the extraordinarily rich detail of their writing and for the romance plot of both novels. However, Hueffer claims that the school of De Morgan is very different from his own. De Morgan was as an associate of the Pre-Raphaelites and the reference to his works suggests that Hueffer is identifying Lawrence as a Pre-Raphaelite novelist. Alongside this comparison to De Morgan, Lawrence's reading, particularly of volumes such as Theodore Watts-Dunton's *Aylwin* (1898) (which Chambers remembered them reading), suggests how strongly historical romance and works of late Victorian Romanticism influence his early writing. Watts-Dunton was himself at the centre of Pre-Raphaelite circles and is mainly remembered as a friend and confidante of Rossetti and Swinburne. In *Aylwin*, Watts-Dunton refers to the late Pre-Raphaelites by name and D'Arcy replicates Rossetti, emphasising his magnetism and melancholy, and details of his life, including his house, garden and menagerie at No.16 Cheyne Walk, and Hurstcote, a representation of Kelsmcott Manor in Oxfordshire. Due to the popularity of the novel, both

that it was Rossetti to whom he was speaking. D. H. Lawrence, 'To Grace Crawford, 24 July 1910' in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.170-171 (p.170).

³⁶ Ford Madox Hueffer, Letter from Ford to Lawrence, 15. Dec 1909, Nottingham, University of Nottingham, Lawrence Archives, La z 5/8/8/1.

Watts-Dunton and Thomas Hake (another Pre-Raphaelite associate) later wrote appendices to the novel in order to answer queries about which characters corresponded to the Pre-Raphaelites and about Rossetti's personality.³⁷ Through reading *Aylwin*, Lawrence encountered a work of late Victorian Romanticism with fictional portrayals of Pre-Raphaelite figures and of Rossetti. The novel also provided a sense of adventure and heightened emotion that feature in the romance elements of his early works, like *The White Peacock*.

Later in 1913, Ezra Pound opened his review of Lawrence's poetry collection *Love Poems and Others* for *Poetry* magazine with: 'The Love Poems, if by that Mr. Lawrence means the middling-sensual erotic verses in this collection, are a sort of pre-raphaelitish slush, disgusting or very nearly so'. In his 'jesting' and dismissal of Pre-Raphaelitism, Pound aligns Lawrence to a Pre-Raphaelite sensibility and individualism. For Pound, when Lawrence 'ceases to discuss his own disagreeable emotions, when he writes low-life narrative [...] there is no English poet under forty who can get within shot of him'.³⁸ In praising Lawrence's talent, Pound encourages a break away from the poetic idioms, or the discussions of 'disagreeable emotions', associated with their Pre-Raphaelite predecessors. Pound's comments about Lawrence's poetry can be seen in relation to his campaign of Imagism, in terms of the direct treatment of the "thing", whether subjective or objective. In 'A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste' (1912), he encourages the poet to be influenced by as many great artists as they can but 'don't allow "influence" to mean that you merely mop up the

³⁷ Theodore Watts-Dunton, *Aylwin: With Two Appendices, One Containing a Note on the Character of D'arcy; the Other a Key to the Story, Reprinted from Notes and Queries*, (1927), <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/13454/pg13454-images.html> [Date accessed: 19/09/2019].

³⁸ Ezra Pound, 'Of *Love Poems and Others* by D. H. Lawrence' (1913), *Poetry* <<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?contentId=65887>> [Date accessed: 15 November 2019], (pp.149-152, p.149).

particular decorative vocabulary' of poets that the artist may admire and, in using this form, not to 'fill up the remaining vacuums with slush'.³⁹ Similarly, in their aims, the Pre-Raphaelites adhered to 'direct attention' to an art that would 'enforce an adherence to the simplicity of nature'.⁴⁰ Like Pound's insistence on directness in art, their aim was to paint directly from nature, making close observations of the natural world and conveying people, places and objects in the clear light, and often with photographic detail. They too engaged with and reflected upon earlier works of poetry and art, making their own attacks on conventional or bad art which they labelled 'slosh' (Figure 2.1). In their objection to Sir Joshua Reynolds's influence at the Royal Academy, they dubbed him 'Sir Sloshua'.



2.1. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Caricature of John Everett Millais*, (1851-1853)
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

Pound's remark about 'pre-raphaelitish slush', especially the 'ish', here is interesting as he seems to take issue with erotic poetry derived from Pre-Raphaelitism (more than the Pre-

³⁹ Ezra Pound 'Imagisme', in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. by Lawrence Rainey (Oxford: Blackwell 2005), pp.94-95 (p.94).
Ezra Pound 'A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste' in *Modernism: An Anthology*, pp. 95-97.

⁴⁰ *The Germ*, Issue 1, <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/pre-raphaelite-journal-the-germ#> [Date accessed: 14 June 2019].

Raphaelites themselves), which he labels, through Lawrence, as 'disgusting or very nearly so'. In his rebuke of Pre-Raphaelite poetry for its eroticism or fleshiness, Pound must be aware that he is echoing Buchanan, who he attacked in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* as abusing Rossetti and Swinburne, and were significant influences on Pound's own work. Comparably, in Ford's *Parade's End* (1924-1928), Tietjens makes a scathing take down of Rossetti, and the Pre-Raphaelites more generally based on similar objections as Pound, as he says to his friend Macmaster, who is reading from his monograph of Rossetti, 'We're always, as it were, committing adultery – like your fellow! – with the name of Heaven on our lips'. In this heated debate, he claims that stands for 'monogamy and chastity' and cannot abide Macmaster's 'Pre-Raphaelite horrors'.⁴¹ For Tietjens, Rossetti's poetry, especially its mysticism and the explicitness of desire, represents the decadent at the turn of the twentieth century. Likewise, Ford's own poetry deals with Rossettian themes, as seen in 'On Heaven' (1914) which depicts the influence of D. G. Rossetti's 'The Blessed Damozel' in the speaker's personal grief, explicitness of desire and of seeking spiritual communion. This public repudiation of Pre-Raphaelitism is another indicator of the modernist's ambivalent relationship with the Pre-Raphaelites.

In *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, Hueffer states that the Pre-Raphaelites in effect 'said that true beauty is to be found in Life alone, and that true beauty is to be brought into works of Art solely by rendering what they saw'.⁴² This quote bring to mind aspects of Lawrence's thought that aligns him to the Pre-Raphaelites: a revolt against modernity signified by his

⁴¹ Ford Madox Ford, *Parade's End* (London: Random House 2012), pp.19-21

⁴² Hueffer, *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, p.82.

espousal of a return to nature and the importance of Life, of the beauty found in Life. The influence of his contemporaries and the wider interest in Pre-Raphaelitism is suggested in the publication of both *The White Peacock* and *Ancient Lights* in 1911. At a meeting, with Jessie Chambers, Lawrence and Pound, talk turned to Carlyle and Ruskin and Lawrence admitted that he had read them both. Hueffer told Lawrence: 'You're the only man I ever met [...] who has read all these people'.⁴³ As Lawrence was acquainted with Hueffer during his writing of *Ancient Lights*, it seems likely that Lawrence and Hueffer discussed their works and the Pre-Raphaelite figures that Hueffer is reminiscing about in his upbringing. Hueffer seemed amazed by Lawrence's knowledge of literature and culture.

There is some dispute as to whether Hueffer in fact visited Lawrence in Nottingham during 1910 or 1911, recording a conversation with one of Lawrence's friends where he was astonished by their literariness. John Worthen argues that this visit was an imaginative account whereas Max Saunders notes that the absence of evidence does not prove the falsehood of the story.⁴⁴ Regardless of whether Hueffer actually visited Eastwood, the account attests to Lawrence's literary-biographical development and to the literariness present within his own writings. In the reviews of *The White Peacock* in 1911, critics commended Lawrence for the visual power of the novel and for his sympathy and observation but seemed incredulous about the references and allusions made to nineteenth-century art and literature by the characters, noting how cultured they are. In a review by

⁴³ Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, I (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), p.297.

⁴⁴ Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, p.284. John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years 1885-1912*, p.171.

Violet Hunt, entitled 'A First Novel of Power', she claims that as the sons and daughters of farmers, the characters 'are extraordinarily and bewilderingly "cultured"'. They play Chopin [...] they quote upon every occasion Browning, Ruskin, the Rossettis, or John Stuart Mill. This would appear incredible.' Indeed, Hunt claims 'his characters simply do not know that class exists'.⁴⁵ Lawrence's work is in some instances concerned with the notion of class and, most notably in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, with breaking class conventions. Lawrence's own working-class background proves that an interest in art is not restricted by class.

As Hunt observes, none of the characters in *The White Peacock* seem particularly concerned with class, and they frequently talk about art and allude to literature and myth, yet knowledge of literature and art is associated with education in the novel. On the one hand, the novel is inconsistent in this regard, as Lettie, Leslie and Cyril are clearly from a more middle-class background than George and Emily who live and work on the farm. Lettie teaches George about art history through the books she owns, and Cyril teaches Emily about art by taking the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley to show her, recalling Lawrence's own behaviour to Chambers. On the other hand, the fact that Emily is an educated woman and a schoolteacher, and that George comes to appreciate and critique art, shows how Lawrence is rejecting the presumption that people have to be of the middle-classes in order to take an interest in art. Yet Lawrence connects Pre-Raphaelitism with wealth as he writes in a letter 'Had I been rich, I should have been something Ruskinian', and associates the English Association with 'middle-class Croydonians' who are 'lingering remnants of the Pre-

⁴⁵ Violet Hunt, 'A First Novel of Power' Nottingham, University of Nottingham, Lawrence Archives, La B232.

Raphaelites'.⁴⁶ Although this holds some negative connotations about the Pre-Raphaelites relating to class and background, it also highlights how Lawrence's criticism of industrialisation and concern for the working-classes is gathered from experience (unlike Ruskin and Morris) and is directed towards the mining community in which he grew up. These criticisms of the Pre-Raphaelites and class do not appear in his later works or thought. Louie Burrows and Lawrence kept a review about *Ancient Lights* called 'Pre-Raphaelite Chestnuts', which focuses mainly on Hueffer's depictions of Millais and Rossetti.⁴⁷ Whilst it is difficult to know the extent of Hueffer's influence on Lawrence's thinking about the Pre-Raphaelites, Lawrence was obviously aware of his work and his acquaintance led him to associate with a later Pre-Raphaelite circle, and with writers who were still reading and engaging with Pre-Raphaelite art and literature.

Whilst, like Lawrence and Yeats, Hueffer is hugely influenced by the visual arts and writes critical and autobiographical works about art, Lawrence's interest in and views on art are largely seen through the position of a painter and creative writer rather than as a critic, as Hueffer positions himself. Lawrence seemingly does not make a distinction between the two phases of Pre-Raphaelitism, between the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the second phase with Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones. These are the three figures that Yeats and Lawrence repeatedly return to in their consideration of Pre-Raphaelitism. However, Lawrence shows more of an interest than Yeats in the wider Pre-Raphaelite circle, especially

⁴⁶ D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.179-180, p.179.

⁴⁷ Review, Nottingham, University of Nottingham Archives, Lawrence archives, LaB7/1.

in Swinburne and Ruskin, and in painters who were associated with or influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites, such as Watts and Waterhouse. The quotations from Christina Rossetti's poem 'A Birthday' (1861) in the novel also suggests her inclusion as a poet who participated in Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics. This interest in the wider Pre-Raphaelite circle is reflected in Lawrence's specific references to Pre-Raphaelite paintings and how he connects together in *The White Peacock*, Millais's *The Knight Errant*, Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose*, D. G. Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel*, G. F. Watts, *Hope and Mammon* and J. W. Waterhouse's *Lady of Shalott*. The way that these images are used in the novel suggests that Lawrence is using the term 'Pre-Raphaelite' more extensively. Nineteenth-century painting is a running thread throughout the novel but Lawrence traces affinities between them through his use of imagery and in the dialogue between the characters in the novel. The dialogue between the characters refers to the dualities that these images display between the spiritual and bodily, and thematically, as images of the imprisoned woman. For Lawrence, the affinities between them are not only in subject matter and theme, but in style. The images of women that Lawrence has gathered together also refer to the Pre-Raphaelite style, which is synonymous with a specific feminine appearance and image, with as Jan Marsh notes, 'loose hair, large eyes, elongated neck and soulful expression'.⁴⁸ These images and the way they are grouped together portray Lawrence's conscious use of Pre-Raphaelite art in his first novel. His initial workings with Pre-Raphaelite literary allusions and paintings explore portrayals of femininity.

⁴⁸ Jan Marsh, *Pre-Raphaelite Women: Images of Femininity in Pre-Raphaelite Art* (London: Guild Publishing 1987), p.10.

Pre-Raphaelite paintings and Motifs of Femininity

Before exploring Lawrence's work, I shall outline his engagement with Pre-Raphaelite art in the context of women's emancipation through his response to Rachel Annand Taylor's poetry. During his involvement with the Croydon branch of the English Association, Lawrence met Rachel Annand Taylor, a prominent poet of the Celtic Revival, at a literary party. When Lawrence was asked to deliver a lecture to the English Association, he chose Taylor's poetry as his subject. In his letters to Taylor, Lawrence repeatedly tells her how much he admires her poetry, especially her sonnet sequence, *The Hours of Fiammetta* (1910). The title of the sequence shows a clear association with D. G. Rossetti's painting *A Vision of Fiammetta* (1878) and its accompanying sonnet 'Fiammetta'. Florence S. Boos has noted the influence of D. G. Rossetti's *House of Life* on Taylor's *The Hours of Fiammetta* and argues that many women poets who were influenced by and engage directly with Rossetti were committed feminists and radicals and could be described as 'new women' rather than the 'True Woman' of Rossetti's own sonnets (56-58). Boos argues that women poets, like Taylor, felt an affinity with Rossetti's sensuous ambivalence, conflict-ridden states of erotic contemplation and his 'feminine' preoccupation with personal grief and transience.⁴⁹ Similarly, and as discussed earlier, the women of Lawrence's circle who were committed feminists and socialists were inspired by and engage with Pre-Raphaelitism and the works of Rossetti.

⁴⁹ Florence S. Boos, 'Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Daughters: *Fin de Siècle* Women Poets and the Sonnet', in *Outsiders Looking In: The Rossetti's Then and Now*, ed. by David Clifford and Laurence Roussillon (London: Anthem Press 2001), pp.253-284 (pp.253-256).

In her preface to *The Hours of Fiammetta* Taylor claims that 'there are two great traditions of womanhood':

One presents the Madonna brooding over the mystery of motherhood; the other, more confusedly, tells of the acolyte, the priestess, the clairvoyante of the unknown gods. This latter exists complete in herself, a personality as definite and significant as a symbol. She is behind all the processes of art, though she rarely becomes a conscious artist, except in delicate and impassioned modes of living. [...] The second tradition of womanhood does not perish; but, in these present confusions of change, women of the more emotional and imaginative type are less potent than they have been and will be again. They appear equally inimical and heretical to the opposing camps of hausfrau and of suffragist.⁵⁰

Here Taylor outlines four types of 'womanhood': the Madonna, priestess, hausfrau and suffragist. The Madonna and the hausfrau are more closely aligned, with the Madonna being equated with the 'mystery of motherhood' and the latter, the hausfrau, with a more conservative domesticity. Taylor presents two different models of female emancipation, through art and politics. The priestess, although not aligned to the suffragist by Taylor, represents a form of emancipation through art; it is an image that for Taylor does not perish but is challenged by social and political change, appearing as both 'inimical' and 'heretical' to the hausfrau and the suffragist.

In his 1910 lecture, Lawrence makes the same distinctions about between the priestess, Madonna and the suffragist when he claims that 'the latter is always, the former never, the

⁵⁰ Rachel Annand Taylor, *The Hours of Fiammetta*, (1910) <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23392/23392-h/23392-h.htm>> [date accessed: 18 May 2018].

artist: which explains, I suppose, why women artists do not sing maternity'.⁵¹ Taylor equates the image of the spiritual woman, or as Lawrence terms it the 'dreaming woman', with the emancipatory role of the artist. The spiritual woman as the muse and artist is evident in Taylor's sonnet sequence which is framed with a prologue and epilogue in the voice of the 'dreaming woman'.⁵² The 'dreaming woman' is equated with Pre-Raphaelite images of femininity and with Rossettian images of 'the acolyte, the priestess, the clairvoyante of the unknown gods'. Lawrence connects Taylor specifically to Rossetti, describing her in his lecture as medieval, pagan and romantic – 'all that could be desired of a poetess' – and her appearance as 'purely Rossettian'.⁵³ Lawrence is linking her to a concept of the Pre-Raphaelite woman in the popular imagination, connoted by loose romantic clothing, unbound hair and a soulful expression. Lawrence is clearly fascinated with the Romanticism and decadence of Taylor's poetry and with her as a figure, but there is also an underlining sense of irony mixed with his fascination in his description of her.

Taylor's definition of the priestess brings to mind Rossettian images such as *Astarte Syriaca* and its accompanying sonnet where the goddess is an 'amulet, talisman, and oracle'.⁵⁴ Lawrence's description of her as 'purely Rossettian', and as Boos notes, her affinity to Rossetti through her poetics, identifies an emancipatory potential of Pre-Raphaelite art and depictions of women. Lawrence too engages with Pre-Raphaelite art through the movement

⁵¹ D. H. Lawrence, 'Rachel Annand Taylor', in *D. H. Lawrence's Poetry: Demon Liberated*, ed. by Amitava Banerjee (London: Macmillan Press 1990), pp.33-36 (p.35).

⁵² *Ibid*, p.35.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p.33.

⁵⁴ D. G. Rossetti, 'Astarte Syriaca', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.361, 13-14.

for women's emancipation, and the mythical or Rossettian images which were incorporated into the turn-of-the century movement for women's emancipation and the suffrage campaigns. Lawrence explores the Pre-Raphaelite depictions of women in relation to the figure of the New Woman, dealing with women's desires for independence and fulfilment. In this way, and as I explore in this section, Lawrence exposes how Pre-Raphaelite paintings present female self-expression and independence whilst showing the constraints placed on women by male characters and artists.

Lawrence further associates Pre-Raphaelitism with the emancipatory potential of the female artist and mythical image when he calls Taylor 'the dreaming woman of today' and describes her as being 'almost unique in her position, when all women who are not exclusively mothers are suffragists or reformers'.⁵⁵ Lawrence, and Taylor in her preface, highlight a debate in the early twentieth-century suffrage movement between a ready acceptance of a domestic or maternal role for women and suffragists who sought to revolutionise stereotypical gender roles which perpetuated the oppression of women.⁵⁶ In his discussion of Taylor's poetry, Lawrence admires her poetry for dealing with the sensual and the actual. Both images of the Madonna and the Priestess create a duality between the body and the soul, evoking the spiritual (both Christian and pre-Christian), but the image of the Madonna, as a symbol of motherhood, becomes associated with the body. In Taylor's preface, the Madonna is also a symbol of virginity whereas the Priestess suggests a more

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.35.

⁵⁶ See Chris Mourant, *Katherine Mansfield and Periodical Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2019), pp.42-52.

ambivalent and active sexuality. Taylor's *The Hours of Fiammetta*, in sonnets such as 'Soul and Body' (no. XXII), reflect Rossetti's recurrent preoccupation with the corporeal and the spiritual, a theme that emerges in Lawrence's own work, notably in *The White Peacock* and most evidently in *Sons and Lovers*. Miriam, in *Sons and Lovers*, is described as chaste and unattainable, cut off from 'ordinary life by her religious intensity which made the world for her either a nunnery garden or a paradise' whereas Clara has a more active sexuality and none of Miriam's religious profundities. Yet there 'was a sense of mystery about her [Clara] ... Her history was open on the surface, but its inner meaning was hidden from everybody'.⁵⁷ The focus on the body and soul arises in the dichotomies between Miriam and Clara and in Paul Morel's complex relationships with these two women.

According to Hilary Simpson, the New Woman and a turn-of-the century feminism incorporated spiritual and mythical or mystical representation of women characterised by Pre-Raphaelite art. This image of the Pre-Raphaelite New Woman was a persistent theme in Lawrence's early work.⁵⁸ Jan Marsh and other critics such as David Sonstroem, have tended to place pictures of Pre-Raphaelite woman into categories, such as 'Ladies of Death', 'Medieval Damozels', 'Sorceresses' and 'Icons'.⁵⁹ For Alicia Craig Faxon 'these icons, especially in Rossetti's overpowering images, became connected with Victorian fears of powerful women, especially shown in the agitation for independence and women's

⁵⁷ D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* (London: Harper Collins 2010), p.172 and p.305.

⁵⁸ Hilary Simpson, *D. H. Lawrence and Feminism* (Kent: Croom Helm Ltd 1982), p.46.

⁵⁹ These are the names of the chapters in Jan Marsh, *Pre-Raphaelite Women: Images of Femininity in Pre-Raphaelite Art*. See David Sonstroem, *Rossetti and the Fair Lady*.

suffrage'.⁶⁰ Although these categories have become a way of delineating the different Pre-Raphaelite portrayals of women and have taken on an emblematic quality, which is now associated with femininity in Pre-Raphaelite art, these figures (particularly Rossetti's mythological figures) are defiantly at odds with conventional Victorian notions of the feminine and prettiness. The image of the 'Pre-Raphaelite woman', whilst emphasising an idealised mystical womanhood, presents a challenge to both Edwardian convention, as a continuation of Victorian ideals, and to the stereotype of 'mannish' New Woman or suffragette. The suffragist, as Taylor imagines her, and in terms of political emancipation, opposes the Pre-Raphaelite image of mystical womanhood. For Taylor and Lawrence, the Pre-Raphaelite woman was nonetheless a model of emancipation of a different kind, and suffragists themselves, like Lawrence's female friends, did not necessarily see the two as being at odds with one another.

In the 1880s and 1890s, New Woman fiction created a means of advancing sexual and social change and brought debates on femininity to a wider audience.⁶¹ The New Woman opened up debates about notions of the feminine and masculine that continued into the early twentieth century. Lawrence's concept of the New Woman is poised between the Pre-Raphaelite New Woman, distinguished by her appearance and sense of spirituality, as seen in Herminia Barton in Grant Allen's *The Woman Who Did*, and by the New Woman who steps beyond patriarchal images of womanhood and rejects the image of the spiritual woman, as

⁶⁰ Alicia Craig Faxon, 'The Pre-Raphaelites and the Mythic Image: Iconographies of Women', *Visual Resources*, 27:1 (2011), 77-89, (p.78).

⁶¹ Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis, 'Introduction', in *The New Woman in Fiction and in Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. by Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (Basingstoke: Palgrave 2001), pp.1-38 (p.24).

typified in H. G. Wells's *Ann Veronica*. Allen identifies Herminia Barton as a Pre-Raphaelite type. She is 'undeniably beautiful' and is 'tall and dark, with abundant black hair'. She is dressed in 'a curious oriental-looking navy-blue robe' that falls 'in natural folds and set off to the utmost the lissom grace of her rounded figure'.⁶² Her appearance is associated with Pre-Raphaelite style, but Allen also classifies her Pre-Raphaelite tastes. Her cottage is as 'dainty as Morris wall-papers' and 'Rossetti's wan maidens gazed unearthly from the over-mantel'.⁶³ Through this portrayal of Herminia as the new woman, Allen connects Pre-Raphaelitism to an emancipatory role (which is also criticised in the novel). The suffragists seized upon Pre-Raphaelite and spiritual images of women in their emancipatory politics. Suffragist art was influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts school's thematic and stylistic principles and their use of allegorical, medieval, mythical and religious iconography. Most notably, the influence is seen from the artworks of William Morris and Walter Crane, who both carried art into the political realm. For instance, Sylvia Pankhurst's artwork for the Women's Social and Political Union and Votes for Women gave them a visual identity and like Crane (who was her art teacher) she combined a revived interest in medievalism and the Pre-Raphaelites with socialist realism in her art (Figure 2.2).⁶⁴

⁶² Grant Allen, *The Woman Who Did* (Oxford: OUP 1995), p.26.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p.61.

⁶⁴ The influence can be seen in her Votes for Women badges feature an angel or herald mascot and the angel freedom and *Peace or Famine- Which?* (1912).



2.2. Sylvia Pankhurst, *Angel or 'herald' mascot, logo of The WSPU*, (1908), Royal College of Art, London

Many of the New Women in Lawrence's fiction have a Pre-Raphaelite origin or background, for instance in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, the name Ursula originates from a medieval painting, Carpaccio's *The Dream of St Ursula*, which Ruskin admired and the name Gudrun from Morris's verse, either from *The Earthly Paradise* and *Sigurd the Volsung*.⁶⁵ The image of Lawrence's Pre-Raphaelite New Woman is captured in Lettie in *The White Peacock* and Helen in *The Trespasser*, Ursula, and as I wish to suggest, in his later work, in characters such as Hermione Roddice and Constance Chatterley.

This image of the Pre-Raphaelite woman is elsewhere rejected by the New Woman. In Wells's *Ann Veronica*, Ann disparages the image of a spiritual or Pre-Raphaelite woman that

⁶⁵ Alldritt notes that *Sigurd the Volsung* seems a more likely source for Lawrence as *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* have the same sense of saga in the succession of social and familial hegemonies and the frequent metamorphosing of Gerald Crich in *Women in Love* is suggested by this work. Loerke is also a name that derives from this tradition. Keith Alldritt, *The Visual imagination of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd 1971), p.97.

Mr Manning repeatedly evokes. When Capes says to Ann 'You are the High Priestess of Life...', she replies: 'your priestess [...] A silly little priestess who knew nothing of life at all until she came to you'.⁶⁶ The novel was published in 1909, the year in which Lawrence was working on *The White Peacock* and Lawrence reports his reading of it. Due to the public scandal surrounding Wells's novel, Lawrence later worries about being 'talked about in an *Ann Veronica* fashion' for his portrayal of Helen's and Siegmund's relationship in his second novel *The Trespasser*.⁶⁷ Similarly, in *Parade's End*, the suffragette Valentine Wannop actively protests on the golf course, and like Ann, she ridicules the mythological image of women found in Ruskin's *Crown of Wild Olive* and the *Queen of the Air* to which Edith Duchemin replies 'my dear! Not a word against John Ruskin in *this* house!'⁶⁸ When positioned with Edith and Sylvia Tietjens and their associations with Pre-Raphaelitism, Valentine's feminism is presented as a historical marker and as the potential of future politics.

The campaign for women's suffrage was happening during Lawrence's youth and the writing of his first novels and he engages with this most directly in *The Rainbow*, which Lyn Pykett has argued can be seen as a New Woman novel.⁶⁹ Ursula has a similar reaction to the suffrage movement as Ann Veronica, although Ann is imprisoned as a result of one of the campaigns. They both acknowledge its importance but gradually focus on individual revolution rather than public reform. Lawrence's female protagonists often express their

⁶⁶ H. G. Wells, *Ann Veronica* (London: Virago 1980), pp.284-285.

⁶⁷ D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.179-180, p.154 and p.339.

⁶⁸ Ford, *Parade's End*, p.91.

⁶⁹ Lyn Pykett, *Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Edward Arnold 1995), pp.123-127.

dissatisfaction with the contemporary position of women in marriage and in society and seek independence and fulfilment. Whilst critics have argued that Lawrence's female characters often appear to be conforming to stereotypes and traditional roles, such as those defined by Taylor, his characters often subvert these in some way. In *The Trespasser*, Helen pursues her relationship with her music teacher, Siegmund, and Clara, in *Sons and Lovers*, seeks refuge from her unhappy marriage through her relationship with Paul. She has also been previously involved in the women's suffrage and expresses her discontent with a woman's life and work.

This image of the Pre-Raphaelite woman, and the female characters' acceptance and subversion of Pre-Raphaelite images and poetry emerges in *The White Peacock*. The Pre-Raphaelite paintings in *The White Peacock* are all grouped together by subject matter and theme: the medieval subject and the theme of the imprisoned woman. Likewise, the novel features tropes of Romantic figures, namely the Lady of Shalott, Sleeping Beauty and Lady Christabel, that were particularly popular with Pre-Raphaelites and further this sense of confinement. All the Pre-Raphaelite paintings and subjects referenced in the novel, such as the Lady of Shalott and the Blessed Damozel, are ones that depict physical and psychological confinement, where the heroines are subjected to the will and fate of another and seek to articulate their own desires but are denied in some way from doing so. The paintings and literary creations used in *The White Peacock* are produced by male artists and writers (excepting Christina Rossetti) and are placed in connection to the women characters in the novel through male characters, in Cyril's narration, Leslie's views of Lettie and the

gamekeeper, Annable's, description of his wife. Lettie is modelled on the Pre-Raphaelite style; she is described as being 'tall and supple' and 'her hair had a curling fluffiness' which was 'very charming' and 'was elegant in her movements'.⁷⁰ She is reminiscent of a Burne-Jones painting with his compositions in their tall thin format and the poses and fashions of his female figures. As shown in self-conscious modelling of the Pre-Raphaelite style, Lawrence is aware of the stylistic qualities of Pre-Raphaelites painting, making similarities and contrasts between artists such as Rossetti and Burne-Jones, and interpreting the narrative moments that the paintings capture.

Much criticism on Pre-Raphaelite art has focused on the notion of the 'masculine gaze', for instance, Griselda Pollock argues that located in ideological formations of art history women are depicted as 'passive, beautiful or erotic' images 'of a creativity exclusively tied to the masculine.' For Pollock, Rossetti's work reflects, 'an ideological process of a redefinition of woman as an image and as visibly different.' 'Woman' is appropriated as a visual image and the feminine positioned as the object of the look or the gaze.⁷¹ Similarly, Sproles makes the same criticisms in Lawrence's work, that up until *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, his use of Pre-Raphaelite models for the female characters remain 'the passive object of male desire'.⁷² In particular, the references to Millais's *The Knight Errant* (Figure 2.3), Burne-Jones's *Briar*

⁷⁰ D. H. Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, (London: Penguin 1982), p.67.

⁷¹ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the histories of art* (London and New York: Routledge Classics 2003), pp.128-162

⁷² Karen Z. Sproles, 'D. H. Lawrence and the Pre-Raphaelites: Love Among the Ruins', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 22 (1990), 299-305, (p.299).

Rose, and J. W. Waterhouse's *Lady of Shalott* evoke the masculine gaze and, through the ways in which the paintings are discussed, the feminine as a passive object of desire.



2.3. John Everett, Millais, *The Knight Errant*, (1870), Tate Britain, London.

Millais's *The Knight Errant* is used by Leslie in connection to his engagement to Lettie; when Lettie tries to remove her engagement ring, Leslie tells her to "Keep it on, keep it on. It holds you faster than that fair damsel tied to a tree in Millais's picture – I believe it is Millais's".⁷³

The Knight Errant, when first exhibited in 1870, was accompanied by text which Millais wished to accompany the painting, that 'The order of Knights errant was instituted to protect widows and orphans, and to succour maidens in distress'.⁷⁴ Following Millais's description, the painting depicts an act of medieval chivalry in which the knight is attempting

⁷³ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.162.

⁷⁴ <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/millais-the-knight-errant-n01508> [Date accessed: 10 March 2019].

to free a woman who has been tied to a tree. It was Millais's first and only attempt at painting a female nude, representing an ideal form of art. However, Millais's nude is far from the classical ideal as painted by Leighton and Waterhouse. By the time Millais exhibited the painting in 1870, the nude had reappeared as a serious subject in high art, featuring debates which challenged the idea that art should fulfil a moral role by arguing for an aesthetic that represented bodily beauty unfettered by moral constraints.⁷⁵ Lawrence is also challenging the moral constraints around the representation of the body, through Leslie's and Lettie's remarks, as I shall argue, and the physical limitations of the figures represented in the painting.

In the novel, Lettie is compared to and accused of playing 'Sleeping Beauty' as she is awoken by Leslie. Cyril notes the 'sweet carelessness of her attitude' and 'the appealing, half-pitiful girliness of her face', as Leslie 'kissed her cheek where already was a crimson stain of sunshine'.⁷⁶ The image of Sleeping Beauty corresponds to Burne-Jones's picture *The Rose Bower* from the *Briar Rose* series, which depicts sleeping beauty lying on her bed surrounded by her slumbering attendants. Sleeping Beauty is again, as is Millais's painting, connected to the notion of chivalry and relies upon the actions of the male figures for her to gain freedom. Similarly, the reference to Waterhouse's *Lady of Shalott*, a figure I will discuss in more detail later in the chapter, is through Annable's speaking of his wife, 'She began to get souly. A poet got hold of her, and she began to affect Burne-Jones – or Waterhouse – it was

⁷⁵ Alison Smith, 'Millais' *Knight Errant* and the formation of the English Nude', in *Re-Framing the Pre-Raphaelites: historical and theoretical essays*, ed. by Ellen Harding (Aldershot: Scolar Press 1995), pp. 127-148 (p.127).

⁷⁶ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.90.

Waterhouse – she was a lot like one of his women – Lady of Shalott, I believe’.⁷⁷ Taking this to be Waterhouse’s most famous *Lady of Shalott* (1888) at the Tate Gallery (one of his three images of the Lady of Shalott), the scene depicts the moment that the Lady of Shalott sails to Camelot and to her death. The painting emphasises her final, inner vision after her sexual awakening. However, Annable’s speech reduces his wife, who is never present in the text, to an image of ‘one’ of Waterhouse’s ‘women’ and denies her independence. Annable’s use of the word ‘affect’ here, in relation to Burne-Jones and Waterhouse, also suggests that Crystabel’s appearance is put on and that she has adopted the appearance of a Pre-Raphaelite woman. Pre-Raphaelite inclinations become a matter of style and the soulfulness she adopts becomes a fashion. Thus, the novel articulates the experiences of the female characters through the male perspectives and overall the male narrator, Cyril, guided by the male Victorian artists.

On the other hand, the women in the novel, mostly Lettie, resist these representations and the way in which these images are imposed on them. Lettie counteracts this through the dialogue about the same paintings. She mocks Leslie’s reference to the *Knight Errant* and to the notion of entrapment and passivity that Leslie implies, through his idea of needing ‘rescuing’. She responds “What a comparison! Who’ll be the brave knight to rescue me – discreetly – from behind?”⁷⁸ She claims that if she must wear an engagement ring then Leslie should have to wear one too. The couple in Millais’s painting have been interpreted by Leslie

⁷⁷ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.212.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.162.

as lovers, but the *Knight Errant* is an ambiguous narrative and is not painted in a way to invite readings of sensuality or romance. She also rejects the sense of dependence and imprisonment, and the notion of chivalry, that the painting and Leslie's remarks imply. Likewise, she reproaches Leslie for his comparison to Sleeping Beauty and for waking her. Leslie reports to Lettie's mother that Lettie has scolded him and for his 'conceit' to 'play Prince'.⁷⁹

In her response to her continual representations as an image, Lettie uses art associated with Pre-Raphaelitism to articulate her own desires and struggles and to object to being cast as what she terms 'a man's woman'. She does so through references to G. F. Watts's allegorical painting *Hope*, describing the painting and wondering why Hope, blindfolded, does not drop her harp and take the handkerchief from her eyes, 'But of course she was a woman – and a man's woman. Do you know I believe most women can sneak a look down their noses from underneath the handkerchief of hope they've tied over their eyes. They could take the whole muffler off- but they don't do it, the dears'.⁸⁰ Hope is seated on a globe and playing a lyre in which all but one string is broken. The painting becomes an allegory of universal themes, and in Lettie's reference, one which defines independence for women and highlights the representation of women through a masculine gaze. Lawrence places Watts's painting in dialogue with the Pre-Raphaelite images to highlight the symbolist qualities of

⁷⁹Ibid., p.90.

⁸⁰Ibid., p.161. (For both quotes).

the painting, matching the Pre-Raphaelite depiction of the imprisoned woman to Victorian art more widely.

She also articulates this through reference to D. G. Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel* (Figure 2.4) claiming 'Suppose I were one – like the "Blessed Damozel"' and 'you kicking the brown beech leaves below thinking'.⁸¹ In Rossetti's poem, the Damozel expresses her own desires, and despite her death, maintains a physical presence in heaven. The Damozel is defined by her physical boundaries but she does not renounce her earthly love for spiritual perfection. Leslie warns Lettie not to take Rossetti's angelic figure as a model and he interjects his reference to the poem, 'with a warm bosom', and asks her what she is 'driving at' in her reference to the Damozel.⁸² Here, instead of being cast as an art object, the Damozel is spoken of as a person, specifically as an example for Lettie herself. The images and symbols she wears, such as the lilies, the rose and the stars, show her to be invested with both an earthly and mystical meaning, as an allegorical figure literally representing philosophical concepts. Her accentuated femininity and mystical associations emphasise her angelic beauty, and as a womanly ideal which is ethereal. Lettie questions him further about whether he would have 'thoughts like prayers' so that his 'soul might mount up'.⁸³ The Damozel questions if her prayers are to be heard as together, with her lover who prays 'on earth', they should provide a 'perfect strength' to affect God's blessing and their physical reunion.⁸⁴ Her prayers petition for the reunion with her lover and also depict a sensuous

⁸¹ Ibid., p.136.

⁸² Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.136.

⁸³ Ibid., p.137.

⁸⁴ D. G. Rossetti, 'The Blessed Damozel', in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, pp232-236, (p.236), 69-71.

longing which seeks for both his redemption and for communion with him, awaiting his death in order to fulfil her desire.



2.4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Blessed Damozel*, (1875–78), Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Leslie responds to Lettie by claiming that ‘I’m not one of your souly sort. I can’t stand Pre-Raphaelites’.⁸⁵ His dismissal of the more spiritual aspects of Rossetti’s poem and his insistence, like Annable’s, of not being the ‘souly’ sort, reveal a duality about the mind and the body, a discussion common in Lawrence criticism. Lawrence’s use of the image of the Blessed Damozel is suggestive of the poem’s tensions between a mystical and physical body and the relationship between art and world. The Damozel’s mystical body is literally invested

⁸⁵ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.137.

with outward symbolic significance and material images, namely the 'three lilies' in her hand, the seven stars in her yellow hair and a 'white rose of Mary's gift'.⁸⁶ As a spiritual body, the Damozel continues to assume a fleshiness that is contained as an outward sign of an earthly body and her mystical and symbolic body becomes physical, as the golden bar she leans 'her bosom' across is made 'warm'.⁸⁷ Her fleshiness explores the notion of transubstantiation, with the mystical body being realised through the physical body. *Hope* is also connected to this duality, with its subject matter derived from the Bible (Hebrews, 6:19), where hope is 'an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil'. Watts and Rossetti, in contrast to Millais, explore the duality between the body and soul. In this way, the exploration of this duality in *The White Peacock* is characterised through the novel's discussion of art.

Lettie voices her struggles through reciting Christina Rossetti's 'A Birthday', when she is with both Leslie and George and points 'to the dusty catkins mingled with the alder on her bosom'.⁸⁸ The physicality of her body, like D. G. Rossetti's Damozel, is depicted in contrast to the imaginary and ideal body that is placed as an object of the look or gaze. Christina Rossetti's poem also relates to the body, emerging through natural imagery, to a 'singing bird' and 'an apple tree' and explores the idea of materialisation as Rossetti's persona demands 'a dais of silk and down' carved with doves, pomegranates and peacocks.⁸⁹ As Kathy Alexis Psomiades argues, the second stanza of the poem depicts a self-conscious

⁸⁶ Rossetti, 'The Blessed Damozel' (pp.232), 5-9.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.233, 45-46.

⁸⁸ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.185.

⁸⁹ Christina Rossetti, 'A Birthday', in *Christina Rossetti: Selected Poems* (London: Phoenix 2010) p.14, 1-12.

display, and a repression of desire and passion which 'acts further to interiorise and mystify that passion'.⁹⁰ Through her recitation of Rossetti's poem, Lettie is voicing her sense of repression and passion that has been repressed by the appropriation of herself as an image and as subject to the gaze of Leslie, Cyril and George. It is notable that choice of poet is a woman connected to the Pre-Raphaelite circle. In this way, Christina Rossetti's status as woman writer intensifies Lettie's expression of her own desires, turning away from a masculine realm.

The artworks and literary allusions that Lawrence uses in the novel deal with this tension and with the representation of the body. The body, specifically in relation to the feminine, is conjured up through these references to Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics and their contrast to the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley that Lawrence mentions. For instance, Lawrence's references to Burne-Jones and his paintings, and as seen in Annable's speech about his wife, are equated with soulfulness. Cyril refers to Emily as being one of 'Burne-Jones' damsels' as the 'troublesome shadows are always crowding across your eyes, and you cherish them. You think the flesh of the apple is nothing, nothing. You only care for the eternal pips'.⁹¹ The tensions between the corporeal and spiritual are encapsulated in Cyril's remarks about the 'flesh' of the apple and its 'eternal pips' and his accusation that Emily denies the physical, thinking of it as nothing, implying Emily's sense of rejection and shame in the living impulses of the body. This is emphasised in Emily's response to Beardsley's *Salomé* pictures which

⁹⁰ Kathy Alexis Psomiades, 'Whose Body? Christina Rossetti and Aestheticist Femininity', in *Women and British Aestheticism* ed. by Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press 1999), pp.101-118 (p.104).

⁹¹ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.118.

Cyril shows her; she deems them to be 'fearful' and shrinks away.⁹² In some ways, whilst Cyril highlights what he sees as Emily's denial and repression, he also attempts to dominate and suppress Emily's presence and bodily spontaneity, a feature that Stefania Michelucci argues is a tendency in characters throughout Lawrence's work.⁹³ Cyril implies that his remarks about Emily as a Burne-Jones damsel are related to her seriousness and sorrowfulness. They hold an underlying mocking, or perhaps a flirtatious edge, as Cyril narrates that 'she looked at me sadly, not understanding, but believing that I in my wisdom spoke truth, as she always believed when I lost her in a maze of words'.⁹⁴

The imagery Lawrence uses in Cyril's description of Emily, and its associations with figure of Eve and the fall, is indicative of the symbolism shared by Rossetti's *Venus Verticordia*. Interestingly, in the manuscript of *The White Peacock*, the reference was originally to Rossetti (changed to Burne-Jones), and the imagery relating to Rossetti is more explicitly related to Eve: – 'you are the daughter of Eve and the apple doesn't tempt you. You carry in your blood all the vague sadness that be in the flesh of the apple, but not the same pips of pleasure that are hid in the core'.⁹⁵ Both images are related to Emily's resistance to temptation and the denial of her sexuality yet there are some similarities and discrepancies in the image as Lawrence ended up using it. In both images the flesh is associated with pleasure, but in the Burne-Jones imagery the pips contain spiritual truths, the 'eternal' ideal,

⁹² Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.222.

⁹³ Stefania Michelucci, 'D. H. Lawrence's Representation of the Body and the Visual Arts', in *Writing the body in D. H. Lawrence: Essays on Language, Representation, and Sexuality*, ed. by Paul Poplawski (London: Greenwood Press 2001), pp.19-30 (p.27).

⁹⁴ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.118.

⁹⁵ D. H. Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, Nottingham, University of Nottingham, Lawrence Archives, Laz 1/1, Book 1 (1 of 6).

whereas in the Rossetti imagery they are pips of 'pleasure' hidden or repressed. The Burne-Jones imagery alludes to the creation story, but the Rossetti imagery is explicitly linked with Eve and to the fall. Rossetti's prose poem 'Orchard Pit' depicts the allure of temptation, as in the pit below the apple tree lie the people with apples in their hands who have fallen from grace. It is implied that the beautiful figure is Eve, standing over the fallen and holding the apples in her hands. Likewise, the imagery Lawrence uses in relation to Rossetti and to the theme of temptation displays a more accentuated sensuality and fleshiness and gives more of a sense of physical presence than the imagery connected to Burne-Jones. Lawrence's references to Burne-Jones in *The White Peacock* sublimate the body and create an absence, through Crystabel's absence from the text, Lettie's sleep, and Cyril's association of Emily with Burne-Jones's otherworldly Damsels. Whilst it is not definite why Lawrence chose to revise this passage from Rossetti to Burne-Jones, the revision suggests that he was consciously responding to the duality between the mystical and physical in Pre-Raphaelite art and choosing between different constructions of gender and sexuality within the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Throughout the rest of the novel, the characters continue to suppress their bodily spontaneity and desires; none of them end up with the person that they truly desire.

Lawrence's use of references and Victorian art is consciously done in *The White Peacock*, exemplified by his letter Blanche Jennings during the novel's composition, questioning the characterisation of Lettie and writing 'Shall I make her longer or shorter, fatter or frailer, a

Burne-Jonesian or a Moore?'⁹⁶ This distinction between Pre-Raphaelitism and artists of the same generation, such as Albert Moore, appears in the novel as Leslie tells Lettie 'You – You're not a Burne-Jonesess – you're an Albert Moore'.⁹⁷ In his distinction between Burne-Jones and Moore, Lawrence shows the construction of her figure, portraying how Lawrence is mindfully visualising his characters in terms of art and literature. It also depicts that Lawrence is aware of the Romantic versus the Classical in his choice of artistic model. This contrasts to Leslie's earlier depiction of Millais's female figure in *The Knight Errant* and his more naturalistic approach. *The Knight Errant* was considered more obviously daring in its portrayal of the nude, which caused scandal amongst critics who thought the woman 'too life-like' and questioned her 'loose morals', as there was no classical pretext, like Leighton's and Moore's work.⁹⁸ The juxtaposition that Lawrence creates between the Pre-Raphaelites and other Victorian artists, between the Pre-Raphaelites themselves, and other artists that are mentioned in the novel, such as Moore and Beardsley, shows his awareness of the portrayal of women in art.

Lawrence points out depictions of women by male artists and by male narrators, and like Yeats's consideration of the portrayal of women in Rossetti's, Morris's and Swinburne's poetry, he is showing how women are being viewed as men's heroines, art objects, and literary constructions. Lettie's appearance and her desires are formulated and internalised through these references to artistic constructions. The choice she faces, between her love

⁹⁶ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Blanche Jennings, 26 October 1908', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Volume 1*, pp.85-87, (p.86).

⁹⁷ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.137.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Alison Smith, 'Millais' *Knight Errant* and the formation of the English Nude', pp. 127-148 (p.127).

for George and Leslie, and how she is characterised as being caught between the two impulses of social standards and sexual desire are captured in Lawrence's use of artistic images and to the tensions within Pre-Raphaelite art. As evidenced in his letter about creating Lettie, Lawrence accedes to the same impulse as his male characters in his self-conscious use of paintings and artists. At the same time, the novel explores and criticises the suppression of desire. Through his conscious references and constructions of art and writing, Lawrence, like the taxonomy of scholars such as Marsh and Sonstroem, categorises women in Pre-Raphaelite art and poetry. This categorisation is limiting to Pre-Raphaelite art and to the challenge that they presented to Victorian ideologies. Here Lawrence also repudiates Pre-Raphaelitism by exposing the limits and abuses of the male characters' and artists' treatment of women.

Lawrence's conscious use of Pre-Raphaelite references and contemplation of the Pre-Raphaelite woman extends into his later novels, particularly *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. In these late novels, Lawrence continues to explore different types of Pre-Raphaelite femininity and paintings of women to enhance his literary portraits and portrayals. Like Lettie, Hermione Roddice typifies Lawrence's 'dreaming woman' and is knowledgeable about art and culture. She is also described as a New Woman due to her independence, a 'woman of the new school, full of intellectuality' and 'passionately interested in reform' yet also as a 'man's woman'.⁹⁹ This is evoked through references to the visual aestheticism and the style of D. G. Rossetti's paintings, describing Hermione as having

⁹⁹ D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth editions 1999), p.11.

a 'long, pale face, that she carried lifted up, somewhat in the Rossetti fashion'.¹⁰⁰ Later the description of her is reminiscent of Rossetti's *Astarte Syriaca*. Notwithstanding some of the mythological associations in connection to Lettie, Hermione is presented as a more powerful and mysterious figure who is aware of her own sexuality, linked to Rossetti's more sensual portraits. Like *Astarte Syriaca*, she appears in lavish green robes, dressed in 'greenish brocade, that fitted tightly and made her look tall' and looking 'strange and sepulchral, her eyes heavy and full of sepulchral darkness, strength'. As in Rossetti's painting, Hermione, standing before the shaded candles, is described as 'uncanny' and 'oppressive' and is positioned as 'a power' and 'a presence'.¹⁰¹ Rossetti invests *Astarte Syriaca* with a monumental stature, gazing down at the viewer as a worshipper in submission. *Astarte's* enduring presence is evoked through the elemental imagery of the sun and moon and by the two angelic figures that frame the picture, presenting an iconic and elemental vision of femininity.

Through the description of Hermione's strange and sepulchral presence, she is defined as looking 'like a priestess', 'unconscious, sunk in a heavy half-trance', something which is reiterated after she hits Birkin with the Lapis Lazuli when an 'almost sinister religious expression became permanent on her face'.¹⁰² Like Taylor in her preface to *Fiammetta*, Hermione has cast herself into the role of the Priestess, and in applying the description to *Astarte Syriaca*, is invested with both a conscious and unconscious power, and as discussed

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p.11.

¹⁰¹ Lawrence, *Women in Love*, p.75.

¹⁰² Lawrence, *Women in Love*, p.90.

in the Yeats chapter, a Rossettian vision of 'sinister' femininity related to his mythological figures. This aspect of the sinister is evoked in the first description of Hermione, where she is portrayed as both attractive and disturbing, as 'impressive' yet 'macabre, something repulsive', fascinating and silencing the people who watch her.¹⁰³ Whilst this image of Hermione is aligned to a mystical and mythical ideal of womanhood, and to ideas of the 'eternal' feminine in the depiction of an ancient deity, she is also cast in the role of a self-aggrandising femme fatale in her fixation on Birkin. *Astarte Syriaca* is also an androgynous figure. Hermione, who is repeatedly referred to as being feminine, is androgynous in her bold and defiant qualities, in claiming her independence in a 'manly world'.¹⁰⁴ Again, there is some convergence of the ideals of 'feminine' Pre-Raphaelite woman and 'masculine' New Woman. In her mythological presentation, Hermione is defined by patriarchal models or stereotypes of the spiritual woman. In this respect, she reproduces models that have been used as a form of repression and as a means of subversion.

Lawrence returns to Pre-Raphaelite representations in his last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Although Sproles argues that in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence departs from Pre-Raphaelite compositional models and portrays Constance as a woman who confronts her own desires rather than adopting poses of femininity, Lawrence is still intentionally dwelling on Pre-Raphaelitism in his portrayal of Constance Chatterley and her sister Hilda. In the final text of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Constance and Hilda are described as having had an

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp.10-11.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p.11.

‘aesthetically unconventional upbringing’ by their father who was a ‘well known R. A.’ and their mother ‘who had been one of the cultivated Fabians in the palmy, rather Pre-Raphaelite days’. They had been taken to Paris, Florence and Rome to ‘breathe in art’ and to Germany to ‘the great Socialist conventions’.¹⁰⁵ The Pre-Raphaelites were renowned for their bohemian lifestyle. In this description of their upbringing, Pre-Raphaelitism and socialism are connected with bohemianism, representing a personal, cultural and social reaction to bourgeois life. This reaction against bourgeois life is reiterated in her relationships with Mellors. Whilst Constance is similar to Hermione and Lettie in her knowledge of art and culture and her independence, Constance actively rejects social conventions and gains freedom. In some respects, she is a New Woman who ‘lived freely’ and ‘argued with the men over philosophical, sociological and artistic matters’ and wants ‘to shake off the old and sordid connections and subjections’ of a woman’s life.¹⁰⁶ Although not a socialist, Connie expresses socialist sympathies. Lawrence breaks down social and class boundaries through Connie’s and Mellor’s relationship. The subjection that Connie voices in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* would recur across Lawrence’s other depictions of women, firstly, through the figure of the Lady of Shalott and, secondly, Persephone.

Ladies of Shalott

One of the most frequent images and portrayals of the ‘Pre-Raphaelite woman’ emerges in Pre-Raphaelite visual depictions of Tennyson’s ‘The Lady of Shalott’ (1832), a subject which

¹⁰⁵ D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth editions 2007), p.2.

¹⁰⁶ Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, p.3.

these artists repeatedly returned to. Through these depictions, the Lady of Shalott becomes, as Jennifer Gribble argues, an 'emblematic lady', distinguished by an Arthurian, Romantic and Pre-Raphaelite heritage.¹⁰⁷ Lawrence continues both the Pre-Raphaelite tradition of reflecting on Tennyson's poem and sees the poem through the lens of Pre-Raphaelite art. Lawrence, as evidenced from his letters and writings, enjoyed reading Tennyson and, as Jessie Chambers details, would read 'Morte d' Arthur', 'Maud', 'Ulysses', 'The Lotus Eaters' and 'Locksley Hall' and was fascinated with 'The Lady of Shalott'. She says that in reading these poems to her 'he conveyed the impression that he was telling me something about himself'.¹⁰⁸ As shown earlier, the title of *The White Peacock* was inspired by Tennyson's *The Princess*. As with the Pre-Raphaelites, Lawrence's attitude to Tennyson is often inconsistent. Throughout his fiction there are references to Tennyson's poetry, from Siegmund in his second novel *The Trespasser*, who views Tennyson as belittling, 'not peacocks and princesses, but the bigger things', to Clifford in his final novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, who in his self-pity is described as being 'like the lady in Tennyson, he must weep or he must die', here, again, quoting from Tennyson's *The Princess*.¹⁰⁹ The Lady of Shalott is a recurring motif across Lawrence's fiction. Throughout his works, Lawrence's characters interpret one another or themselves in terms of the Lady of Shalott. The following section examines the process of identification to self-identification in Lawrence's interpretation of the Lady of Shalott; it explores how the male characters cast women as the Lady of Shalott, moving gradually across his fiction to women characters self-identifying with the Lady of Shalott.

¹⁰⁷ Jennifer Gribble, *The Lady of Shalott in the Victorian Novel* (London: Macmillan Press 1983), p.1.

¹⁰⁸ Chambers, D. H. *Lawrence: A Personal Record*, p.95.

¹⁰⁹ D. H. Lawrence, *The Trespasser* (London: Penguin 1986), p.45. D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, p.257. For a discussion of Lawrence and Tennyson, particularly of Lawrence's use of Tennyson across his fiction, see John Morton, *Tennyson Among the Novelists* (London: Continuum International Publishing 2010), pp.65-77.

The poem was an inspiration to the Pre-Raphaelites as poets, painters and illustrators; Rossetti's *Blessed Damozel* has been termed as the 'beatified Lady of Shalott' by Gribble, an image which prefigures other Pre-Raphaelite women.¹¹⁰ It is an image which simultaneously prefigures and defines Pre-Raphaelite visual art and is a key text for the intertextuality of their work. 'The Lady of Shalott', loosely based on the Arthurian legend of Elaine of Astolat, tells of a mysterious lady, who is never named, and who is self-imprisoned in a tower on the island of Shalott near Camelot. She is placed under a curse, viewing the outside world through a mirror and translating these images by weaving these reflections into tapestry or 'web'. Upon seeing Sir Lancelot, she abandons her work and the tower. In doing so, the curse descends and leads to her death. Both the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and other artists associated with the movement, such as Arthur Hughes and Waterhouse, produced drawings, illustrations and paintings of the poem. Burne-Jones drew early designs of the poem and one of the first drawings of the poem was produced by Elizabeth Siddall in 1853.¹¹¹ The first visual versions of the text by members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood appeared in the Moxon edition of Tennyson's poems in 1857, for which Millais, Rossetti, Holman Hunt and Hughes all contributed illustrations. Holman Hunt and Rossetti both illustrated the Lady of Shalott; Hunt chose the moment at which the curse descends (and later turned this image into a painting) and Rossetti chose the final scene of the poem, where Lancelot looks down at the Lady's corpse.¹¹² These two aspects of the poem were

¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp.1-3.

¹¹¹ For an exploration of Siddall's image *The Lady of Shalott* and its interart aesthetic and representation of gender, see Divya Athmanathan, "Good pictures...are always another poem": Mapping Spatialities in Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" and Elizabeth Siddall's *The Lady of Shalott*, in *Poetry in Pre-Raphaelite Paintings: Transcending Boundaries*, ed. by Sophia Andres and Brian Donnelly (New York: Peter Lang 2018), pp.29-42.

¹¹² Tennyson was less than co-operative with the Pre-Raphaelite artists, questioning whether their illustrations, especially Hunt's, contained details that could be plainly justified by the words of the poem. He questioned the

especially attractive to the Pre-Raphaelites: the imprisoned woman at the moment the curse descends, looking into the mirror and as she dies, sailing to Camelot. Waterhouse's paintings convey how a subject which inspired nineteenth-century painters continued well into the twentieth (he produced three pictures of this subject in 1888, 1894 and 1916).

Like the Pre-Raphaelites, Lawrence uses the Lady of Shalott as both a literary and visual motif. It is an image which signifies the Victorian Romantic heritage that inspired him. Lawrence focuses on the two aspects of the poem that the Pre-Raphaelites visualise, exploring these in terms of their portrayal of physical and psychological entrapment. The 'Lady of Shalott business' is, for Lawrence, a cultural tradition which he consciously uses in order to explore the complexities of literary and social conventions.¹¹³ Similarly, Virginia Woolf queries Victorian literary and social conventions in her short story *The Lady in the Looking Glass: A Reflection* (1929). The story, alluding to Tennyson's poem, is concerned with mimesis and moves away from a Victorian Realist tradition in the examination of the self. The mirror captures the material room and its arrangement, laying 'still in the trance of immortality', whilst reflecting Isabella's inner consciousness in which the room, through her thought, becomes 'more shadowy and 'symbolic'.¹¹⁴ Like the Lady of Shalott, Woolf's story examines the process of reflection, as seen in the title itself, and through a mirroring device

depiction of the Lady's hair in Hunt's illustration, as to why it was so 'wildly' depicted, saying 'I didn't say her hair was blown about like that.' Tennyson's family also expressed their dissatisfaction with the Pre-Raphaelite depictions. Robert Bernard Martin, *Tennyson: The Unquiet Heart* (Oxford: Faber and Faber 1983), p.414.

¹¹³ Lawrence, *Women in Love*, p.33.

¹¹⁴ Virginia Woolf, *The Lady in the Looking- Glass: A Reflection* (London: Penguin 2011), pp. 3-4.

in which the mirror reflects her surroundings, Isabella reflects upon the physical mirror and the narrator mirrors the protagonist's consciousness.

The image and symbolism of the Lady, the room, the mirror, the web and the curse become a way for Lawrence, like Woolf, to explore the nature of being in relation to the surrounding world and the individual consciousness. In his use of this trope, Lawrence is particularly fascinated by the mirror and the dichotomy that it symbolises. The Lady of Shalott's mirror acts as a separating device for Lawrence. Through this, Lawrence adheres to a well-known Victorian subject and develops it further, relating its use to historical and contemporary concerns, simultaneously mediating between the woman and the external world, the body and the mind, and the relationship of the artist with the outside world. Lawrence, like the Pre-Raphaelites, uses the Lady of Shalott as an image in which to explore both the conditioned and liberating forces of desire. He develops the image further, relating this image and poetic figure to circumscribed ideas about gender boundaries and similarly challenging them.

Tennyson himself associated the poem with the role of the poet and with the relationship between isolated creativity and the social allegiances. In being placed beside other poems, such as 'The Palace of Art' in the 1833 *Poems* collection, the 'Lady of Shalott' carries these connotations. Critics have focused on this aspect of the poem and on the Platonic allusions

to the 'shadows' and the mirror, examining the nature of mimesis and poetical identity.¹¹⁵ In Lawrence's initial use of the Lady of Shalott in his fiction, in *The White Peacock*, he uses a painting of the subject as a means to explore the relationship between art and life or rather with life imitating art. Here, the Lady of Shalott is directly associated with Pre-Raphaelitism, through Waterhouse's painting (Figure 2.5). Waterhouse's composition recalls his Pre-Raphaelite models, from Millais's *Ophelia*, in the vividly painted foliage, and Rossetti's Moxon Lady of Shalott with the guttering candles which signify the process of dying. There is also an influence from Hunt's Moxon illustration, suggested by the Christian symbolism of the crucifixion and of the dawning of sexual desires in both paintings. Her pose is also reminiscent of Rossetti's *Beata Beatrix*, shown in the process of dying and moment of transcendence, as a figure hovering between sensuality and spirituality. She is dressed in white, like in the Tennyson poem, highlighting her innocence. The choice of the Lady of Shalott for Waterhouse, according to Peter Trippi, 'followed logically from ongoing interest of the affinity between women and water, the erotic language of martyrdom and the alternative states of consciousness'.¹¹⁶ These ongoing interests of Waterhouse's *Lady of Shalott* resonate with Lawrence's own use of the painting in the novel and in his later use of the motif, particularly in his explorations of alternative states of consciousness.

¹¹⁵ These critical works include Edgar F. Shannon Jr, 'Poetry as Vision: Sight and Insight in "The Lady of Shalott"', *Victorian Poetry*, 19:3 (1981), 207-223. Gerhard Joseph, 'The Echo and the Mirror "en abîme" in Victorian Poetry', *Victorian Poetry*, 23:4 (1985), 403-412.

¹¹⁶ Peter Trippi, *J. W. Waterhouse* (London: Phaidon Press 2002), p.87.



2.5. John William Waterhouse, *The Lady of Shalott*, (1888), Tate Britain.

In *The White Peacock*, Lady Crystabel is described as the 'souly' woman who affects the style of a painting. Here, Lawrence's characters and narrator take the Lady of Shalott as a major reference point through which to evoke the likeness of an absent female character. The name Crystabel, in connection to Coleridge's poem of the same name (albeit spelt differently), indicates a continuity between Romantic and late Victorian visionary painting and literature. In Annable's descriptions of his wife and their romance, she becomes the Lady of Shalott without the mirror. Instead, Waterhouse's painting is used as a mirror; as a mirror through which her life and physical beauty are contemplated. Lady Crystabel, like the Lady of Shalott, remains a mystery, and is also connected to place, to the river both she and Annable walked beside and rowed upon. Annable further hints to her artistic creativity but

claims that he 'never saw her drawings'.¹¹⁷ In his cynical description of Crystabel, Annable affects the language of martyrdom and accuses her of ensnaring him through weaving her own fantasies; she 'used to pretend to be childish and unknowing', and later, when she became 'souly' treated him as her 'animal'.¹¹⁸ He adds that he could stand it no longer and left her, after which she died. Similarly, Rossetti's Moxon illustration depicts the connection and fascination between love and death. However, in the poem and Waterhouse's painting it is only in death that she is named, after inscribing her name on the boat. In the poem, Lancelot just sees the dead beautiful woman and comments on her 'lovely face'.¹¹⁹ As with the persona of Tennyson's text and the Waterhouse painting, the only reference to and description of Crystabel in the novel occurs after her death through Annable's speech and Cyril's narration of it.

For Lawrence and Waterhouse, desire is positioned as being both liberating and destructive. Indeed, this is an important theme that runs throughout the novel and in the relationships that the novel explores, expressly in George's and Lettie's relationship and the relationship between Emily and the narrator, Cyril. Lawrence uses art as a way of mediating, or inducing desire, particularly through Beardsley's *Salomé* illustrations to which he devotes a two-page discussion to in the novel. As previously mentioned, Emily finds these fearful whereas Cyril finds them fascinating and thrilling, as does her brother George, who studies them and in

¹¹⁷ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.212.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p.212.

¹¹⁹ Alfred Tennyson, 'The Lady of Shalott', in *The Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions 2008), pp.55-59 (p.59), 171.

doing so, acknowledges to Cyril that he 'wants' Lettie.¹²⁰ Through Beardsley's illustrations and Annable's dialogue, Lawrence shows the process of historicising and constraining women through art, with the image of the Lady of Shalott circumscribing and challenging ideas about gender boundaries. This becomes apparent when he calls Crystabel his 'white peacock', an image which is connected to Beardsley's *Salomé* illustrations in the novel and reflects *fin de siècle* anxieties about gender. In the novel, the image of the peacock is specifically related to women, as Annable describes the peacock that lands on the gravestone to be 'the very soul of a lady' and misogynistically, as a 'woman to the end [...] all vanity and screech and defilement'.¹²¹ Annable, who is a precursor of Parkin or Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, attributes the peacock's qualities to Crystabel and through this, links to Beardsley's illustrations and to Oscar Wilde. The peacock becomes an aesthetic symbol and the symbol of a woman. In Wilde's play, the white peacocks are one of the gifts that Herod offers to Salomé to thwart her desire and persuade her from beheading Jokanaan. Here, the peacock, as in Beardsley's images of *Salomé*, is associated with a decadent and deadly woman. Beardsley's illustrations, notably *The Peacock Skirt* and *The Eyes of Herod*, with the peacock feathers in Salomé's hair, portray images of vanity and reflect a desire which is both attractive and destructive. In this respect, the Lady of Shalott becomes another representation of women through a masculine gaze. Lawrence is conscious of this representation, not only in *The White Peacock* and, again, it becomes a metaphor which is often imposed on the female characters by men. The peacock is, however, male, and the beauty and association of male birds becomes related to women. Through the image of the

¹²⁰ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, pp.222-223.

¹²¹ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.210.

peacock, and its association with the Aesthetic Movement, beauty is perceived as a sensual experience. In evolutionary terms, Charles Darwin's investigation into beauty led him to believe that the presence of beauty was inseparable from the sexualised performance of its display.¹²² In this way, Annable's use of the 'white peacock' links to his wife's beauty and his sexual attraction to her but in her choice to leave him, he deems her as transgressing what he perceives to be her determined role. Yet his casting of her as an image associated with sensuality depicts her own agency and sexuality.

In Lawrence's short story 'The Witch a La Mode' (1911), Bernard accuses Winifred of withholding herself from him, claiming that 'I'm a blessed Lady-of-Shalott looking-glass for you'.¹²³ In this instance, the mirror, again, becomes a separating device between the self and the outside world and as a rejection of desire and the body. In relation to Tennyson's poem, life and beauty are contemplated through mirrors rather than experience. However, there is an underlying implication of Winifred's narcissism, and in psychoanalytic terms, about the process of identification and structure of subjectivity. The mirror is not used in a narcissistic way in the poem. In other Pre-Raphaelite paintings, such as Rossetti's *Lady Lilith*, the subject is a figure who is absorbed by her own beauty and not the surrounding world. In Tennyson's poem, by contrast, the mirror is used as the process of relation between the subject and its

¹²² For Darwin, birds after humans, were the most aesthetic in nature and provided the human basis for his theory of sexual selection; as with birds, beauty is involved in the operation of sexual attraction, linking the plumage of male birds to an involved taste for the decorative in the female sex, used to enhance natural aesthetic appearance, not least through fashion. Jane Munro, 'More like a Work of Art than of Nature': Darwin, Beauty, and Sexual Selection', in *Endless Forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science and the Visual Arts*, ed. by Diana Donald and Jane Munro (New Haven and London: Yale University press 2009), pp. 253-291 (pp.256-288).

¹²³ D. H. Lawrence, 'The Witch a La Mode', in *Love Among the Haystacks and Other Stories*, ed. by John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001), pp.54-70 (p.67).

reality. The subject, the Lady of Shalott, concurrently fantasises about identification with the reflected image and is alienated by it.¹²⁴

In *The Rainbow* (1915) Ursula and Gudrun fantasise about identification with a literary image and visualise or enact their experiences through Pre-Raphaelite imagery. In her childhood, through her dreams and visions Ursula draws on visual aspects of poetry and medieval images. This is shown in her early appreciation of Tennyson's poetry such as 'Idylls of the King' and 'Lady of Shalott' and romantic stories. Ursula imagines 'Launcelot would ride just now, would wave to her as he rode by, his scarlet cloak passing behind the dark yew-trees and between the open space.' She casts herself in as Elaine from 'Idylls of the King' and the Lady of Shalott, where she 'would remain the lonely maid high up and isolated in the tower, polishing the terrible shield, weaving it a covering with a true device, and waiting, waiting, always remote and high'.¹²⁵ In this respect, Ursula is connected to the Lady, who has been seen as a 'youthful and child-like figure', associated with physical perfection and moral innocence, remaining as the isolated and lonely maid in her childhood fantasy of isolation.¹²⁶ The Lady of Shalott motif is here connected to Ursula's coming of age, a self-identification which acknowledges, like the Lady of Shalott, a sexual awakening, as represented by the figure of Lancelot. It is presented as a childish image, an 'intricately woven illusion of her life'

¹²⁴ Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, eds. by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, 2 edn. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing 2004), pp.441-446 (p.443).

¹²⁵ D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow* (London: Penguin 2007), pp.247.

¹²⁶ Christine Poulson, 'Death and the Maiden: The Lady of Shalott and the Pre-Raphaelites', in *Re-Framing the Pre-Raphaelites: historical and theoretical essays*, pp.173-194 (p.187).

that she has created and must grow out of.¹²⁷ As previously noted, Ursula has been immersed in late Victorian Romanticism and Pre-Raphaelite traditions, and her surroundings, like the Lady of Shalott's surroundings, are translated into art and are figured like the rich tapestries of 'damsels' and 'knights'.¹²⁸ It becomes a conscious world of art and the Lady's life is in itself a woven allusion.

In this sense, Lawrence is interested in the psychology behind the Lady of Shalott and the exploration of alternative states of consciousness, as depicted in Birkin's reference to 'all that Lady of Shalott business' in *Women in Love*. He tells Hermione:

You've got that mirror, your own fixed will, your immortal understanding, your own tight conscious world, and there is nothing beyond it. There, in the mirror, you must have everything. But now you have come to all your conclusions, you want to go back and be like a savage, without knowledge. You want a life of pure sensation and "passion".¹²⁹

The mirror acts as an object which transmits 'shadows' and is representative of the 'fixed will' and 'tight conscious world' of a self-enclosed protagonist, Hermione, who Birkin accuses of seeing the world mirrored by, and contained in, her own consciousness. For Birkin, there is 'nothing beyond' the self-conscious 'limited, false set of concepts' that Hermione, like the Lady, adheres to, and he alleges that she does not venture beyond the knowable self. In claiming that Hermione wants only of life of 'pure sensation' and 'passion', Birkin accuses her of being an unconscious woman, and Hermione can be seen as a version of Frank

¹²⁷ Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, pp.249.

¹²⁸ Tennyson, 'The Lady of Shalott', p.56, 54-60.

¹²⁹ Lawrence, *Women in Love*, p.33.

Kermode's Romantic Image, which he identifies as a Romantic and Yeatsian figure.¹³⁰

Hermione is cast in the image of a beautiful woman, self-involved and absorbed, usually in movement. This sense of unconsciousness, again, connects to Watts-Dunton's *Alywin* and Winifred Wynne's state of unconsciousness, which D'Arcy is repeatedly fascinated by. Earlier in the novel, Hermione's actions are based upon unconscious movement in her dancing and act of hitting Birkin with the Lapis Lazuli. Similarly, the Lady of Shalott is unaware of the realities of the outside. In the use of this metaphor, Birkin argues that relationships between the individual consciousness and the world beyond the mirror still need to be fathomed and, in this way, he holds up a mirror to the world. He questions Hermione's sense of self and her place in the world. At the same time, she is aligned to a cultural tradition imposed upon her by Birkin.

Likewise, in Lawrence's unfinished novel *Mr. Noon* (1920-1921), Louise 'seemed to Gilbert like some spider spinning in a jewelled web; or like a dark, magical Lady of Shalott who never looked out of the window, but sat weaving heaven knows what'.¹³¹ Whilst this can be taken as a flippant remark made by the narrator, Lawrence returns to exploring the motif in relation to creativity, specifically here female creativity and activity. In Waterhouse's painting, the tapestry is in the boat with her, suggesting that her art has withstood the curse. Elizabeth Siddall's drawing of the Lady of Shalott shows the lady at her loom at the moment she turns away to look at Lancelot and the tapestry disassembles and the mirror cracks.

¹³⁰ See Kermode's discussion of The Dancer. Frank Kermode, *Romantic Image* (London: Routledge Classics 2002), pp 59-110. He outlines the dualities of the dancer, what he calls Yeats's 'great reconciling images' on p.58.

¹³¹ D. H. Lawrence, *Mr. Noon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002), p.194.

Lancelot is barely visible in the reflection of the mirror and is not drawn with the solidity of the landscape in the window. Unlike Siddall's *Lady of Shalott*, Louise does not, as Gilbert sees her, look away from her work nor is moved by desire to do so.

Other depictions of *Lady of Shalott*, like Holman Hunt's, Rossetti's and Waterhouse's 1916 painting, paint Lancelot as a solid figure visible in the landscape, but for Siddall, the view of him is for the Lady alone. Siddall also focuses on female creativity and depicts how the mirror connects the lady's art with the real world. The mirror is used in the physical processes of weaving and is placed in front of the loom, reflecting the design for the weaver to copy (this was the practice used for Morris's and Burne-Jones's tapestries at Merton Abbey). It creates an ambiguity of space and realities, between the exterior world, the Lady's interior world, the material work of art and all these reflected in the mirror. Lawrence's use of the poem and the Pre-Raphaelite depictions convey the sense of limitation in the mirror and surrounding space of the Lady's room, in which the room becomes seen as a female space. The connection between women and space in the poem has been examined by critics, particularly in relation to gendered space and limitation of women in the Victorian era. In the twentieth century and in modernist literature, ideas about space and gender and women's relationships between public and private worlds and social structures and individual lives, were still being contested, most famously in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's own*. For Woolf, to go into any room one encounters 'the whole of that extremely complex force of femininity' and she reclaims the room as a creative space.¹³² The Lady of

¹³² Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's own* (London: Vintage 2001), p.75.

Shalott's room is thus a physical limitation on a woman marginalised by patriarchal values, and reclaimed by Siddall, Woolf, and to some extent Lawrence, as a creative space which transcends physical boundaries.

In *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, the Lady of Shalott moves away from the 'male gaze' to self-conscious identification for Yvette. Maria Aline Ferreira argues that, whilst references to Tennyson's 'The Lady of Shalott' abound in Lawrence's early writings, it is in *The Virgin and the Gipsy* (1926) that the most striking examples occur, in theme, plot, setting, and imagery.¹³³ The Lady and Yvette live in confinement, the lady within the tower and Yvette in the stuffy atmosphere of the rectory. These dwellings are situated by rivers, which play an important part in the narrative. Yvette, unlike the Lady, is not a literal prisoner but is imprisoned by familial and social restrictions in her father's house. Whilst Ferreira focuses on the similarities in theme, plot, setting, and imagery and the contrasts which throws light upon Lawrence's purposes and intentions, the image of the Lady of Shalott goes beyond this in Lawrence's story, to become an emblem of emancipatory potential and a means of self-identification for Yvette.

Yvette had the freedom to leave the house if she chooses but is, like the Lady, in a constant process of waiting and watching. In this way, she stands gazing out the window as, 'like the Lady of Shalott, she seemed always to imagine that someone would come along singing

¹³³ Maria Aline Ferreira, 'The Virgin and the Gipsy As A Rewriting And Subversion Of Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott"', *The D. H. Lawrence Review*, 23:1 (1991), 167-177 (p.168).

Tirra-lirra! or something equally intelligent, by the river'.¹³⁴ Like the Lady, Yvette is positioned high up, on the landing, watching out the window for Joe, and for an enticement to leave her room. In comparison to Ursula and her childhood visions, Yvette's self-identification with the Lady of Shalott is an emblem of the life from which she desires to emancipate herself. Joe is positioned as the figure who will set her free from what she sees as a conventional and unromantic life. This, however, stands in contrast to what the poem stands for in Ursula's Romantic imagination. Yvette 'hated the rectory, and everything it implied' and 'wishes she were a gipsy' so that she would 'never set foot in a house' and 'not know the existence of a parish'.¹³⁵ Like Sinfi Lovell in Watts-Dunton's *Alywin*, Joe, as a gipsy, represents far more to Yvette than just a romantic attachment, he represents an oppositional culture and livelihood to the bourgeois world of the house and her domineering Granny.

Lawrence critiques bourgeois culture through Yvette's wish to break free from social convention and the materialism of her world. In this story, Lawrence is concerned with how psychological forces are the product of social order and Yvette yearns to escape this order but never does so. In this way, the Lady of Shalott is ultimately a symbol for Lawrence of the social bonds which these heroines cannot escape. Again, Lawrence focuses on the symbolism of the mirror, in a scene in which Yvette almost breaks it herself. Yvette uses the mirror in both a creative and narcissistic way, as she makes herself a dress and admires her reflection. The family are superstitious about the mirror and the consequences if it should

¹³⁴ D. H. Lawrence, 'The Virgin and the Gypsy', in *The Virgin and the Gypsy & Other Stories*, (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions 2004), pp.3-74 (p.33).

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p.27.

break but the mirror she almost breaks belonged to 'She-who-was-Cynthia', her absent mother.¹³⁶ In this respect, her mother, whose name is taboo in the rectory, is the breaker of social conventions and restrictions placed upon her at the Rectory. The Lady too breaks the physical and psychological restrictions placed on her in the tower, signified by the mirror breaking, and the descent of the curse. Whereas Yvette seeks to escape social conventions and familial restrictions, the Lady seeks to be part of the society she sees reflected and wishes to enter the social order, as indicated by the writing of her name on the boat.

Despite the similarities between the texts, Lawrence also subverts the poem, particularly the ending, lending a more positive ending in the portrayal of female sexuality. Yvette lives and is renewed by her physical relationship with Joe, as regenerated in and by the flood. The curse over the Lady of Shalott can be read as being related to her thwarted sexuality.

Lawrence's ending is placed in contrast with the Lady's death and repressed sexuality and instead offers Yvette regeneration, emphasising his defence of the body and instincts.

Ultimately, Yvette does not escape the rectory itself, she is left with her love for Joe, who like Lancelot, disappears. In a final subversion of Tennyson's poem, it is only at the end of the novella that Yvette realises that the 'he had a name'.¹³⁷ Like the Lady, it is through his disappearance that Joe's name is realised. As Maria Aline Ferreira argues, Lawrence's subversion of Tennyson's poem 'is an index of the force of the critical dialogue enacted between Lawrence and his powerful predecessor' and directs our attention towards the

¹³⁶ Ibid, p.5.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p.74.

nature of change and Lawrence's intentions.¹³⁸ Lawrence's use of Tennyson's poem and the Lady of Shalott as a motif throughout his work portrays his development as a writer, utilising the Victorian heritage and Pre-Raphaelite visual heritage that inspired him in his early work. He explores this motif and explores the complexities of this poem and image in relation to his contemporary world. In developing the image, Lawrence dwells on the elements that the Pre-Raphaelites visualise, particularly the relationships between the woman and the external world, the body and the mind, and the relationship of the artist with the outside world. The Pre-Raphaelites portray the body and the mind through visualising narratives in their poetry and art, of psychological and physical entrapment, and thwarted sexuality. This is demonstrated in figures such as the Lady of Shalott, Marianna, La Belle Dame Sans Merci, Persephone and the Blessed Damozel. For Lawrence and the Pre-Raphaelites, the Lady of Shalott portrays physical and psychological entrapment and confronts the liberating and destructive forces of desire and gender boundaries. In Lawrence's work, the Lady of Shalott, like the mirror through which she sees the world, is a reflective device that gradually moves away from the 'male gaze' of art to self-conscious identification for his female characters. This gradual process of identification to self-identification, and its emancipatory potential, is an important part of Lawrence's treatment of the Persephone myth.

¹³⁸ Maria Aline Ferreira, 'The Virgin and the Gypsy As A Rewriting And Subversion Of Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott"', *The D. H. Lawrence Review*, 23:1 (1991), 167-177, (p.176).

The Myth of Persephone

As with Lawrence's use of the Lady of Shalott, critics have previously commented on Lawrence's recurring use of the Persephone myth but not on his derivation of the myth from Pre-Raphaelite sources. Lawrence's engagement with the Persephone myth draws from a range of sources, ranging from the Pre-Raphaelites to James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, an influential text of anthropology which Lawrence read.¹³⁹ He was familiar with the same literary sources of Greek mythology as the Pre-Raphaelites, including Homer, the Homeric 'Hymn to Demeter' and Ovid. As with the Lady of Shalott, however, Lawrence uses Pre-Raphaelite art and literature as his primary source for the myth. Lawrence imaginatively follows and engages with Pre-Raphaelite visual and literary depictions of Persephone.¹⁴⁰ Rossetti's *Proserpine* and sonnet 'Proserpina' (1875) and Swinburne's 'The Garden of Proserpine' and 'Hymn to Proserpine', both included in *Poems and Ballads* (1866), present a mythology that Lawrence continued to draw from in his vision, through works that he assumed his readers would have been familiar with.¹⁴¹ Rossetti's painting (Figure 2.6) and poetry and Swinburne's verse offered Lawrence a cross-media aesthetic, images and language that he used to pursue his own ideas. In his vision of Pre-Raphaelite myth, Lawrence goes beyond Rossetti and Swinburne to depict new ways of living and the vitality and fecundity of the myth, portraying more radical notions of gender and sexuality. The

¹³⁹ In a letter to Bertrand Russell, Lawrence writes that he has been reading *The Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy*. D. H. Lawrence, 'To Bertrand Russell, 8 December 1915', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume 2, 1913-1916* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1981), pp.469-471 (p.470).

¹⁴⁰ In my own use of the name, I use Persephone and follow Rossetti's, Swinburne's and Lawrence's variations of the name.

¹⁴¹ See Howard J. Booth, 'The Woodland Whose Depths and Whose Heights Were Pan's': Swinburne and Lawrence, Decadence and Modernism', in *Decadence in the Age of Modernism*, ed. by Kate Hext and Alex Murray (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press 2019), pp.179-196 (p.180). In his chapter, Booth discusses Lawrence and Swinburne through their representations of Pan, but this also applies to the Persephone myth.

following section focuses on Lawrence's responses to Swinburne and Rossetti; it examines how Lawrence's use of symbolism and treatment of the Persephone myth, in his poems 'Pomegranate' (1921) and 'Bavarian Gentians' (1929), points to a continuity with Rossetti's poetics and explores Lawrence's intertextual references to Swinburne's Proserpine poems in his poem 'Autumn Sunshine' (1914-16) and the three different versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928).



2.6. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Proserpine, (1874), Tate Britain, London.

Throughout his works, Lawrence shows his continued fascination with the myth, through direct references to, depictions of, or allusions to Persephone. Keith Sagar, in *D. H. Lawrence: A Poet*, notes the extent of Lawrence's engagement with the myth, claiming that

for Lawrence 'every flower acts out the myth of Persephone'.¹⁴² Lawrence evokes the figure of Persephone across his writings. She is present in his critical works, as he muses on the Sicilian landscape, 'the place where Persephone came above-world, bringing back spring', in his poetry, and fictional works where he uses the myth to explore wider issues relating to nature, society, and personal relationships.¹⁴³ The use of myth in Lawrence's work lies in the exploration of consciousness and of being in the universe which is related to his ontological and cosmological visions. Andrew Radford's *The Lost Girls: Demeter, Persephone, and the Literary Imagination 1850-1930* and Margot. K. Louis's *Persephone Rises, 1860-1927: Mythography, Gender, and the Creation of a New Spirituality* have explored Lawrence's range of sources for the myth, including noting the influence of Swinburne. Radford notes that Lawrence's sources for the myth range from Rossetti to James Frazer, commenting on the importance of Rossetti's depictions of Persephone in *The White Peacock*.¹⁴⁴ However, Radford mainly focuses on the use of the myth in *The Lost Girl* (1920), without considering or examining how Lawrence uses and engages with Pre-Raphaelite depictions of Persephone. Tracing the figure of Persephone from a Romantic origin, Louis explores how the ambivalence of Persephone enabled Victorian and modernist writers to question cultural changes in attitudes to religion, society and gender. Louis contends that Lawrence's approach to the Persephone myth adapts the tradition developed by freethinkers like Thomas Hardy and Swinburne.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Keith Sagar, *D. H. Lawrence: A Poet* (Penrith: Humanities- Ebooks LLP 2007), p.60.

¹⁴³ D. H. Lawrence, 'Introduction to *Mastro - don Gesualdo* by Giovanni Verga', in *Selected Critical Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998), pp.223-233 (p.231).

¹⁴⁴ Andrew Radford, *The Lost Girls: Demeter- Persephone and the Literary Imagination 1850-1930* (New York: Rodopi 2007) p.62.

¹⁴⁵ Margot. K. Louis, *Persephone Rises, 1860-1927: Mythography, Gender, and the Creation of a New Spirituality* (Surrey: Ashgate 2009), p.117.

Radford has examined Lawrence's treatment of Persephone in connection to Hardy, arguing for Lawrence's inspiration from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.¹⁴⁶ For Radford, *The Study of Thomas Hardy* reveals Lawrence's deep appreciation of the Persephone myth as an imaginative lens through which to view late Victorian England. These previous discussions concentrate on Frazer and Hardy as influences for Lawrence's treatment of Persephone, in exploring the tragedy, life and fertility inherent in the myth. I propose that Lawrence builds upon and pushes away from Pre-Raphaelite poetic and visual depictions of Persephone; that in his poetic and fictional treatments of the Persephone myth, Lawrence follows Rossetti and Swinburne more than Frazer and Hardy. For Frazer, Persephone signifies spring and is a goddess who 'can surely be nothing else than a mythical embodiment of the vegetation'.¹⁴⁷ For the Pre-Raphaelites, Persephone was associated with death, as an entrapped queen and goddess of underworld. Rossetti emphasizes Proserpine's association with death in his summary of the myth as represented in his painting:

The figure represents Proserpine as Empress of Hades. After she was conveyed by Pluto to his realm, and became his bride, her mother Ceres importuned Jupiter for her return to earth, and he was prevailed on to consent to this, provided only she had not partaken of any of the fruits of Hades. It was found, however, that she had eaten one grain of a pomegranate, and this enchained her to her new empire and destiny.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Andrew Radford, 'The Making of a Goddess: Hardy, Lawrence and Persephone', *Connotations* 12:2-3 (2002-3), 202-231.

¹⁴⁷ Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics 1993), p.395.

¹⁴⁸ D. G. Rossetti, 'To William Arthur Turner, 1877', in *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, vol. VII, 1875-1877*, ed. by William E. Fredeman (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer 2008), p.477.

Lawrence likewise associates Persephone with the opposition between life and death. In his focus on this duality Lawrence turns to, and makes new, the Pre-Raphaelite vision of the myth.

According to Andrew Radford, Rossetti's image of Proserpine is a vital reference point for Lawrence in *The White Peacock*, as Lettie lacks the emotion and sensuality that Rossetti's painting flaunts.¹⁴⁹ Lettie participates in the iconic qualities associated with Proserpine as she is described 'bending over the flowers' and 'stooping to the earth like a sable Persephone come into freedom'.¹⁵⁰ The Persephone myth also features in the dialogue in the novel, between the friends at Lettie's party as Will says 'couldn't forget today, Lettie. Wouldn't have let old Pluto and all the bunch of 'em keep me away'.¹⁵¹ The casual references here suggest how well-known the attributes of the myth are. Persephone is connected, as Pater remarked in his essay on the myth, 'with a delicate, feminine motion' of growth which is comparable, in some instances, to Lawrence's depiction of the myth, as seen here in *The White Peacock*.¹⁵²

Rossetti made eight versions of *Proserpine* and wrote two versions of the sonnet to accompany the painting, one in English and one in Italian, suggesting something of the

¹⁴⁹ Andrew D. Radford, *The Lost Girls: Demeter- Persephone and the Literary Imagination 1850-1930*, p.62.

¹⁵⁰ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.277.

¹⁵¹ Lawrence, *The White Peacock*, p.165.

¹⁵² Walter Pater, 'The Myth of Demeter and Persephone', in *Greek Studies: A Series of Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co. 1922), pp.81-151 (p.98).

importance of the painting and its subject to him.¹⁵³ Rossetti emphasizes the symbolist elements of his painting:

She is represented in a gloomy corridor of her palace, with the fatal fruit in her hand. As she passes, a gleam strikes on the wall behind her from some inlet suddenly opened, and admitting for a moment the light of the upper world; and she glances furtively towards it, immersed in thought. The incense-burner stands behind her as the attribute of a goddess. The ivy-branch may be taken as a symbol of clinging memory.¹⁵⁴

The ivy-branch is a symbol of 'clinging memory' and the incense-burner with the 'attributes of a goddess' signifies her divinity. One of Rossetti's main symbols and the focal point of the painting is the pomegranate, the richly red 'fatal fruit' that matches the color of Proserpine's lips. The pomegranate's connection to the underworld and the fleshiness of the matching color of her lips highlight both the spiritual and the corporeal. Rossetti's depiction of Proserpine with the pomegranate is iconographic, visually rendering what Pater describes as 'the partly consumed pomegranate – one morsel gone; the most usual emblem of Persephone being this mystical fruit'.¹⁵⁵ The emblematic qualities of Rossetti's painting, and the symbols of the myth, would have appealed to Lawrence. Lawrence's poem 'Pomegranate' is a poem about love and the history of the pomegranate's association with love and death. The poem contains no mythological references but mentions three cities, Syracuse, Venice and San Gervasio, connected to mythology and three pomegranate

¹⁵³ Rossetti's interest in the myth has been systematically connected to his relationship with Jane Morris. Although Morris reportedly gave him the idea for the subject and these elements can be read into the picture, it detracts from Rossetti's working with the mythology itself.

¹⁵⁴ Rossetti, 'To William Arthur Turner, 1877', p.477.

¹⁵⁵ Pater, 'The Myth of Demeter and Persephone', p.150.

orchards with flowering trees. 'Pomegranate', like Rossetti's symbolism, metamorphoses the fruit and reinforces its prominence in the myths that interested Lawrence:

For all that, the setting suns are open.
The end cracks open with the beginning:
Rosy, tender, glittering with the fissure.

Do you mean to tell me there should be no fissure?
No glittering, compact drops of dawn?
Do you mean it is wrong, the gold-filmed skin, integument,
Shown ruptured?

For my part, I prefer my heart to be broken.
It is so lovely, dawn-kaleidoscopic within the crack.¹⁵⁶

In his use of free form and lack of recurrent rhythm, Lawrence's poetics differ from the Pre-Raphaelites. Nonetheless, the subject matter and element of symbolism points to a continuity with Rossetti's poetics. Lawrence's description of the fruit matches Rossetti's visual depiction of the pomegranate, with the fruit fissured and the 'glittering' seeds exposed. In this poem and elsewhere, Lawrence uses the pomegranate as an explicit image and symbol of sexuality and sexual relationships. The pomegranate, as it is presented here in Lawrence's poem, is associated with fertility, abundance and as a symbol of resurrection, life and death, as the end of the fruit 'cracks open with the beginning'. The persona sees the glittering seeds, indicating the beginnings of life, and here in the ruptured fruit, the final product of growth. The fissure of the fruit depicts the potential of new creation and organic life, including death and decay. Like Rossetti's depiction of Proserpine holding the broken

¹⁵⁶ D. H. Lawrence, 'Pomegranate', in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (London: Penguin Books 1999), pp.3-4, 20-30.

pomegranate as the goddess of the underworld and death, Lawrence implies a sense of ending and death in the breaking of the fruit and of a relationship, as the persona prefers their 'heart to be broken'. Rossetti's imagery is developed further by Lawrence, to focus on life and fecundity, opening up the various historical, religious and mythical symbolisms of the fruit that Pater notes; for the Romans it is a symbol of fecundity, in the medieval era, of the 'fruitful earth itself' and then of the 'seed sown in the underworld'.¹⁵⁷

Both Rossetti and Lawrence, connect the pomegranate, and its significance to Persephone, to female sexuality. In the introduction to the 'Fruits' section of the *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* Collection (1923) (of which 'Pomegranate' is the opening poem) Lawrence states that 'fruits are all of them female, in them lies the seed. And so when they break and show the seed, then we look into the womb and see its secrets'.¹⁵⁸ Again, Lawrence connects the pomegranate to fertility and life and also attempts to represent ontologically the being of a natural object. Whilst Lawrence explicitly links fruits to the female, he both confronts and avoids the issue of female sexuality in the poem. At the very beginning of the poem, the persona asserts that they are not wrong and reprimands any who should tell them so. When the persona questions why there should be 'no fissure' and why 'it is wrong' to show the pomegranate 'ruptured', the questioning and confrontational tone challenges social ideas and morality behind the representation of the fruit, its implications in relation to women, and its associations with sexuality and the body.

¹⁵⁷ Pater, 'The Myth of Demeter and Persephone', p.150.

¹⁵⁸ D. H. Lawrence, Introduction to 'Fruits', in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*, (New Hampshire: Sparrow Black Books 2008), p.1.

In this respect, the poem's discussion of female sexuality is implied rather than discussed openly. In Rossetti's painting the combination of Proserpine's full red lips, her flowing hair and green dress, and her pose, with the rosy flesh of the pomegranate creates a sultry and sensual atmosphere. As she raises the fruit towards her mouth, she holds the wrist of her left hand with her right hand, as if restraining herself from the act that will spell her ruin and seal her fate. The fruit 'tasted once', in Rossetti's accompanying sonnet, 'must thrall me here'.¹⁵⁹ In the introduction to the 'Fruits' section, Lawrence notes a history of the connection between women and fruit, for the Apple of Eden was 'Eve's fruit' and 'It belonged to her and she offered it to the man'.¹⁶⁰ The pomegranate, in Christian iconography, is symbolic of resurrection and eternal life, and whilst Rossetti clearly focuses on its mythological associations as the food of the deceased, there is an undertone in the painting which connotes immortality and the eternal entrapment of Persephone. In Rossetti's *Proserpine* and other paintings such as *Venus Verticordia*, a goddess who stands holding the golden apple in 'her hand for thee' and which she will use to 'work her spell', the fruit is connected to female sexuality and temptation.¹⁶¹ Like Eve, Proserpine tastes the forbidden fruit that will lead to her downfall. Proserpine's downfall, however, is only her own as she does not tempt anyone else, portraying, as Rossetti paints it, a more inward-turning myth about the experience of female sexuality. For Lawrence, the pomegranate is the 'apple of love' and just as the fruit is cracked open in the poem, the persona's heart is broken.¹⁶² Lawrence takes the emblematic qualities of the myth and of Pre-Raphaelitism,

¹⁵⁹ D. G. Rossetti, 'Proserpina' in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.371, 5.

¹⁶⁰ Lawrence, Introduction to 'Fruits', p.1.

¹⁶¹ D. G. Rossetti, 'Venus Verticordia' in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.360, 1-10.

¹⁶² Lawrence, Introduction to "Fruits", p.1.

developing Rossetti's symbolism further, to create a more explicit exploration of sexuality and religion.

In his poem 'Bavarian Gentians', Lawrence's treatment of the Persephone myth aligns more closely with Rossetti's. Rossetti's visual and literary representations display Proserpine as the Queen of the Underworld and the goddess of death. The painting and the accompanying sonnet indicate Proserpine's plight, as she is described by Rossetti, in his prose note, as being 'enchained' and represented in a 'gloomy' corridor with the 'fatal' fruit, heightening the sense of entrapment where for only 'a moment' the 'light of the upper world' emerges. In Rossetti's sonnet 'Proserpina', Proserpine is given a voice, one which is both introspective and melancholic:

Afar away the light that brings cold cheer
Unto this wall, — one instant and no more
Admitted at my distant palace-door.
Afar the flowers of Enna from this drear
Dire fruit, which, tasted once, must thrall me here.
Afar those skies from this Tartarean grey
That chills me: and afar, how far away,
The nights that shall be from the days that were.

Afar from mine own self I seem, and wing
Strange ways in thought, and listen for a sign:
And still some heart unto some soul doth pine,
Whose sounds mine inner sense is fain to bring,
Continually together murmuring,) —
"Woe's me for thee, unhappy Proserpine!"¹⁶³

¹⁶³ D. G. Rossetti, 'Proserpina' in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, p.371

She is presented by Rossetti as suspended between the worlds of the living and the dead. Rossetti accentuates her unattainability and distance, with the repetition of the word 'Afar' throughout the poem. As in the accompanying painting, she is trapped in the underworld, listening for a sound and pining for a presence in her 'palace'. Similarly, in 'Bavarian Gentian', Lawrence emphasises Persephone's physical and spiritual distance, as the dark blue flowers signify, to the persona, the presence of the underworld:

Reach me a gentian, give me a torch!
let me guide myself with the blue, forked torch of this flower
down the darker and darker stairs, where blue is darkened on blueness
even where Persephone goes, just now, from the frosted September
to the sightless realm where darkness is awake upon the dark
and Persephone herself is but a voice
or a darkness invisible enfolded in the deeper dark
of the arms Plutonic, and pierced with the passion of dense gloom,
among the splendour of torches of darkness, shedding darkness on
the lost bride and her groom.¹⁶⁴

Lawrence focuses, like Rossetti, on the imagery of light and dark and its duality. Here Lawrence draws out the dualities between the upper world and the underworld and life and death, light and dark, and the secular and divine, and in the figure of Persephone herself. For the persona, the underworld and the descent to it, is not merely a terrifying or deathly experience but one that has more positive and vital connotations. The 'passion of dense gloom' and 'darkness' of the underworld is a place of potency and creativity. Both poems begin with the imagery of light. In Rossetti's sonnet, Persephone seems to be shrouded in darkness where 'afar away the light that brings cold cheer' while the persona of 'Bavarian

¹⁶⁴ D. H. Lawrence, "Bavarian Gentian" in *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*, p.584, 11-20.

Gentians' asks for a torch in order to descend into the underworld.¹⁶⁵ The light offers Rossetti's Proserpine a momentary glimpse of the outside world and a respite from the darkness for an 'instant' and no more. For Lawrence's speaker, the Bavarian Gentians are the torches which act as a guide into a 'sightless realm' and darkness is 'enfolded in the deeper dark'. These flowers give off darkness just as 'Demeter's pale lamps give off light'. Fiona Becket argues that the imagery of 'Bavarian Gentians' best represents the 'oxymoronic spirit of Lawrence's language'.¹⁶⁶ This is evident the intensity of Lawrence's language and importantly, in the key image of the 'torches of darkness, shedding darkness'.¹⁶⁷ The intensity of Lawrence's language is reflected in his use of Swinburnian alliteration. The darkness attains the metaphorical properties of light and the repetition of darkness (and variations of the word) creates an impenetrable atmosphere to the poem. The continual repetition of darkness goes beyond the use of visual imagery and has a visual quality, of a spiritual and revelatory journey down 'the darker and darker stairs' to where Persephone dwells.

As in Rossetti's painting, the darkness in Lawrence's poem is blue, coming from the flower's natural color, and charges the gloom with vitality. This vitality is indicative in the organicity of the Gentian and the seasonal change within the poem, as the persona mentions the month of September twice, connoting the encroaching autumn, when Persephone must return to the underworld. Unlike Lawrence, Rossetti does not use any obvious imagery of darkness in his sonnet, it is implied through the light and its apparent duality. It is a darkness

¹⁶⁵ Rossetti, "Proserpina", 1.

¹⁶⁶ Lawrence, "Bavarian Gentian", 9.

¹⁶⁷ Fiona Becket, *D. H. Lawrence: The Thinker as Poet* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press 1997), p.179.

which has none of Lawrence's vitality and is part of the sense of death and nothingness of Persephone's fate. In 'Bavarian Gentian', the duality of light and dark implies an underlying theme of life and death, as the speaker seems to be nearing death, whilst using a flower, symbolic of life. The darkness brings out an aspect of the persona confronting death and the hope of resurrection, as symbolised by Persephone. The darkness is part of Persephone's distance and her seclusion in Lawrence's and Rossetti's poems. The repetition of 'darkness' of Lawrence's poem and of 'afar' in Rossetti's poem, whilst connoting distance, draws the reader further into the poems. Both poems convey a sense of nothingness but for Lawrence, the darkness captures a sense of creativity and the inspirational power of the mythic underworld in the persona's search for the 'splendour' and 'passion' of the gloom.

Lawrence's 'Pomegranate' and 'Bavarian Gentian' work with Rossetti's visual and poetic imagery. However, as 'Bavarian Gentian' directly deals with the Persephone myth, the poem thematically explores the treatment of Persephone. Lawrence's and Rossetti's respective treatment of Persephone explores the sense of selfhood, or rather lack of it, and her conflicting sense of self, split between the upper and under worlds and life and death. In Lawrence's poem 'Persephone herself is but a voice' in the darkness whereas in Rossetti's poem, Proserpine speaks in her own voice, mourning how 'afar from my own self I seem' and waits, listening for a sign that 'sounds mine inner sense is fain to bring'.¹⁶⁸ This split in Persephone's selfhood is indicated in the structure of the poem itself, for the sestet marks a shift from Proserpine's voice and a presence of new one within the poem, who intersects

¹⁶⁸ Rossetti, "Proserpina", 8-11.

with the exclamation 'Woe's me for thee, unhappy Proserpine!' at the very end of the poem.¹⁶⁹ She is looking for a sign that someone misses and mourns her. Catherine Maxwell argues that the sonnet could be a prosopopoeia, a personification which brings the dead to life.¹⁷⁰ Although Maxwell argues that the prosopopoeia might be the voices of Elizabeth Siddall, as Rossetti's deceased wife, Rossetti's own voice in mourning, or Jane Morris, it is significant to the figure of Persephone herself, living in the land of the dead, and as a symbol of eternal life, bringing the dead to life in the afterlife. As such, she is presented by Lawrence and Rossetti as a liminal figure who mediates between these realms but belongs to neither. In both their poems, Persephone becomes a presence-in-absence, just a disembodied voice in the darkness. They both explore the qualities that constitute Persephone's distinct individuality, whilst simultaneously displaying how these attributes lead to a loss of self. Selfhood is here, created by visual art and poetics. In this respect, Lawrence's response to Pre-Raphaelitism draws on preceding imagery in order to "make it new" and put emphasis on his own individual vision.

Throughout his career, and in contrast to his fluctuating views of and ambivalence towards Pre-Raphaelite painting, Lawrence returned to and greatly admired Swinburne's work. His first reference to him occurs in his 1909 play *A Collier's Friday Night*, where the protagonist Ernest tells his mother of Swinburne's death, 'fancy! Swinburne's dead' to which his mother replies 'Yes, so I saw. But he was getting on'.¹⁷¹ His other female characters, such as Ursula in

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 12.

¹⁷⁰ Catherine Maxwell, *Second Sight: The Visionary Imagination in late Victorian literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2008), p.39.

¹⁷¹ D. H. Lawrence, *A Collier's Friday Night in Three Plays* (London: Penguin 1988), pp.19-79 (pp.32-33), l. 175-176.

The Rainbow, read or are given volumes of Swinburne's poetry. His poems are given to Ursula as a present, to which she exclaims 'Oh I shall love them', and she is told that they were suggested by her friend Maggie Schofield, who is presented as a New Woman.¹⁷² In this way, his use of Swinburne in his fiction follows Hardy's, as Sue Bridehead in *Jude the Obscure* also reads Swinburne. Swinburne's poetry is used similarly in Lawrence's other novels, as a means of exploring female self-expression and sexuality. Lawrence portrays female readers of Swinburne's work, who use his poetry to express their own experiences or their own feminism. Lawrence echoes the Pre-Raphaelites to articulate a form of female emancipation, and through this intertextual mechanism of reference and homage, the myth and figure of Persephone becomes a means of self-expression in his later fiction. Here, as discussed in the earlier sections, Lawrence shared his interest in the Pre-Raphaelites with his feminist circles. The scope for emancipation, as shown in Lawrence's representations of Persephone, contrasts to the constraints imposed and symbolised by the Lady of Shalott. In Lawrence's final novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which I will discuss later in the chapter, Swinburne's poetry is only read and recited by Connie, Lady Chatterley, herself.

Lawrence's correspondence confirms that he was actively reading and exploring Swinburne's poetry around 1914-1916. In a letter from 1916, Lawrence asks Barbara Low to 'steal' Frieda's volume of Swinburne's poetry so that he may 'read him in a loud and declamatory voice – it gives me great satisfaction'.¹⁷³ During his visit to Garsington in 1915, Lady Ottoline Morrell writes in her memoirs that Lawrence would read poems to the guests in the

¹⁷² Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, p.393.

¹⁷³ D. H. Lawrence, "To Barbara Low, 25th Nov.1916", in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume 3, 1916-1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1987), pp.42-43 (p.42).

evenings, and they were 'generally poems from Swinburne.'¹⁷⁴ His writing at this time, especially from Garsington, and as John Worthen notes, has a distinct Swinburnian quality.¹⁷⁵ This is seen, for example, in his description of the house: 'This is a morning which dawns like an iridescence on the wings of sleeping darkness, till the darkness bursts and flies off in glory, dripping with the rose of morning [...] Another dawn, another day, another night – another heaven and earth – a resurrection'.¹⁷⁶ Here again, the Swinburnian quality of Lawrence's writing exhibits similar fascinations with the Persephone myth, in terms of dualism and rebirth. As shown in his recitals of Swinburne, Lawrence responds to the rhythmic qualities of his verse and his prose style reaffirms the excesses of Swinburne's prose and verse. He intentionally makes linguistic and thematic connections to Swinburne, integrating a Pre-Raphaelite visual and literary heritage into his own poetics. His admiration for Swinburne is expressed again in another letter to Barbara Low, written on his birthday, in 1916. Writing to thank her for the gift of Swinburne's poetry:

I lie in bed and read him, and he moves me very deeply. The pure realisation in him is something to reverence: he is [...] very like Shelley, full of philosophic spiritual realisation and revelation. He is a great revealer, very great. I put him with Shelley as our greatest poet. He is the last fiery spirit among us. How wicked the world has been to jeer at his physical appearance etc. There was more powerful rushing flame of life in him than all the heroes rolled together. One day I shall buy all his books. I am very glad to have these poems always by me.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Lady Ottoline Morrell, *Ottoline at Garsington: memoirs of Lady Ottoline Morrell 1915-1918*, ed. By Robert Gatherne-Hardy (London: Faber and Faber 1974), p.69.

¹⁷⁵ John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider* (London: Allen Lane 2005), p.166.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p.72.

¹⁷⁷ D. H. Lawrence, 'To Barbara Low, 11th September 1916', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume 2, June 1913-October 1916*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1981), pp.653-654.

In his view of Swinburne's 'philosophic spiritual revelation' and his 'powerful rushing flame of life' Lawrence stresses the dualism of the physical and the mental being and the celebration of life that they both share. This is most evident in his repeated quotations or allusions to 'The Garden of Proserpine'. In his essay 'The Proper Study' (1923), Lawrence begins with 'If no man lives for ever, neither does any precept. And if even the weariest river winds somewhere safe to sea, so also does the weariest wisdom' alluding to Swinburne's lines: 'That no life lives for ever | That dead men rise up never; | That even the weariest river | Winds somewhere safe to sea'.¹⁷⁸ Lawrence draws on Swinburne's images, the myth of Persephone, and as implied in the start of this essay, relies on the familiarity of the poem to his readers.¹⁷⁹

Both Swinburne and Rossetti focus on Proserpine alone as a female deity, and in contrast to their contemporaries Alfred Lord Tennyson and George Meredith, take the focus away from Demeter.¹⁸⁰ Swinburne depicts Proserpine as an elusive and liminal figure, the 'Goddess and maiden and queen', who mainly occupies the world of the dead.¹⁸¹ As in Rossetti's poem and

¹⁷⁸ D. H. Lawrence, 'The Proper Study', in *Reflections On The Death Of A Porcupine And Other Essays*, ed. by Michael Herbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988), pp.169-173 (p.169).

¹⁷⁹ Swinburne's poems influenced many depictions of Persephone, likely including Rossetti's, John Ruskin's *The Queen of the Air* (1869) and Walter Pater's lecture 'The Myth of Demeter and Persephone' and essay published in the *Fortnightly Review* (1876). Pater's essay may in fact owe something to Rossetti's sonnet 'Proserpina' and to F. G. Stephen's prose description of Rossetti's painting, both published in the *Athenaeum* in 1875. Indeed, in a letter from 1874, Burne-Jones tells Rossetti about the enthusiasm he felt on seeing his *Proserpine* painting at Fredrick Leyland's house. Edward Burne-Jones, Letters to D. G. Rossetti, Oxford, Bodleian Library, The Rossetti family papers, MS Facs. D. 272. Ruskin commissioned Burne-Jones to paint a picture of 'The Rape of Proserpine' which was never finished. The preliminary sketch is now held at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The extent of his fascination with this particular myth was the focal point for an exhibition at Lancaster University which was dedicated to Ruskin and his interest in the Persephone myth in 2007.

¹⁸⁰ See Tennyson's 'Demeter and Persephone' (1889) and Meredith's 'The Day of the Daughter of Hades' (1883) and 'The Appeasement of Demeter' (1887).

¹⁸¹ Algernon Swinburne, 'Hymn to Proserpine', in *The Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions 1995), pp.22-28 (p.22), 2.

painting, Swinburne's Proserpine, in 'The Garden of Proserpine', is depicted as a sensual figure, standing watching and sorrowful. The garden is her domain and that of the dead. The pomegranate has been replaced with poppies and grape vines. The poppies are used as an emblem of sleep and death by its innumerable seeds. In Swinburne's poems, Persephone is increasingly detached from her connection to the earth and the seasons, but Lawrence's poetry continues to connect her presence, and absence, to seasonal change to autumn and the death of spring. In 'Autumn Sunshine', like Swinburne's Proserpine poems, Persephone is revered as the goddess of death by a persona who is confronting loss and contemplating immortality:

The sun sets out the autumn crocuses
And fills them up a pouring measure
Of death – producing wine, till treasure
Runs waste down their chalices.

All, all Persephone's pale cups of mould
Are on the board, are over-filled;
The portion to the gods is spilled;
Now, mortals all, take hold!

The time is now, the wine-cup full and full
Of lambent heaven, a pledging-cup;
Let now all mortal men take up
The drink, and a long, strong pull!

Out of the hell-queen's cup, the heaven's pale wine!
Drink then, invisible heroes, drink!
Lips to the vessels, never shrink,
Throats to the heavens incline.

And take within the wine the god's great oath

By heaven and earth and hellish stream,
To break this sick and nauseous dream
We writhe and lust in, both.

Swear, in the pale wine poured from the cups of the queen
Of hell, to wake and be free
From this nightmare we writhe in,
Break out of this foul has-been.¹⁸²

Lawrence's poem displays intertextual references to Swinburne's poems, primarily to the 'pale', 'deadly wine' Proserpine produces for 'dead men' in 'The Garden of Proserpine'.¹⁸³

Both Swinburne and Lawrence use the figure of the goddess to explore language, death, and Christianity and pagan myth. In his Proserpine poems, Swinburne focuses on Christianity's usurpation of Greco-Roman gods and Proserpine becomes symbolic, with the poem, of the cyclical nature of life and death, and of the historical and religious transition from ancient Rome to Christian Rome. In this way, he criticises the Christian teaching of life after death by undermining the desire for immortality through the yearning for death and for oblivion or nothingness. Like Lawrence's, Swinburne's Proserpine represents a nothingness and state of un-being that can only be brought about by death, as the speaker states at the end of 'Hymn to Proserpine', 'there is no God found stronger than death; and death is sleep'.¹⁸⁴

Lawrence's persona, like the speakers of Swinburne's Proserpine poems, yearns for death, 'to wake and be free/ From this nightmare we writhe in' and to escape the present world. In

¹⁸² D. H. Lawrence, 'Autumn Sunshine', in *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions 1994), pp.139-140.

¹⁸³ Algernon Swinburne, 'The Garden of Proserpine', in *The Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, pp.58-61 (p.59), 32-33.

¹⁸⁴ Swinburne, "Hymn to Proserpine", p.22, 114.

Lawrence's poem, whilst there is a yearning for nothingness, it is not a portrayal of the finality of death nor a complete rejection of life after death.

Through the image of Persephone, both Lawrence and Swinburne question the concept of immortality and resurrection from Christian teaching. It is Persephone who 'gathers all things mortal | With cold immortal hands' that has the dominion over life and the other gods, both pagan and Christian, in these poems.¹⁸⁵ The relevance of pagan mythology to Christianity is shown in Lawrence's and Swinburne's language, particularly in the imagery of wine. In Swinburne's poem, like Lawrence's, Persephone crushes grapes as a drink for the dead, the fruit of the earth which through the vines, provide a connection to the underworld. In both Greek and Roman myth, the wine, through its association to Persephone and Dionysus, and to Jesus in Christianity, represents life and death. For Swinburne, the wine is an anodyne. For Lawrence, it acts as an anodyne to the nightmare the persona wishes to escape from, and as a means of resurrection. To this effect, Lawrence's use of imagery is associated with ancient mythology and Christianity, and with worship, where Persephone's 'pale cups of mould' are both the 'hell-queen's cup' and 'chalices' filled with 'heaven's pale wine'. Lawrence plays with the duality of heaven and hell, mortality and immortality, and with the bodily and divine in transubstantiation of the wine. Through his use of intertextuality, Lawrence appropriates Swinburne's poetry and imagery to articulate their shared concerns and the different historical situations out of which the texts

¹⁸⁵ Swinburne, 'The Garden of Proserpine', p.60, 51-52..

emerge. The poem is both a response to the First World War and a modernist perception of the failure of European civilization.

Whilst Lawrence responds to the exaggerated and unconstrained quality of Swinburne, his poetry, in this political and cultural climate, rejects Swinburne's sonorous quality and verse form. Lawrence's 'Autumn Sunshine' largely follows an enclosed ABBA rhyme scheme, aside from the last verse and the first verse, in which 'crocuses' and 'chalices' form a half rhyme in the assonance of 'ses' sound. Lawrence's rhythms and verse forms contrast to the structure of Swinburne's 'The Garden of Proserpine' and 'Hymn to Proserpine' with their strong rhythms and insistent rhyme schemes; 'The Garden of Proserpine' is written in octave stanzas with iambic trimeters, using an ABABCCCB rhyme scheme whereas 'Hymn to Proserpine' is a dramatic monologue with hexameters. In each poem, like Lawrence's poem, the regularity of the rhyme schemes and the emphasis on the last words of each line, reflect the cyclical nature of the seasons and Persephone's resurgence. Like 'Hymn to Proserpine', which uses paradoxes, such as seasons 'that laugh or that weep' and 'joy and sorrow', Lawrence's poem focuses on the paradoxical nature of Persephone in terms of life and death, as seen the contrast between heaven and hell in the line 'Out of the hell-queen's cup, the heaven's pale wine'.¹⁸⁶ The assonance of Lawrence's poem complements the rich imagery and a sensuousness that emphasises the Swinburnian influence. This sensuousness is also reflected in the resemblances between Swinburne's prose and Lawrence's own, with their use of poetic language and grammatical elaboration, seen for instance, in the long

¹⁸⁶ Swinburne, 'Hymn to Proserpine', p.22, 3-5.

sentence structures and the descriptions of the natural world in Swinburne's unfinished novel *Lesbia Brandon* (1859–67).¹⁸⁷

Thematically, Lawrence's 'Autumn Sunshine' becomes a framework for Lawrence's use of the myth in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, using the thematic qualities of the poem to explore his gender politics and portrayal of sexuality. Again, his prose style in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* recalls the Swinburnian excess and the rhythmic qualities of Swinburne's verse. Across all three versions of the novel, Connie recites Swinburne's poetry when she is collecting flowers outside the gamekeeper's cottage. In *The First Lady Chatterley*, at this moment, the gamekeeper Parkin represents her 'true Pluto' as opposed to her husband Clifford.¹⁸⁸ In her love affair she quotes Swinburne's chorus, 'when the hounds of spring are on winter's traces', from *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865). She identifies herself as the 'escaping Persephone, Proserpine', Parkin with Pluto and Clifford with Plato, as 'she'd rather be married to Pluto than Plato. She would rather be caught by the wild hound of Pluto than by the speculative spaniel of Plato'.¹⁸⁹ Lawrence accentuates the duality of the body and mind, through the opposition of Pluto and Plato. Connie's relationship with Parkin is one which is life-giving and renewing, corresponding to the changing of the seasons from the Swinburne quote, whereas Clifford, as well as being physically disabled, is also emotionally disconnected from his desires.

¹⁸⁷ For example, see the Swinburne's descriptions of the natural imagery on pp.6-10. Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Lesbia Brandon*, <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.149685/page/n49> [date accessed: 24/01/2020].

¹⁸⁸ Margot. K. Louis, *Persephone Rises, 1860-1927: Mythography, Gender, and the Creation of a New Spirituality*, pp.119-120.

¹⁸⁹ D. H. Lawrence, *The First Lady Chatterley* (London: Heinemann 1972), p.80.

Pluto does not feature in Swinburne's or Rossetti's representations of Proserpine whereas in Lawrence's novel the characters' responses are based on their understanding of the myth as a whole. In contrast to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence's poem 'Purple Anemones' (1923) depicts a more orthodox representation of Persephone as Pluto's victim, as the '*Husband-snared hell-queen*' and the anemones are the 'hell-hounds' of 'the dark, the jealous god, the husband' that 'track her down again, white victim'.¹⁹⁰ Pluto's pursuit of Persephone is shown to be the force which drives the cycle of the seasons and marks the end of her freedom. Persephone is linked to rights for women which the persona seemingly supports and mocks at the same time. Margot K. Louis argues that for Lawrence, Persephone represents the modern psyche who must be released from her false Hades (often her legal spouse) by her true Hades, who meets her in secret marriage.¹⁹¹ Connie identifies Parkin, called Mellors in the later text of the novel, with Pluto. She chooses the underworld because it is sexually satisfying and exhilarating. In this way, through the figure of Proserpine, Lawrence also calls for a regeneration of society and attitudes towards sexual relationships within the novel.

Connie sees herself as Persephone and the image of Persephone is infused with a sense of regenerative energy and an 'ecological selfhood'.¹⁹² Lawrence's ecology is linked to his sexual politics and, for him, the immanent, physical world is a means of renewal and redemption (related to the underworld), which Connie finds in her relationship with Parkin

¹⁹⁰ D. H. Lawrence, 'Purple Anemones', in *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*, pp.244-246, 19-64.

¹⁹¹ Louis, *Persephone Rises, 1860-1927: Mythography, Gender, and the Creation of a New Spirituality*, p.120.

¹⁹² Fiona Becket uses this term in her discussion of Lawrence's work and ecology. Fiona Becket, "D. H. Lawrence, language and green cultural critique" in *New D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by Howard Booth (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2009), pp.148-168 (p.165).

or Mellors. Their relationship is portrayed as elemental and connected to the natural world, as they regularly meet in the woods of Wragby Hall. The images of Persephone in Lawrence's poems, as distanced and incorporeal, placed in the realm of death, are displaced to focus on her presence within life and nature. In the later versions of the novel, Persephone is predominantly portrayed as the goddess of spring. The quotations from Swinburne's poetry are used to explore Connie's sense of being in relation to her surrounding environment and, as in *The First Lady Chatterley*, as a means of self-expression. However, in all three versions of the text, Swinburne's verse and the representation of Persephone are allied not to a yearning for death but to a yearning for life. In *The Second Lady Chatterley*, as she gathers the daffodils from Parkin's cottage, Connie quotes from Swinburne's 'Hymn to Proserpine' – 'Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean!' For Connie 'there was to be a resurrection, the earth, the animals, and men' and a 'resurrection of the body' which 'even the true Christian creed insisted on'.¹⁹³ Through quoting Swinburne, Lawrence follows his criticism of the desire for immortality and eternity by the conquering of death. Yet Lawrence also rejects Swinburne's outright denunciation of Christianity. For Lawrence, resurrection is corporeal and not a purely spiritual rebirth. Correspondingly, in the third *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Connie quotes from the Apostles Creed when she adds 'I believe in the resurrection of the body!'¹⁹⁴ Lawrence stresses, as shown here, the sacredness of the physical life.

¹⁹³ D. H. Lawrence, *The Second Lady Chatterley's Lover* (Surrey: Oneworld Classics Ltd 2007), p.77

¹⁹⁴ D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, p.72.

In the second version, Connie wants ‘live things, only live things’ and ‘no more engines, no more machines, no more riches and luxury’.¹⁹⁵ From an ecofeminist perspective, Connie consciously positions herself with nature and questions the balance between nature and humanity as she claims that the ‘carrion-bodied’ people are dead and will let nothing ‘remain free, wild and alive. Men would prevent it’.¹⁹⁶ Although Lawrence has been dismissed by ecofeminists as a masculinist writer, his writing is more complex in its exploration of a feminine connection to nature and sense of ecological selfhood, and explores a sense of deep connection to the natural world.¹⁹⁷ As seen in these quotes from Connie, Lawrence, in keeping with ecofeminism, explores the exploitation of nature, and through Connie, the exploitation of nature and women – parallels that are understood in the context of patriarchy. In this way, Lawrence expresses anxieties over the destruction and subjugation of nature through the myth of Persephone. In the final *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, upon walking to Mellors’s cottage, she is reminded of the gamekeeper’s ‘thin, white body’ which she ‘had forgotten [...] in her unspeakable depression. But now something roused ... “Pale beyond porch and portal” ... the thing to do was to pass the porches and the portals’.¹⁹⁸ Through the quotation from Swinburne’s ‘The Garden of Proserpine’ Mellors is seemingly identified with Persephone. Yet Connie indirectly identifies herself with the goddess, again, through reciting ‘Hymn to Proserpine’, ‘The world has grown pale with thy breath’. But it was the breath of Persephone, this time; she was out of hell on a cold morning’. The ‘pale’ in the second quotation has been changed from the original ‘grey’.

¹⁹⁵ Lawrence, *The Second Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, p.77.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.77.

¹⁹⁷ For example, Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*.

¹⁹⁸ Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, p.71.

Whether this has been misquoted by Lawrence or changed intentionally, the world is no longer infused with the 'grey' breath of the Galilean or Christianity, but with the 'pale' breath of Persephone present in 'pale with the pallor' and 'naked white bodies' of the anemones and windflowers or Mellors's pale white body.¹⁹⁹ Standing amidst the flowers in the woods, Connie's identification with Persephone evokes her pantheistic presence amongst nature and her breath with beauty and rebirth, particularly the power to regenerate humanity and the earth.

Despite the intertextual references to Swinburne's poems in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence's final treatment of the Persephone myth in the novel is not in alignment with Rossetti's or Swinburne's. In this way, Rossetti and Swinburne are key influences but are also literary and artistic precursors to whom Lawrence replies. Lawrence, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, responds by taking the Pre-Raphaelite imagery further, using Swinburne's poems to examine the relationship between humanity and the natural world. In doing so, he recasts and reimagines the myth of Persephone, which the Pre-Raphaelites cast exclusively in terms of death, in terms of rebirth. Lawrence's references to Pre-Raphaelite poetry range across various forms, from his early plays, to his poetry and his novels, emphasising the cross-media alliance. The use of Swinburne's poetics in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* creates a mythical and intertextual network through which Persephone becomes a symbol of renewal and emancipatory potential.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p.72. (also for quotes in the preceding sentence).

Lawrence's poetics are shaped by Pre-Raphaelitism in his subject matter and use of symbolism, developing their cross-media aesthetic, images, and language to pursue his own ideas and poetic form. In his early career, he developed these interests through his networks and friendships and, throughout his works, used Pre-Raphaelite paintings and motifs in a way that enabled him to explore female self-expression. He continued to develop Pre-Raphaelite literary and visual motifs in his treatment of mythologies, his engagement with their literary works, his anti-industrialist stance and ideas about the spiritual significance of art. His treatment of myth aligns with Swinburne and Rossetti, exploring female sexuality, the sense of selfhood, and the dualities inherent in the figure of Persephone. His strong literary and artistic dialogue with his Pre-Raphaelite predecessors demonstrates how the Pre-Raphaelite legacy is implicated in the making of modernist literature.

Chapter Three

David Jones, Pre-Raphaelite

David Jones, working on his watercolour painting *Guinever* in 1938, told a visiting artist 'I am a Pre-Raphaelite'.¹ Likewise, in 1959 Jones remarked that his painting *Gwener* (or *The Lee Shore*) showed that he had 'got a bit of pre-Raphaelite lurking in me'.² Whilst Jones's reference to the Pre-Raphaelites refers to the subject matter and the intense visual detail of *Guinever* and *Gwener*, his self-comparison reveals his inspiration from the Pre-Raphaelites and places himself in a dialogue with their legacy. Jones's remark poses some important questions about how he views his own work: what makes his work Pre-Raphaelite and more specifically, how does Jones work in dialogue with them?

Pre-Raphaelitism, with its literary and mythological preoccupations, captivated Jones from the very start of his career. Jones was interested by the Pre-Raphaelites, both as a group of artists and as individuals; his curiosity about their personal lives, of which Jones writes that he finds anecdotes about them 'fascinating' and 'extremely amusing', is shown in his reading on the subject and his written records of this reading.³ In *Dai Greatcoat*, a series of letters which comprises a self-portrait of Jones, posthumously edited by his friend and colleague Renè Hague, Jones notes that he read William Gaunt's *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy* (1942)

¹ David Jones to J. Ede, 27/6/38, quoted in Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet* (London: Jonathan Cape 2017), p.199.

² David Jones, letter to Janet Stone, 13-14 October 1959, Oxford, Bodleian Library, quoted in Jonathan Miles and Derek Shiel, *David Jones: The Maker Unmade* (Bridgend: Seren Books 1995), p.227.

³ Quoted in Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.207.

and *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais* by the artist's son, John Guille Millais (1899, 2 vols). Jones owned many books relating to the Pre-Raphaelites, together with these two books and others about figures associated with the movement, such as Rossetti and Burne-Jones. The works on Rossetti include Nicolette Gray's *Rossetti, Dante and ourselves* (1947) and Ford Madox Hueffer's *Rossetti: A Critical Essay of His Art* (1914), and on Burne-Jones, David Cecil's *Visionary & Dreamer: Two Poetic Painters: Samuel Palmer & Edward Burne-Jones* (1969).⁴ Gray's study of Rossetti considers Jones's own work, arguing for the validity of Rossetti's mythic allusion; for Gray, Jones is the 'only artist retaining the image and its allusions today'. However, for Gray, Jones, unlike Rossetti and Dante, 'is not content to see his image in the unknown'.⁵ The dedication of Hueffer's *Rossetti* to Jones by Powys Evans, who gifted the book to him, evidences his interest in Rossetti; inside the cover, Evans has written out Rossetti's poem 'Thomae Fides' (1869) and in an autograph letter to Jones he writes that he has sent it to him as 'you said you would like to read something about him [Rossetti] besides Holman Hunt's account!'⁶ Rossetti's 'Thomae Fides', a poem about Catholic faith and belief, written in Latin, may have had a particular resonance for Jones or may well have been a shared favourite between him and Evans. In his reading of *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy*, Jones was delighted with stories about the Pre-Raphaelite membership, including Morris, Rossetti and Burne-Jones, of the Artist Rifles, especially with Morris's reaction to orders when on parade, where he would invariably turn to the right when the

⁴ Huw Ceiriog Jones, *The Library of David Jones: A Catalogue* (Aberystwyth: The National Library of Wales 1995), pp.56-199.

⁵ Nicolette Gray, *Rossetti, Dante And Ourselves* (London: Faber & Faber 1947), p.54.

⁶ Aberystwyth, The National Library of Wales, David Jones Library 132. The dedication is undated. Reference in *The Library of David Jones: A Catalogue*, p.142.

order left was given.⁷ In 1944 Jones notes that he has been reading ‘for relaxation’ the life and letters of Millais which he finds ‘jolly interesting’ for they represent a ‘damned different world from anything we’ve been used to’, at once ‘so close yet very far’.⁸ In 1939, Jones stayed at Mells, where he met Lady Francis Horner. Jones found her ‘jolly interesting.... for she had known some of the Pre-Raphaelites, Burne-Jones in particular, quite well’.⁹ Lady Horner had been a close friend of Burne-Jones who had visited Mells and worked in collaboration with her on the designs and the creation of embroideries and tapestries. Burne-Jones designed a peacock gesso memorial to Laura Lyttleton and tapestries for Mells church. Jones’s watercolour *Mells Church* (1939) was painted during this visit. Jones’s interest in Burne-Jones is both personal and professional; previous critical attention has noted their shared interest in Sir Thomas Malory, but has overlooked the extent of his awareness in Burne-Jones’s artwork.¹⁰ His knowledge of Burne-Jones’s artwork is shown in his poem ‘The Fatigue’ from *The Sleeping Lord* in a footnote in which he draws the reader’s attention specifically to Burne-Jones’s *Flower Book*, and a roundel illustrative of ‘Saturn’s Loathing’.¹¹

⁷ In his copy of Gaunt’s *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy*, Jones has marked this passage out in pencil. In the list of members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and their associates at the start of the book, Jones has written ‘you have a kind face’ next to Millais’s name and ‘OK’ next to Ford Madox Brown’s name. He has also put a cross next to Rossetti and Hughes and a tick next to Morris, noting that they are ‘the best of the bloody lot’. William Gaunt, *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy* (London: Jonathan Cape 1942), p.12. Aberystwyth, The National Library of Wales, David Jones Library 84.

⁸ David Jones, *Dai Greatcoat: A Self-Portrait of David Jones in His Letters*, ed. by Renè Hague (London: Faber & Faber 2017), p.128.

⁹ Quoted in Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.207. In his copy *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy*, Jones has placed a cross next to Lady Horner’s name. Aberystwyth, The National Library of Wales, David Jones Library 84. Also, *The Library of David Jones: A Catalogue*, p.110. Lady Horner also wrote a memoir, *Time Remembered*, (1933) which includes reminiscences about her time with Burne-Jones and is referenced in Gaunt’s book.

¹⁰ See Paul Robichaud, *Making the Past Present; David Jones, the Middle Ages, & Modernism*, p.15 and Muriel Whitaker, *The Legends of King Arthur in Art* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer 1990).

¹¹ David Jones, ‘The Fatigue’, in *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments* (London: Faber & Faber 2017), p.39.

Whilst Jones evidently read widely about the Pre-Raphaelites and enjoyed biographical and humorous accounts of them, the relationship extends beyond this to reveal a 'constant' engagement with their visual and literary works and their artistic processes and ideals. In an unpublished and unidentified draft, Jones writes that the Pre-Raphaelites are 'a constant fascination to me for a number of reasons – and the analysis of their goodness and badness is a most intriguing subject...' In his surveying of what he perceives as the goodness and badness of the Pre-Raphaelites, Jones adds that their work has 'great qualities' and 'intense feeling' but that their 'observation of the appearance of nature lacks vitality in design and a feeling for *painting* as such'. Jones contrasts them with the French Impressionists, Turner, Constable and Blake, whose works 'however "literary"... always compel attention merely as powerful linear forms' and feels that the Pre-Raphaelites lacked the freedom of these artists.¹² Here Jones has a critical attitude towards their artwork which in some ways echoes Lawrence's view of vitality in art. Like Lawrence, the Pre-Raphaelites and Jones were in opposition to the artistic practices of the Royal Academy. Despite these criticisms, Jones returns to the Pre-Raphaelites as a source of inspiration. In 1973, the year before his death, Jones was still acknowledging his 'interest in Morris's poetry and Rossetti & Co'.¹³ Like Yeats and Lawrence, Jones encountered the Pre-Raphaelites in his early life, reading their literary work and taking interest in their visual art. Jones's engagement with their visual art extends further than Yeats's and Lawrence's in terms of its direct application and influence on him as a professional visual artist.

¹²David Jones, unidentified fragment in National Library of Wales, quoted in Jonathan Miles and Derek Shiel, *David Jones: The Maker Unmade*, p.227.

¹³ David Jones, *Dai Greatcoat: A Self-Portrait of David Jones in His Letters*, p.246.

As a trained visual artist, Jones was introduced to the Pre-Raphaelites at Camberwell Art School, where he was enrolled from 1909-1914, and was taught by Reginald Savage and A. S. Hartrick. Savage taught a course on book illustration, composition and drawing from life. Jones called Savage a 'certain civilising influence', crediting him with introducing him to the Pre-Raphaelites.¹⁴ Savage taught the class about the Pre-Raphaelites, their paintings and illustrations, as well as showing them works by other nineteenth-century illustrators such as Fredrick Sandys and Beardsley. Hartrick was an artist who had known and had worked with Van Gogh and Gauguin, when he was studying at the artistic colony of Pont-Aven in the 1880s. In 1913, he published an important recollection of Van Gogh, following the first major show of his work in Britain.¹⁵ He had also known Beardsley and Whistler, telling the class anecdotes about Rossetti and Swinburne that he had learnt from Whistler.¹⁶ The historical and medievalist narratives illustrated by Pre-Raphaelite artwork, such as the Moxon edition of Tennyson, the Kelmscott Chaucer and Christina Rossetti's *The Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862), were a major influence on Jones's artwork of this period, in works such as *Soldier and the Old Man* (1914) and *Lancelot and Guinevere* (1916).¹⁷ Both artworks show a stylistic and compositional influence from Pre-Raphaelite illustration, and in *Lancelot and Guinevere*, the influence is also seen in Jones's use of colour. Part of the course at Camberwell involved studying literature and it inspired his interest in reading. At this time, the Pre-Raphaelites formed part of his reading, chiefly Morris.

¹⁴ Jones, *Dai Greatcoat*, p.20.

¹⁵ Carol Jacobi, *The EY Exhibition: Van Gogh and Britain*, (London: Tate Publishing 2019), p.112-113. Hartrick's life drawing studies are included in the exhibition and his books on Van Gogh.

¹⁶ Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.25.

¹⁷ During his studies, Jones may also have encountered graphic works by Millais, Burne-Jones and Simeon Solomon, derived from religious journals such as *Good Words*, *Once a Week* and *Leisure Hour* during the 1860s.

Jones's visual work, like the Pre-Raphaelites', uses historical allusions and as Jonathan Miles points out, demonstrates a 'passion for archaeological detail' seen in mythological paintings such as *Guinever* and *Gwener*.¹⁸ In these late mythological paintings, Jones has a similar technique to that of the Pre-Raphaelites, particularly their paintings and drawings of the late 1840s and the 1850s which pay equal attention to detail in all areas of the image and convey all the details of the background as well as foreground of the painting. These historical, literary and mythological preoccupations also emerge in Jones's poetry, connecting his creative work and interests. Jones was fascinated with the relationship between word and image in his writings, paintings, engravings and inscriptions. The originality of his work and the way in which he combined word and image has often led to comparisons with William Blake (whom Jones also admired). For Jones, as for the Pre-Raphaelites, painting and poetry are interlinked and augment one another.

Jones's written work too shows his visual imagination and knowledge of art history. In his poem 'Epithalamion' (1940), one of his *Wedding Poems*, written in celebration of the marriage of his close friends Harman Grisewood and Margaret Bailey, Jones uses historical allusion to construct a survey which includes famous Pre-Raphaelite paintings and figures. 'Epithalamion', as its classical and Spenserian title implies, celebrates the beauty of the bride and the good fortune of the groom.¹⁹ Jones's historical list of beautiful women moves from Helen of Troy to his contemporary times, meditating on the social and cultural contexts of

¹⁸ Jonathan Miles and Derek Shiel, *David Jones: The Maker Unmade*, p.215.

¹⁹ David Jones, *Wedding Poems*, ed. by Thomas Dilworth (London: Enithamon Press 2002), p.7.

the female figures. Like Yeats and Lawrence, Jones explores the stereotypes of beauty by Victorian and Western culture and his workings with Pre-Raphaelite literary allusions and paintings, in this poem, explores portrayals of femininity. Helen of Troy is a significant figure in Western poetic tradition, is frequently referred to throughout Yeats's work and is evoked in Pre-Raphaelite art, especially Rossetti's painting *Helen of Troy*. Jones mentions Guenever, Elaine and Iseult and the 'distraught Ophelias or those Christabels', referring to medieval figures from Malory, who fascinated the Pre-Raphaelites, and their recurring images of Ophelia, most famously Millais's *Ophelia* (1851-52) and Waterhouse's *Ophelia* (1894), as well as William Dyce's *Christabel* (1855).²⁰ Jones refers to 'Cophetua's ragged love', made famous by Burne-Jones's painting and the 'pallid moistener of the basil-flower' of Isabella, invoking both Millais's *Lorenzo and Isabella* (1848-49) and Holman Hunt's *Isabella and the Pot of Basil* (1866-68), as well as their sources Keats and Boccaccio.²¹

The Arthurian legends, such as that of Tristram and Isolde and Guenevere and Lancelot, particular favourites of Rossetti, Swinburne, Morris, Burne-Jones and David Jones, explore the paradigms of romantic love and chivalric action. Rossetti produced watercolour paintings such as *Tristan and Isolde drinking the Love Potion* (1867) and studies of Guinevere, as modelled by Jane Burden, for his *Sir Lancelot in the Queen's Chamber* (1857). The legend of Tristan and Isolde would be the subject of Morris's only completed easel painting *La Belle Iseult* (1858), sometimes known as *Queen Guinevere*, also modelled by his future wife Jane Burden, and he made several designs of Guinevere for tapestries and stained glass. Burne-

²⁰ David Jones, 'Epithalamion' in *Wedding Poems*, pp. 34-41 (p.35), li.51.

²¹ Jones, 'Epithalamion', p.35, 45 & 60.

Jones also produced several pencil studies for a picture of Tristram and Isolde (1862) and a stained-glass piece *The Marriage of Sir Tristram* (1863).²² Jones's visual depictions of these legends are in his *Guinever* and *Trystan ac Essyllt* (1963), portraying Trystan and Essyllt immediately after drinking the love potion aboard the ship, taken from Malory VIII, 24. It was a subject that Jones had long contemplated painting and according to Thomas Dilworth, the modern artist feels what Trystan feels in the legend, expressing Jones's 'hopeless infatuation' with his friend Valerie Wynne-Williams.²³ The painting's themes are centred around images which were significant in Jones's imagination: the poetics and symbolism of ships and ship-building, voyages, the cup or grail and the perilous quest.²⁴ These paintings are simultaneously modern, and medieval in style, with their profusion of highly defined detail and the centrality of the lovers who are placed disproportionately to the background. Across Jones's and the Pre-Raphaelites' work these two stories of extramarital love, Tristan and Isolde and Guinevere and Lancelot, recur and are often conflated. In 'Epithalamion', Jones connects other Pre-Raphaelite heroines to these central Arthurian pairings through their tragic tales of love which are doomed or thwarted. Jones draws attention to central Pre-Raphaelite female figures, as shown in *Guinevere*, *Isolde*, *Elaine*, *Ophelia* and *Isabella*, who are destroyed by love. Jones's 'Epithalamion' and 'The Fatigue', poems which specifically refer to Pre-Raphaelite paintings, plus the subject matter and the medieval style of *Guinever* and *Trystan ac Essyllt*, portray his affinity to and dialogue with the Pre-Raphaelites, which is most explicit in his use of Arthurian legends and themes.

²² For instance the Figure of Guinevere by Morris, Study of Iseult for 'The Marriage of Sir Tristram'. Verso: Figure of Sir Tristram by Burne-Jones, Tate stores.

²³ Tom Dilworth, 'David Jones and the Making of "Trystan and Essyllt"', *The Burlington Magazine*, 151: 1272 (2009), 163-168, (p.163 & p.167).

²⁴ Ariane Bankes and Paul Hills, *The Art of David Jones: Vision and Memory* (London: Lund Humphries 2015), p.133.

Scholarship about Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites primarily mentions his early Pre-Raphaelite influences at Art School. Paul Robichaud's *Making the Past Present* argues that Jones's own vision of the Middle Ages 'draws upon and revises the most strongly aestheticized Medievalism, that of the Pre-Raphaelites, which emphasizes the beauty, passion, and spirituality of the Medieval world'.²⁵ For Robichaud, the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and Ruskin for Jones reveals important connections between his poetry and nineteenth-century medievalism, chiefly due to their shared interest in medieval authors such as Malory and Chaucer. Robichaud and Thomas Dilworth have both noted the link between Morris and Jones. Dilworth sees *The Quest* as an allegory expressing anger at the class and military systems, portraying an affinity with Morris's socialism. The name 'John Ball' in *In Parenthesis* (1937) links to Morris's *The Dream of John Ball* and the medieval revolt. The communal vision of Morris's prose is reflected within Jones's portrayal of comradeship in *In Parenthesis*.²⁶ Robichaud also argues that Jones himself had much in common with Morris, both as poets and visual artists and in their medievalism, and that Jones echoes Morris's poetry in his own, seeing the 'Gwenhwyfar' passage of *The Anathemata* as a modernist revision and echoing of the 'Defence of Guinevere'.²⁷ Jones intentionally followed Morris's example by continuing the tradition from the past into modern era and thus the Pre-Raphaelite project of integrating the past into the present.²⁸ Aside from their shared enthusiasm for medieval authors, the connection between their portrayal of these legends is deeper and more complex. What do Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites share in their love of Malory? How do they

²⁵ Robichaud, *Making the Past Present; David Jones, the Middle Ages, & Modernism*, p.6.

²⁶ Thomas Dilworth, *Reading David Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press 2008), p.29.

²⁷ Robichaud, *Making the Past Present; David Jones, the Middle Ages, & Modernism*, p.6.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.26-28.

shape and present these Arthurian themes? How does Jones work with other Pre-Raphaelite poetry and paintings in his use of Arthurian legends? In this chapter, I aim to examine Jones's 'Pre-Raphaelite project' in more depth, expanding the understanding of Jones's engagement with the Pre-Raphaelites, particularly in his theories and ideas about art and use of legendary subjects, and his influence from and affinity with them, including Burne-Jones. Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites focus on the same moments from Malory, in particular the quest of the Sangrail, Lancelot at the chapel of the Sangrail and the death of Arthur. For both Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, there is a shared emphasis and concern for spiritual and moral regeneration, using the past, mythological or historical to offer what they saw as a remedial approach to civilizational decline. Their literary and visual works explore the theme of reawakening and salvation, using the past to create, what Jones terms, a 'now-ness'.²⁹

Robichaud argues that Jones, like Ezra Pound, had a 'modernist desire to avoid' the Pre-Raphaelites in his work, suggesting the powerful influence they exercised on his imagination, and that his appreciation of them endured well beyond early years as an art student, 'complicating and at times inhibiting his modernism'.³⁰ Indeed Jones's work is more highly modernist than that of Yeats and Lawrence. Jones was heavily influenced by modernism and was very much aware of contemporary literature and art movements, including the Post-Impressionist theories of Roger Fry and Clive Bell. He visited exhibitions that featured art by Picasso, Matisse and Derrian, saw the *Group X* show (1920) and was familiar with Surrealism

²⁹ David Jones, 'The Arthurian Legends' in *Epoch and Artist* (London: Faber & Faber 2017), pp. 202-211 (pp.209-210).

³⁰ Robichaud, *Making the Past Present; David Jones, the Middle Ages, & Modernism*, pp.12-13.

and the paintings of Dali. The early cubism of Cezanne and the works of Picasso were a constant point of reference, shown in the modular and stylised forms of his human figures.³¹

With the Chelsea group, a mostly Catholic reading and discussion group, who saw themselves as an alternative to the Bloomsbury group, he read works such as Pound's *Spirit of Romance* (1910), Lewis's *Time and Western Man* (1927), Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and works by Yeats and Lawrence. Jones disliked the dualism of Yeats's poetry. The group admired Lawrence's work and ideas, particularly his views about sex, spontaneity and the approach to God as a basic concern of life, but found his prose 'turgid' and his poetry 'undisciplined'.³² Jones's artistic ideals about spontaneity, delight, the rejection of academic training and the Royal Academy align with Lawrence's ideas of art. Jones's poetry has often been viewed as having an affinity with Pound's, particularly with *The Cantos*.³³ Lewis's preference of a spatial sense of reality (rational, classical and objective) to a temporal sense (subjective, romantic and impressionistic) may have influenced Jones's own sense of the spatial and temporal in his art and poetry.³⁴ For Jones, James Joyce was

³¹ Bankes and Hills, *The Art of David Jones: Vision and Memory*, p.18.

³² Harman Grisewood, 'Remembering David Jones', ed. by Thomas Dilworth, *Journal of Modern Literature*, 14: 4 (1988), 565-576, (p.570).

³³ Jones had in fact never read any of Pound's poetry until the similarities were pointed out to him and preceded to part of *The Cantos*, but did not finish it, fearing that it would influence him. Pound also encouraged their mutual friend William Cookson to establish the *Agenda* poetry periodical for which Jones created inscriptions and artwork.

³⁴ Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (London: Chatto and Windus 1927), p.26. Jones admired Lewis's anti-academic artistic movement, particularly around 1919, and Lewis's artwork. Thomas Dilworth notes his potential influence of Lewis's notions of the subjective and objective in *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.123. Dilworth remembers Jones saying, during his meeting with him, that he admired the work of Lewis. Thomas Dilworth, *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones* (London: University of Toronto 1988), p.13. Jones also owned a book of Lewis's art (1939). In 1972, Jones's work was the focal point in a series of exhibitions entitled *Word and Image*. One of the previous three exhibitions had been on Wyndham Lewis, stressing the shared interest in the interdisciplinary relationship between image and word for them both as artists and writers. David Jones, letters to Douglas Clevedon, Tate Archives, TAM 73.

‘the pre-eminent modern writer’, and *Finnegans Wake* (1939) ‘the paradigm of literary art’.³⁵ Jones admired the ‘Celticity’ of Joyce’s work and saw Joyce, despite the opinions that he was highly contemporary and the enemy of tradition, as ‘incarnational’, amalgamating more than any other artist ‘all that which those historical, mythological, anthropological, archaeological etc., studies had to offer’ alongside the psychoanalytic studies of Freud and Jung, medieval and doctrinal modes of thought, peasantry and the urban.³⁶ For Jones, Joyce uses the locality of the site and its complex historical associations to express a universal concept. *The Waste Land* was an important influence for Jones too, which he regarded as a work of ‘extraordinary authenticity’ that ‘mirrors our civilizational phase with absolute validity’.³⁷

Jones was clearly very aware of his influences, both modernist and Pre-Raphaelite, and of how he uses them. He notes how his contemporaries are both modern and respond to, or work with tradition and preceding literary and cultural movements. Jones was influenced by the liberation and experimentation that modernist work offered but, like Lawrence and Yeats, remained in touch with more traditional and historical practices, and as part of his neo-romantic ideals, repeatedly returned to the Pre-Raphaelite tradition. Whilst Jones, on occasion, criticises the Pre-Raphaelites, he does not show a desire to avoid them (as his writings attest to) nor does his Pre-Raphaelitism complicate or inhibit his modernism. His Pre-Raphaelitism is rather part of his modernist aesthetic, forming an interaction with their

³⁵ David Jones, ‘Preface to The Anathemata’ in *The Anathemata*, (London: Faber and Faber 2010), p. 26 and quoted in Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.123.

³⁶ David Jones, ‘Notes on the 1930s’ in *The Dying Gaul and Other Writings* (London: Faber & Faber 2017), pp.41-49 (p.46).

³⁷ Quoted in Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.123.

work through shared inspirations, enthusiasms and aesthetics in the development and revision of his style.

Jones's work also interacts with contemporary engagements with Pre-Raphaelitism.³⁸ Robin Ironside, an acquaintance of Jones, was a painter in the Neo-Romantic tradition (the term which he coined himself), writer, theatre designer and assistant keeper at the Tate Gallery from 1937 to 1946. Ironside and Jones have often been grouped together as Neo-Romantic painters. Kenneth Clark commissioned Ironside to write and edit a Penguin book on David Jones which was published in 1949, the first monograph dedicated to Jones's artistic career. Ironside revived interest in the Pre-Raphaelites with his introduction to the book *Pre-Raphaelite Painters*, written to coincide with the 1948 centenary exhibition of their work. Ironside writes that he intends the catalogue and selection of plates to display the 'beauties of Pre-Raphaelite painting' and not 'a historical survey of the movement's development'.³⁹ In his introduction to *David Jones*, Ironside pays particular attention to his paintings *Guinever*, *The Four Queens* (1941) and *The Chapel in the Park* (1932). Although Ironside does not explicitly link the Pre-Raphaelites and Jones in his introductions to the *Pre-Raphaelite Painters* and *David Jones*, he does emphasise the medievalism of their works and the joint inspiration from Arthurian legend. It is likely that Jones attended the exhibition, writing to

³⁸ Jones's friends and acquaintances, such as Evelyn Waugh and John Betjeman, continued to be interested in Pre-Raphaelitism. Waugh had published his first book which was a biography of D. G. Rossetti, *Rossetti: His Life and Work* in 1928. Betjeman, who was the founder of the Victorian Society and a leading authority on Victorian church architecture, had written various poems and prose pieces which included the Pre-Raphaelites. His poems, such as 'An Archaeological Picnic' (1945), show his passion for Victorian architecture and for Burne-Jones's stained-glass windows. Burne-Jones was a particular hero of Betjeman's.

³⁹ Robin Ironside, Foreword in *Pre-Raphaelite Painters* (London: The Phaidon Press Ltd, 1948).

Harman Grisewood that they 'ought to try and go to the Tate together to see the Pre-Raphaelites while they are on'.⁴⁰

Jones was enthused at this time by William Bell Scott, recommending the poem 'The Witch's Ballad' in another letter to Grisewood, and noting the 'Pre-Raphaelite tricks' in his use of repetition in the poem.⁴¹ Ironside was also moved by the spirit of Bell Scott's 'medievalist adornments'.⁴² Ironside was involved with the Burne-Jones centenary exhibition (1933) and in his article 'Burne-Jones and Gustave Moreau' (1940) he related Burne-Jones's intricate and esoteric paintings to works of Moreau, Ferdinand Hollander and Gauguin, arguing that Burne-Jones was a central, original and important artist. After Ironside's advocacy of Burne-Jones led his work to be reappraised with fresh perspective.⁴³ He argued for Burne-Jones's crucial position in the visionary tradition of art derived from Blake. Ironside likewise ascribed this visionary quality to David Jones, seeing him as a painter of original imagination, writing that his work 'conveys to us his spiritual findings as objects appealing to the sense, to be apprehended as "sub ratione delectabilis", rather as, on another plane'.⁴⁴

Jones is positioned by Ironside as a visionary artist, in affinity with Burne-Jones and other Pre-Raphaelite artists, but Jones also places himself as a Pre-Raphaelite, a figure who shares in both modernist and Neo-Romantic traditions. Harman Grisewood, the BBC broadcaster

⁴⁰ David Jones 'To Harman Grisewood, 5th October 1948', Yale, Beinecke Library, GEN MSS 903, fol. 15.

⁴¹ David Jones 'To Harman Grisewood, 7th October 1948', Yale, Beinecke Library, GEN MSS 903, fol. 15.

⁴² Ironside, Foreword in *Pre-Raphaelite Painters*, p.19.

⁴³ MacCarthy, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination*, p.528.

⁴⁴ Robin Ironside, *David Jones* (Middlesex: Penguin 1949), p.18.

and long-time friend and literary executor of Jones's, wrote that principally in discussion with Jones, 'Art, religion, history were our themes'.⁴⁵ Grisewood had his own interest in the Victorian era, providing a foreword for the book *Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians* (1949). Jones's proposal that they go to the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition and his use of Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite images in 'Epithalamion' suggest a shared keenness for Pre-Raphaelitism. This chapter will consider and re-evaluate the key components of the relationship between Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, firstly through their aesthetics, covering Arts and Crafts and Sacramentalism, showing Jones's strong artistic and literary dialogue with the Pre-Raphaelites through his aesthetic theories, and then his Arthurianism, in their treatments of the Grail legend, Lancelot and the Sleep of King Arthur.

Jones, Pre-Raphaelitism and Aesthetic theories

Arts and Crafts

Jones's interest in Morris, the Arts and Crafts, and the correlation between his various creative works is reflected in his friendship with Eric Gill and his time at Arts and Crafts communes. In 1921 Jones met Eric Gill, artist-craftsman, sculptor, wood engraver, letter cutter and typographer, visiting him at his workshop at Ditchling Common. Gill spoke to Jones about life at Ditchling, the craftsmen at the Guild and his aims of uniting life, art, work, religion and rural culture. Later in 1921, Jones converted to Roman Catholicism, as Gill had done in 1913, and joined him at Ditchling Common as part of the Guild of Saints Joseph and

⁴⁵ Harman Grisewood, *One Thing At A Time: An Autobiography* (London: Hutchinson & Co. 1968), p.83. Harman Grisewood, 'Remembering David Jones', pp.565-576.

Dominic. The Guild of Saints Joseph and Dominic was a manifestation of the Arts and Crafts movement, a Catholic art and craft community set up by Gill in 1913. It followed the ideals of Morris and Ruskin by retrieving the values of pre-industrial rural life and craftsmanship and through the belief in the necessity of creativity to everyday life. Unlike Morris, they were not Socialists but Distributists, dedicated to distributing rather than abolishing private ownership. The Guild members were considered as 'workers' and followed distributist principles of individual responsibility and owned their own tools, workshops and the products of their work.⁴⁶ Gill observed that industrialism denied the craftsman freedom over their own work and creativity and reduced them to an irresponsibility and slavery; he believed that 'all free workmen are artists' and that 'all workmen who are not artists are slaves'.⁴⁷ Gill has often been viewed as 'the closest twentieth-century equivalent of Morris', both in terms of his creative skills and his critique of society.⁴⁸

Jones notes the comparison in his appreciation of Eric Gill (1940), when he says that Gill 'was a true master in the sense that Morris was a master; indeed with Morris he had much affinity – he was in a way, a Victorian person' with 'an enormous capacity for work' and the vision 'to make a unity of all his activities'.⁴⁹ Gill had his origins in Morris's territory, in the Arts and Crafts exhibition society, the Art Worker's Guild and in the location of one of his early workshops situated in Hammersmith, close to Morris's Kelmscott House and the site of

⁴⁶ Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.67.

⁴⁷ Eric Gill, *Art Nonsense And Other Essays* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd. 1934), p.5.

⁴⁸ Fiona MacCarthy, *Anarchy & Beauty: William Morris and his Legacy 1860-1960* (London: National Portrait Gallery 2014), p.93.

⁴⁹ David Jones, 'Eric Gill: An Appreciation', in *Epoch and Artist*, pp.296-302 (pp.297-298).

the Kelmscott Press. Although Gill acknowledged his influence from Morris, he found the Arts and Crafts followers and the surrounding environment in London too exclusive. Just as Gill's ideas about industrialism show the influence of Morris and Ruskin, it is also present in his notion of beauty as 'an Essential Perfection of Creation and of handiwork', returning to a medieval craft that was about direct communication between the handiwork of the artist and the work itself.⁵⁰ For Gill, Morris, 'the great man' despite 'being sensitive and passionate', was missing out religion and God, for 'he saw no being behind doing; he saw no city of God behind an earthly paradise; he saw joy in labour but no sacrifice'.⁵¹

Gill's ideas about industrialism and craftsmanship inspired Jones. At Ditchling Gill provided Jones with a place to work, away from the restrictions of Art School, and a space for him to develop his thinking about the processes of art and craftsmanship. For this understanding Jones claims that he owed 'a great debt to the few years at Ditchling with Eric Gill and his associates'.⁵² When Jones moved to Ditchling, he wanted to break with art school altogether and became a carpenter's apprentice there. Jones claims that carpentry had an 'enormous effect' on his ideas about making things, including poetry. Carpentry is equated with the creation and the structuring of his poetry, a process which he views as a craft.⁵³ For Jones, carpentry suggests a fitting together or someone concerned with fitting of some sort, revealing the carpenter's inclinations and limitations.⁵⁴ Similarly, one of Jones's recurrent

⁵⁰ Gill, *Art Nonsense And Other Essays*, pp.3-4.

⁵¹ Gill, *The Necessity of Belief*, p.304.

⁵² David Jones, 'Autobiographical Talk' in *Epoch and Artist*, pp.25-31 (p.30).

⁵³ Quoted from 1965 interview, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psQkOT7eNwE> [Date accessed: 20 June 2019]

⁵⁴ David Jones, 'Autobiographical Talk', in *Epoch and Artist*, pp.25-31 (p.29).

anecdotes about the importance of all types of craftsmanship is taken from Oliver St. John Gogarty's report of what James Joyce said about boat-building needing to be 'comprehended in practical life as "art", no less than the making of a poem'.⁵⁵ This is a notion of particular importance to *The Anathemata* (1952). Jones's poetry and art contains a material quality, a form of physical contact, creation and recreation and human memory. Pre-Raphaelite poetry often refers to a physical work of art, the processes of creating art and processes of idealisation that these undertake, as seen in Christina Rossetti's 'In the Artist's Studio'. D. G. Rossetti's 'The Portrait', both the sonnet and longer poem, explore the artistic representation of the artist's beloved and human memory. In 'The Portrait' (the longer poem), the beloved is an image in a portrait, in the mirror, a shadow and in the stream, placed as a mimetic representation of his beloved's material body which evokes the memory of the painting's creation. However, the image will 'tarry' when he is gone, connoting a loss of physicality that becomes purely a memory or art object.⁵⁶ There is also an ethereal quality to Pre-Raphaelite poetry that transcends physical contact and creates tensions between the physical and the spiritual. In his poems, Jones refers to physical artworks, inscriptions, and antique sculptures and in his poem 'A, a, a, Domine Deus', from *The Sleeping Lord*, the persona seeks God's presence amidst the 'textures and contours' of modern technology and civilisation.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ David Jones, 'In illo tempore', in *The Dying Gaul*, pp.19-29 (p.22).

⁵⁶ D. G. Rossetti, 'The Portrait' *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, pp.240-243 (p.240), 3-4.

⁵⁷ David Jones, 'A, a, a, Domine Deus', in *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments*, p.9, 7.

Gill was the focal figure to a series of Catholic art-and-craft communities, firstly at Ditchling in Sussex, then Capel-y-ffin in the Welsh mountains and eventually Pigotts at High Wycombe, all of which Jones lived and worked at. In 1924, Jones joined the Guild at Capel-y-ffin when Gill transferred the Ditchling community to the Black mountains. Jones loved the landscape and during this time at Capel, the longest time he spent in Wales, developed his watercolour and landscape paintings. The landscape of Capel-y-ffin and the border between England and Wales was important in Jones's writings, particularly *In Parenthesis*. According to Jonathan Miles, the border between England and Wales at Capel-y-ffin gave a 'tangible quality to Jones's later writing which treated Wales largely as an imagined construct' and provided an inspiration for the divisions that arise in Jones's poetry, such as those between London and Wales, Rome and Wales and civilisation and culture.⁵⁸ These communities shaped Jones's interest in a pre-industrial way of life and in the Arts and Crafts, as seen in his interest in tapestry and carpentry, and provided a space for Jones to consider his artistry and craftsmanship. His friendship with Gill and his ideals continued to be of great importance to Jones and highlight the impact of Morris's artistic and political ideals in the early twentieth century and in Gill's and Jones's conception of art and craftsmanship in their lives and work. Jones's concept of the Arts and Crafts follows Morris's in his acknowledgement of the importance of architecture within the arts and society, particularly the workmanship and organic forms of Gothic architecture. For example, in *The Anathemata*, the church's architecture with 'the living floriations/under the leaping arches', like the Gothic, combine the natural with the architectural to create organicity.⁵⁹ In Jones's ideas of art and the sign,

⁵⁸ Jonathan Miles, *Eric Gill & David Jones at Capel-y-ffin* (Glamorgan: Seren Books 1992), p.15.

⁵⁹ David Jones, *The Anathemata* (London: Faber and Faber 2010), p.49.

there is a concern for beauty which for Morris is art, and for the virtues of honesty and simplicity of life. Like Morris, Jones was concerned with now-ness of art and of the sign, as inspired by tradition and the past, and with the physical processes of creating art. For Morris, art is the expression of truth and 'of man's happiness in labour – an art made by the people, for the people, as a happiness to the maker and user'.⁶⁰ Jones, unlike Morris, saw art as being tied to God, as the expression of the creator through creation and having an affinity with the sacramental.

Sacramentalism

Rowan Williams describes Jones's art as 'a form of archaeology – not simply excavating antique objects, but excavating connections'.⁶¹ Jones's own practice as an artist and poet, as well as his writings on art and culture, reveal his fascination with excavating connections between human imagination, communication and history, uncovering the systems of myth and perception of various cultural and civilizational phases. Indeed, Jones saw 'the principle that informs the poetic art' as 'something which cannot be disengaged from the mythus, deposits, *matière*, ethos, whole *res* of which the poet is himself a product'.⁶² Throughout Jones's literary and visual works, each word or sign signifies layers of associations, meanings

⁶⁰ William Morris, 'The Art of the People', in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, ed. by G. D. H. Cole (London: Nonesuch Press 1948), pp.517-537 (pp.533-534).

⁶¹ Rowan Williams, 'Introduction', in *David Jones on Religion, Politics, and Culture: Unpublished Prose*, ed. by Thomas Berenato, Anne Price-Owen and Kathleen Henderson Staudt (London: Bloomsbury Publishing 2018), pp. xvi-xviii (p. xvii).

⁶² David Jones, 'Preface to The Anathemata' in *The Anathemata*, pp. 9-43 (p.20).

and traditions. As a poet and artist, his work explores the connections and associations of meaning and the civilizational changes that comprise his present cultural phase.

In his own theory of culture, Jones often expressed the view that the modern age was unfamiliar with sign and symbol and feared that there was a failure to recognise the complex of meanings behind them. Jones was convinced that since the Renaissance, and increasingly the Industrial Revolution, western society had become culturally impoverished and dehumanising. Similarly, Jones's friend and contemporary T. S. Eliot outlined a dehumanising quality in what he calls the dissociation of sensibility, seeing the dissolution of a unified sensibility in the poets after the Metaphysicals, as separating thought from feeling. The dissociation of sensibility is thus the reason for the difference between the intellectual and reflective poet.⁶³

For Jones, there were two kinds of action or motivation that inform human words, attitudes and experiences: the utilitarian and the gratuitous, or what he terms 'Use and Sign'. Utilitarian objects and acts are not innately symbolic, are characterised by efficiency, and in themselves express nothing. Gratuitous acts and objects, such as birthday cakes and gifted flowers (the examples which Jones gives in his essay 'Art and Sacrament') are innately symbolic; they are expressive of feelings and emotion and therefore characterise culture and what it means to be human. In Jones's view utility exemplifies modern technological

⁶³ T. S. Eliot, 'The Metaphysical Poets', in T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays, 1917-1932* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932), pp.241-250.

civilisation and increases at the expense of culture. Efficiency outweighs gratuitous values which have been traditionally expressed in domestic rituals, religion and the arts. For Jones, a healthy society is one in which pragmatism and gratuitous values are in balance.⁶⁴ Jones's values of gratuitousness and efficiency echo Ruskin's claim that 'there is no wealth but life' from *Unto this Last* (1860).⁶⁵ Jones's view of utility connects with Ruskin's views on the destructive effects of industrialism on humanity and the natural world, and his criticism of capitalist utility. His criticism of capitalism, like Morris's, is most apparent in his championing of the Middle Ages, a pre-industrial and pre-capitalist ideal, which acts as both a utopia and a social criticism. Through his medieval ideals, Ruskin emphasises individual craftsmanship and artistic labour, which has for him, a social and religious function, highlighting individuality and in its value, recognises imperfections.⁶⁶ He claims that the demand for perfection is the misunderstanding of the ends of art; in recognising imperfections, art becomes accessible to life and to ideas of progress and change.⁶⁷ This becomes a critique on labour and machine production in modern society as the focus, for Ruskin, is placed on the idea of pleasure, pleasure obtained from individual artistic pursuits and from labour that is turned into an artistic and pleasurable pursuit.⁶⁸ Just as Jones's examples of gratuitous acts are part of everyday life and human creation, Ruskin and Morris's views of the integrity of

⁶⁴ Thomas Dilworth, 'Afterword' in *Wedding Poems*, pp.45-46. See Jones's essay 'The Utile' in *Epoch And Artist*, pp.180-185.

⁶⁵ John Ruskin, *Unto This Last* (Lancashire: Hendon Publishing 2000), p.156. Jones was familiar with Ruskin's work, owning his *Lectures on architecture and painting, delivered at Edinburgh in November, 1853* and *The Harbours of England*, with illustrations by Turner (1907) and was interested in Ruskin himself, having a copy of his autobiographical *Praeterita*. *The Library of David Jones: A Catalogue*, pp.259-60. Ruskin's Edinburgh lectures also discuss Pre-Raphaelitism.

⁶⁶ John Ruskin, 'The Nature of the Gothic' in *On Art and Life* (London: Penguin Books 2004) pp.1-56 (pp.11-12).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.26-27.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.14-21.

art unite art and society, through which art becomes an integral part of everyday life and labour.

Jones's appropriation of the idea of art for art's sake, in his essay 'Art and Sacrament', follows Ruskin's and Morris's emphasis on the processes of craftsmanship. Walter Pater was one of the first English writers to use the term 'art for art's sake' in his article 'Poems by William Morris' (1868) in the *Westminster Review* and appropriated in *The Renaissance* (1873). Its first appearance in an article on Morris suggests that the terms was strongly associated the artistic, and poetic work, of Rossetti's circle, including Rossetti's own paintings of the 1860s such as *Bocca Baciata* and Swinburne's poetry and essays (with Swinburne using the term himself in his essay on Blake in 1867-8).⁶⁹ A term associated with Aestheticism, its association with experimental Pre-Raphaelite art and poetry expresses their philosophy in its emphasis on the intrinsic value of art divorced from a utilitarian function. For Jones, the term, which he says is "totally untrue" if used in any other sense', is true as an account of art as a process concerned with perfecting a means to achieve a perfect fit or a 'fitting together', derived from its Latin term [Artem/Ar-], meaning 'to fit' and 'skill', and that art is 'the activity of fitting together'.⁷⁰ In considering the term to be 'totally untrue' if used in another sense, Jones is taking the term out of a secular discourse, in Pater's and Swinburne's use of the term, which sets itself against Christian morality as a standard or function for art and appropriating it for a theological conception of art. Jones writes that

⁶⁹ Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Walter Pater and Aesthetic Painting', in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England*, pp.36-58 (p.38).

⁷⁰ David Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', in *Epoch And Artist*, pp.143-179 (p.151).

among his friends they used to discuss something called 'The Break', which for them was exemplified in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, and they were concerned with the break in the arts and religion, affecting sacrament and the notion and concept of sign 'owing to the turn civilisation has taken'.⁷¹ Art, for Jones, is gratuitous and symbolic in its creation, its feelings and emotions, and its ends of fitting together culture and humanity and art and society. For Jones, art, and its gratuitous and symbolic creations are implicated in theology and Christian religious signification.

Jones's understanding of cultural change may have been influenced by Morris, particularly in his use of the term 'The Break', as Colin Wilcockson argues in his article 'David Jones and "The Break" in *Agenda* (1977).⁷² The notion of the break emerges in Morris's works, especially *News from Nowhere* and his lecture 'The Beauty of Life'. 'The Break', for Jones, is cultural discontinuity and occurred in the Platonic division between matter and spirit and religion and life, which was healed by the synthesis of the medieval era, but reverted back again to this duality during the Reformation, after which culture became more secular and pragmatic.⁷³ In his Preface to *The Anathemata*, Jones argues that the artist deals wholly with signs and must be valid for the artist and the culture that made them, but these signs have a time factor and if the now-ness is not present the sign is apt to suffer from invalidation.

⁷¹ David Jones, 'Preface to *The Anathemata*', pp.15-16.

⁷² Many of the books on Jones refer to this article and Wilcockson's connection between Jones and Morris. Need to find specific article- have requested an anthology of the *Agenda* which may contain this article. Colin Wilcockson, 'David Jones and "The Break"', *Agenda*, 15: 2-3 (1977), 126-131 (pp.130-1).

⁷³ Thomas Dilworth, 'David Jones and the Chelsea Group', in *David Jones: Christian Modernist?: New Approaches to His Art, Poetry and Cultural Theory*, ed. by Jamie Callison, Paul S. Fiddes, Anna Johnson and Erik Tønning (Leiden: Brill 2018), pp.107-122 (p.113).

Morris's 'The Beauty of Life' is similar to Jones's ideas in its expression of art and civilisation. In his lecture, Morris warns of the danger of the 'the present course of civilisation' that 'will destroy the beauty of life'. He adds that beauty, 'what is meant by *art*' is 'no mere accident to human life, which people can take or leave as they choose, but a positive necessity of life'. Morris contends that modern civilisation will 'trample out' beauty and following this course, art.⁷⁴

Jones's notion of 'the Break' and the turn of a civilisation emerges in the work of his contemporaries in different ways, but following similar trajectories. Yeats's 'The Second Coming' (1919) famously presents a nightmarish vision on the brink of apocalyptic revelation. In *Apocalypse*, Lawrence presents his polemic against materialism and intellectualism, as a revelation and protest of life in which humanity reconnects with the cosmos. It also protests against the dehumanising effects of Christianity and the scientific. Lawrence also sees a break in 'St Mawr', a break that occurs from the life 'that must destroy life', and through a revolt against the denial of the life force, creativity and freedom denied in modern life.⁷⁵ These reflections emerge in Eliot's poetry and prose, such as *The Four Quartets* (1941), particularly after his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism. Ruskin, Jones, Yeats, Lawrence and Eliot all adopt similar stances regarding dehumanising effects on culture and modern life. For Jones and Eliot, in particular, religion is the basis of culture; a notion influenced by the work of Christopher Dawson, the cultural historian, in publications such as

⁷⁴ William Morris, 'The Beauty of Life' in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, pp.538-564 (pp.540-541).

⁷⁵ D. H. Lawrence, 'St Mawr', in *The Complete Short Novels* (London: Penguin 1990), pp.276-428 (pp.342-343).

Religion and Progress (1929). Yeats, Eliot and especially Jones seek to communicate a mystical or 'theological experience' which bear upon their poetics, in considering how to show the relation between history and eternity and between the self and God.⁷⁶

Jones's theory of culture is fundamental to his aesthetic theory. Firstly, I shall outline Jones's theory of art and sacramentalism in more detail, before turning to the Pre-Raphaelites.

Jones followed Aristotle's contrasts of *poiesis* with *praxis* and constantly refers to the making of a work or the process of making.⁷⁷ Like Morris, Jones makes no differentiation between fine arts and useful arts (such as boat-building); Morris, in a view similar to Jones's, believed that the arts 'only in latter times, and under the most intricate conditions of life [...] have fallen apart from one another', declaring 'I hold that, when they are so parted, it is ill for the Arts altogether'.⁷⁸ Guided by these ideas, Jones recognised fundamental similarities between diverse acts such as icing a cake, making a painting and celebrating a Mass. For Jones, these acts are 'a recalling, a re-presenting, anaphora and anamnesis'.⁷⁹ As shown throughout his work, Jones was alert to etymology, which alongside the archaeological aspect of his thinking, is important in his terminology. These four words, which reoccur across his work and thinking, are all concerned with the act of recalling and making something present. Both 'Anaphora' and 'Anamnesis' have their roots from the Greek (ana-) meaning 'again, anew or back'; 'Anaphora' from (ana-) and (Pherein-) meaning to 'to bear or repetition' is the

⁷⁶ W. David Soud, *Divine Cartographies: God, History, and Poiesis In W.B. Yeats, David Jones, and T. S. Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2016), p.4.

⁷⁷ David Jones, 'Past and Present', in *Epoch And Artist*, pp.138-142 (p.139).

⁷⁸ William Morris, 'The Lesser Arts', in *William Morris: Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, pp.494-516 (p.494).

⁷⁹ David Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.167.

deliberate repetition of a word or phrase in successive clauses and used in Biblical Psalms and the Catholic Catechism. 'Anamnesis', from the Greek (ana-) and (mnemnon) or (mneme) for 'mindful' or 'memory' means recalling, making present. It was a word once used in Catholic doctrine, at the consecration of the Mass, recalling Christ's words at the Last Supper: 'Do this in anamnesis of me'.⁸⁰ This notion of representation and recalling is hugely important to his ideas about art and sign-making, defining as an art an activity where there is making, 'there is an explicit sign, there is a showing forth, a representing, a recalling, there is gratuitousness and full intention to make this making thus'.⁸¹

In his essay 'Art and Sacrament', Jones outlines a view of art that shares similarities with religious signification and is aligned to Christian systems and rituals. In this essay, Jones is concerned with art as a sacred, 'essentially a sign-making or "sacramental" activity'.⁸² The 'sacramental' for Jones is the act of recalling of the spiritual through an outward and visible sign, from the Greek for 'mystery' and the Latin (sacer) for 'sacred', 'making holy' and 'sacramentum' for 'consecrating'. As it was for Gill, art for Jones is religious and is in its nature bound to God. In 'Art and Sacrament', art is defined as an activity (*Ars*) and as having a divine providence or quality (*Prudentia*). Artistic creation is defined by Jones in this essay as a gratuitous act, (from the Latin for 'spontaneous' or 'giving freely') in which the Creator is reflected in the art of the creature.⁸³ Gill believed that art should be moral, but Jones disagreed; he thought morality should be the concern of practical life and beauty should be

⁸⁰ See David Jones, 'Preface to The Anathemata' in *The Anathemata*, p.31. Thomas Dilworth, *Reading David Jones*, p.130.

⁸¹ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.164.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.161

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.153.

exclusively the concern of art.⁸⁴ For Jones, humanity are 'sign-makers' and 'sacramentalists' and witness the connections and collection of all things in the eternal word albeit in a culture that systematically disconnects. Jones stresses that sign-making is a necessary and natural activity for all humans whilst implying that Christianity, particularly the Catholic faith, is especially committed to sign-making. He notes the distinction between the sacred and the profane but argues that art knows only a 'sacred activity'.⁸⁵ As W. David Soud argues, Jones expands the definition of sacrament beyond the confines of Catholic doctrine in order to formulate his own aesthetic and through his assertion that all human sign-making is a fundamentally sacred activity, investing all signification with a sacramental function.⁸⁶ Activities are done for a sign and Jones posits art as an intellectual act in representing a significant quality, act or event.

Jones is concerned with how acts of creation and art become significant and outward signs. He claims that 'all art re-presents'.⁸⁷ He stresses his use of the hyphenated version of the word, adding that there is a slight gain which conveys and emphasises more of what the work is. In Jones's view, the artist is concerned with signs: how the artist recalls, represents and orders these signs within the conditions of a given art and a reality dependent upon these signs.⁸⁸ For Jones, art represents something that is significant of something greater. A number of existing shapes are shifted about and a form not previously existent is created.

⁸⁴ Eric Gill, 'Essential Perfection', in *Art Nonsense And Other Essays*, pp.3-5.

⁸⁵ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.157.

⁸⁶ Soud, *Divine Cartographies: God, History, and Poiesis In W.B. Yeats, David Jones, and T. S. Eliot*, p.109.

⁸⁷ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.161

⁸⁸ See Nicolette Gray, *The Paintings of David Jones* (London: John Taylor/Lund Humphries Publishers, 1989), p. 38.

The artist and sign-maker are concerned with the positioning and juxtaposing of certain several parts with a view to establishing a whole. When this form is brought into being there is a reality, something which has come into existence. Using Hogarth's painting 'The Shrimp Girl' as an example, the painting is described as a 'thing', an object contrived of various materials that are so ordered to show forth, recall and re-present, strictly within the conditions of a given art and under another mode. Hogarth's art gives a *signum* of that reality, a complex of realities, and it makes a kind of anamnesis of that reality. The *signum*, made to have a significance, is also independent of our changing reactions and its meaning stands alone as a sign of the artist's reality.⁸⁹ Form-making has in itself the nature of a sign, then the artist's formal realities which the artist's strategy creates becomes a *signa*. A sign is significant of something, of some 'reality', of something 'good' and 'implies the sacred'.⁹⁰ In his argument that the notion of sign implies the sacred and that humanity are unavoidably sacramentalists whether religious or not, Jones claims that there is 'ample archaeological evidence' to prove that 'Palaeolithic man' was a 'sacramental animal' and that this is shown through the marks on surfaces which are not 'merely utile' but are significant and intentional, representing and recalling under other forms.⁹¹ Reality is created through abstract form. For Jones, all art has an abstract quality. Form-making is also a sign that causes man's art to be bound to God. It has the intention to re-present, recall or show forth something under certain signs and by a manual act. Jones argues that the sacramental is dependent on humanity and creation: 'without *ars* there is no possibility of *sacramentum*'.⁹²

⁸⁹ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', pp.174-175.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.157.

⁹¹ Ibid., p.155.

⁹² Ibid., p.176.

Liturgical thinking is at the centre of David Jones's aesthetic, particularly the celebration of the Roman Catholic Mass, which is, as James Callison argues, important to Jones 'in its celebration of and ministrations to human creativity'.⁹³ Although Jones is careful in 'Art and Sacrament' to avoid limiting the category of art to high art objects, including rituals, the Mass is fundamental to Jones's notion of sacrament and the doctrine of transubstantiation. It is in the rite of communion and consecration of the eucharist that the moment of transubstantiation occurs. It depicts the incarnational nature of language, communicating the spiritual through the material and investing the material, the bread and wine, with spiritual and religious significance. In his consideration of the use of material signs, Jones refers to the symbolism of the eucharist, the materiality of the wine and bread, and how they convey 'spiritual and moral regeneration', 'life beyond this world', and are integral to belief.⁹⁴ For Jones, the eucharist and the communication in the Mass in an 'unbloody manner' of 'what was done once and for all in a bloody manner' is the 'inner secret' and 'nodal point of *all* the arts'.⁹⁵ The eucharist makes Christ present and manifests being, a form of self-offering and material offering. The sign is bound up with the notion of sacrament. For Jones, the eucharist is the supreme sign-making activity and the Last Supper is where the notion of sign-making is instituted. In the Mass, as offered by the Trinity, is the remembrance of the Incarnation, the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. For Jones, the Mass is something creative in itself. The understanding of sacrifice and redemption are important to the doctrine of Transubstantiation and for Jones, this offers a

⁹³ Jamie Callison, 'David Jones's 'Barbaric-Fetish': Frazer and the 'Aesthetic Value' of the Liturgy', *Modernist Cultures*, 12.3 (2017), 439-462, (pp.443-444).

⁹⁴ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.162.

⁹⁵ Jones, *Dai Greatcoat*, p.190

remedial approach to civilizational decline. The Mass is a kind of making, makes something other, a series of signs, and is both a spiritual and vital offering.

Post-Impressionist theory regarded a painting to be an object in its own right, rather than an impression of an object. In Post-Impressionist theory, Jones saw a parallel with the doctrine of the Catholic eucharist:

Well, the insistence that a painting must be a thing and not the impression of something has an affinity with what the Church said of the Mass, that what was obliterated under the species of Bread and Wine at the Supper was the same *thing* as what was bloodily immolated on Calvary.⁹⁶

Similarly, Jacques Maritain, a philosopher whose work Jones encountered at Ditchling and a subsequent influence on Jones's views of art, writes that art manifests or expresses itself in a material, a certain form or being, and that truth belongs to the object depicted.⁹⁷ Through these theories and ideas, Jones defined that the work is in itself a 'thing', not the impression of some other thing. The qualities of the object are transubstantiated into images and words. The 'abstract' quality in a painting causes it to have 'being.' From the theories of Roger Fry and Clive Bell, Jones acquired convictions about the importance of objectivity and structure in a work of art. For Jones, shape is significant to content providing a visual and spatial sense of structure and symbolic meaning in representation. This structure is important in his visual and written work, especially to *The Anathemata*, which corresponds to the sacrament and Catholic Mass.

⁹⁶ Jones, *Dai Greatcoat*, p.232.

⁹⁷ David Jones, *Dai Greatcoat*, p.31 and Jonathan Miles, *Backgrounds to David Jones: A Study in Sources and Drafts* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press 1990), pp.16-17.

For the Pre-Raphaelites, this was characterised by an interest in Pre-Renaissance art and the rich culture of images central to the Catholic faith of the Middle Ages. The Brotherhood sought a revival of the typological and iconographic qualities of early Christian art, drawn to its stylistic strategy and representational traditions. They advanced the portrayal of meaningful and biblical subjects both in works commissioned for churches and more widely. In this respect, Jerome McGann sees Pre-Raphaelitism as a refusal to choose between realism and symbolism or alternatively, between a secular and religious point of view.⁹⁸ They were interested in the symbolism and ritualism of early Christian art and the revival of Catholic movements, such as Tractarianism, with its espousal ceremonial and past traditions, ritual and sacraments, which challenged the established Anglican Church. The early work of the Brotherhood, especially works such as Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents* (1849-50), Hunt's *A Converted British Family Sheltering a Christian Missionary from the Persecution of the Druids* (1849-50) and Rossetti's *Ecce Ancilla Domini!* (1849-50), set out to reform Christian art but critics were dismayed by the Tractarianism and Catholicism of their art and suspected the artists themselves, of being agents of the revival of the Catholic faith in Victorian Britain. These paintings, especially Rossetti's, reveal a preoccupation with the forms of Christian symbol and sacrament. In this respect, the language and symbols that are shown to be important to liturgical ceremony and sacramental truths further emphasise the relationship between religion and art. Like Jones, the use of language and artistic representation is shown to communicate sacred meanings and the manifestation of the infinite within the finite.

⁹⁸ Jerome J. McGann, 'Rossetti's Significant Details', *Victorian Poetry*, 7:1, 41-54 (pp.42-43).

In the unpublished and unidentified draft, in which he reflects upon the goodness and badness of the Pre-Raphaelites, Jones writes that he feels that the work of the Pre-Raphaelites so largely sociological, moral, literary, religious or pseudo-religious that they never really 'transubstantiated' their 'content under the form of paint'.⁹⁹ Jones's use of the term 'sociological' here seems to refer to the social consciousness or criticism of Pre-Raphaelite artworks. His criticism of the Pre-Raphaelites here is also reflected in his repudiation of pseudo-Prudentias or bogus Prudentias in 'Art and Sacrament', including social conduct and secular moral systems, which all humans are committed to or the majority follow.¹⁰⁰ Jones is considering the 'transubstantiated' content of Pre-Raphaelite art and how, for him, it does not manifest itself. Yet the notion of transubstantiation and the sacramental is important to Pre-Raphaelite artworks and aesthetic theories, as shown in the religious and iconographic art of the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and throughout the works and artistic ideals of Rossetti and Burne-Jones. Jones reflects upon the processes of creating art, by means of analogy to the doctrine of Transubstantiation and the incarnational possibilities of art and language. Transubstantiation is used as a way to explain form and representation in art, with the 'reality' that 'significant form' brings into being.¹⁰¹ For Jones, the doctrine of Transubstantiation is most explicitly present in the sacrament of the Eucharist and is a fundamental part of his Catholicism. For the Pre-Raphaelites, the sacrament, both real and an idea, is a sign which carries theological implications for their art and artistic practices. As well as shaping Jones's theories through the idea and practice of

⁹⁹David Jones, unidentified fragment in National Library of Wales, quoted in Jonathan Miles and Derek Shiel, *David Jones: The Maker Unmade*, p.227.

¹⁰⁰ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.147.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p.159.

'art for art's sake', the Pre-Raphaelites were closer to Jones's position of sacramental art than he himself recognised or acknowledged.

D. G. Rossetti's ideas portray a sacramentalist view of art. McGann argues that for Rossetti art brings revelation and aspires to the condition of the devotional image. Rossetti wondered, as did the other Pre-Raphaelite artists, at the loss of devotional art, with its soul betrayed by the total physicality of the pictorial action and the ritual sacramentalism presupposed in the devotional image.¹⁰² Both McGann and David G. Riede suggest that whilst Rossetti uses Christian symbolism, he empties his work of theological significance, searching for an symbolist art not to express religious truths but spiritual value or a psychological need for this value.¹⁰³ Rossetti's focus is primarily on the visual and sacred meanings of Christian signs rather than Christian worship. Like Jones, he explores the dichotomies between the sacred and the profane, the fleshy and spiritual, and the notions of concealment and revelation which produces, for Rossetti, an aesthetic mysticism that explores symbol and sign. Rossetti's personal religious beliefs seem to have followed the duality of his work, veering between belief and scepticism and the positive and negative. Accounts of Rossetti's faith, mainly by his brother William Michael Rossetti, repeat that he never had any religious faith or was not a practising Catholic, being opposed to doctrinal belief or institutional worship, rather than rejecting Christianity completely. Not having any religious faith does not necessarily entail a total rejection of Christianity and Rossetti retains a strong aesthetic attachment to Christianity and some notion of the spiritual that retains

¹⁰² Jerome J. McGann, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game that Must be Lost* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2000), pp.5-7.

¹⁰³ David G. Riede, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Limits of Victorian Vision* (London: Cornell Press 1983), p.52.

historically Christian foundations. His artwork and poetry attest to his interest in medieval Catholicism, mainly through his love of Dante Aligheri and his fascination with Dante's commitment to Beatrice in *Vita Nuova* and *The Divine Comedy*. In seeing art as a means of revelation and as having spiritual value, it exemplifies his views as to the religious or theological experience of the arts.

The sacramentalism of Rossetti's early work, when his attachment to Christianity was stronger, is especially shown in his early project *Songs of the Art Catholic*, comprised of a series of poems Rossetti gathered together in 1847.¹⁰⁴ The poems that were to be featured in this project included 'The Blessed Damozel' and 'My Sister's Sleep'. His devotional images *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1848-9) and *Ecce Ancilla Domini!*, along with an accompanying sonnets for the first of these images, show contributions along a similar line to the 'Art Catholic'. It occurred around the time of his study into the early Italian painters. The project never went beyond manuscript form, but it is an important part of the formation his aesthetic ideals. The label 'Art-Catholic' implies that he endorsed the artistic forms and subjects from earlier ages, mostly medieval art and Christianity. It could be read purely as an interest in medieval Christianity or as sharing sympathies with Roman Catholicism. Riede argues that Rossetti contributed Art-Catholicism to the Pre-Raphaelite endeavour and that through it he found the means to express his love for medievalism, his love of an ideal woman, and his heritage as an Italian Englishman. Riede is critical of Rossetti's use of the term, claiming that it showed his devotion to art rather than any genuine faith and

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/11-1847.raw.html> [Date accessed:21 November 2019].

embracing Christianity for the sake of its aesthetic tradition.¹⁰⁵ However, his sacramental interest or belief, at this time, seems to extend further than just aesthetic tradition, as shown in a poem 'Sacrament Hymn' (1850). In this poem, the speaker receives the communion, he specifically invokes the sacrament of the eucharist: 'He gives me His body and blood;/The blood and the body (I'll think of it still)/ Of my Lord, which is Christ, which is God'.¹⁰⁶ The lines directly link to a Catholic belief in Transubstantiation and to the manifestation of God's presence. The label 'Art-Catholic' also implies, like Jones, that Catholicism and a sacramental view of art inspired his artistic beliefs and practices.

In 1853, Morris and Burne-Jones entered Exeter College, Oxford, to study theology. Although they both left decided upon a change of career, from the Church to art, Burne-Jones, like Rossetti, never lost his interest in Christianity or Christian art. He would also seek to revitalise modern Christianity through beautiful and meaningful forms of church decoration, especially his stained-glass windows. It is difficult to gauge the precise nature of Burne-Jones's faith but his letters, reports of conversations, and Georgiana Burne-Jones's *Memorials* are filled with references to Christian belief and aspects of theology. In discussion, Burne-Jones speaks of his art as having been a 'call', like the voice of God, and that what the person has to do is 'express' themselves utterly, turning out what is inside them, 'on the side of beauty, right and truth'.¹⁰⁷ In this case, Burne-Jones's faith may have been personal rather than institutional. Burne-Jones's theological education impacted upon

¹⁰⁵Jerome J. McGann, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game that Must be Lost*, p.5. David G. Riede, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Limits of Victorian Vision*, p.20.

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/ap4.n12.16.rad.html> [Date accessed:21 November 2019].

¹⁰⁷ Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*, (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited 1906), p.255.

his art, in particular his early reading of John Henry Newman. He was reported as saying that:

I could not do without medieval Christianity. The central idea of it and all it has gathered to itself made the Europe that I exist in. The enthusiasm and devotion, the learning and the art, the humanity and the romance, the self-denial and splendid achievement that the human race can never be deprived of, except by a cataclysm, that would all but destroy man himself – all belong to it.¹⁰⁸

Like Rossetti, he was drawn to medieval Christianity, its artwork and the spiritual significance of this art, capturing ‘enthusiasm’, ‘devotion’ and ‘humanity’. His theological ideals reveal themselves through the metaphysical and divine beauty in his artwork, and what he called a ‘love between worlds’, portraying dreamscapes and mystical and spiritual worlds, between earth and heaven. According to Georgina Burne-Jones, Burne-Jones deliberates on Ruskin’s conviction that the artist paints God for the world. In a discussion between himself and his acquaintance Dr Sebastian Evans in 1893 about ‘the religion of art’, recorded by Georgina Burne-Jones in her *Memorials*, he defined a sacramental view of art:

that was an awful thought of Ruskin’s, that artists paint God for the world. There’s a lump of greasy pigment at the end of Michael Angelo’s hog-bristle brush, and by the time it has been laid on the stucco, there is something there that all men with eyes recognize as divine. Think of what it means. It is the power of bringing God into the world – making God manifest. It is giving back her Child that was crucified to Our Lady of the Sorrows.¹⁰⁹

Burne-Jones’s statement about art’s ‘power of bringing God into the world’ and ‘making God manifest’ portrays how his concepts of theology and art were inspired by the incarnational

¹⁰⁸ Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*, p.160.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.257.

and by transubstantiation, making and manifesting a presence both real and sacramental.

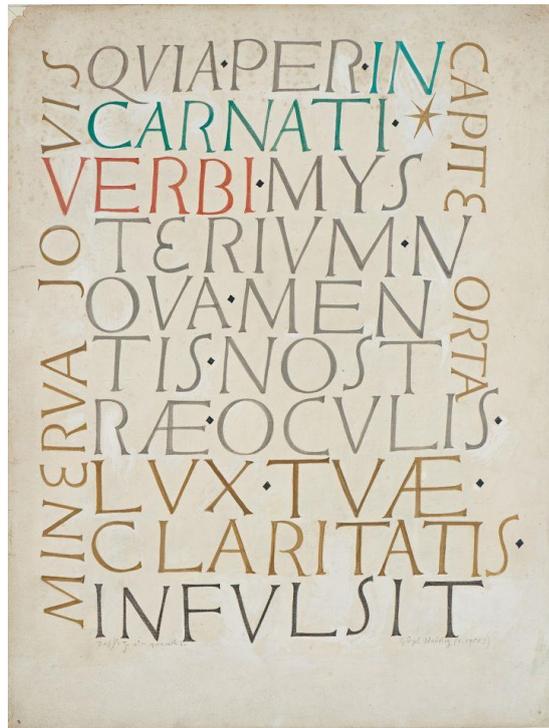
Burne-Jones's view of the divine nature of art is similar to Ruskin's view, as outlined in volumes such as *Modern Painters* (1843–1860). For Ruskin, art should be used to contemplate the greater workings of God and meditate on the mysteries of God.¹¹⁰

However, Burne-Jones's view of art is more sacramental than Ruskin's, the artists' role for Burne-Jones, is not to just paint God for the viewer or reflect His nature but to make God manifest, as a means of revelation and presence. Burne-Jones's statements are similar to Jones's not only in the connection between God and art and the notion of making things present, but also through linking it to the Passion of Christ. It shows his interest in the reality of the incarnation and the metaphysical possibilities behind the visual iconography of religious art. It is a contemplation of a divine otherworldly beauty and of mystical being, which is revealed and has the power to redeem.

Thomas Dilworth has argued that alongside the structure of *The Anathemata*, when Jones writes about recalling or amanuensis, his use of eucharistic terminology presupposes a poetic transubstantiation analogous to his painting.¹¹¹ Here, I shall explore how Jones's idea of sacramental art manifests itself in his own works. Jones represented the Mass through image and word, and explored this relationship in his inscriptions.

¹¹⁰ In his lectures on the Art of England, Ruskin speaks of the Pre-Raphaelites' 'materialisation' or 'realisation', that their spiritual persons and subjects of their art 'must usually be of real persons in a solid world'. For Ruskin, this is represented in Holman Hunt's and Rossetti's artworks. Ruskin claims Burne-Jones to be a painter 'neither of Divine History, nor of Divine Natural History, but of Mythology, accepted as such, and understood by its symbolic figures to represent only general truths, or abstract ideas'. For Ruskin, Burne-Jones's art is characterised as romantic, and that romance is captured in the passions appealed to by the things related rather than through the manner of representation. John Ruskin, *The Art of England: Lectures Given in Oxford, Lecture II: Mythic Schools of Painting* (Kent: George Allen 1883) pp.46-49

¹¹¹ Dilworth, *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones*, p.10.



3.1, David Jones, *QUIA PER INCARNATI* (1953), Kettle's Yard, Cambridge.

The translation of his *QUIA PER INCARNATI* (1953) (Figure 3.1) reads 'For by the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of thy glory has shone anew upon the eyes of our mind'. The words and their visuality in colours of green, ochre, black and gold, embody the presence of the Word; the Word as an incarnate presence in the Catholic liturgy. The eucharist recalls the rite of Mass with Christ's original sacrifice and his incarnation and is recalled throughout his work. For Jones, as seen in the inscription, language itself has incarnational possibilities through which he emphasises its material qualities. In *The Anthemata*, the 'rudimentary bowl' becomes a chalice and the persona asks, 'How the *calix* | without which | how *the* re-

calling?’¹¹² The italicised ‘the’ and again, the ‘re-calling’ with a hyphen emphasises its presence and becomes a signa for the reality of the Mass and the sign of the Chalice. The structure of the Mass is recalled through ritual, sign, gestures and the ordering of words. In *In Parenthesis* the ‘ritual’ ordering of words and the ‘liturgy’ of ‘high order’ initiate John Ball and other soldiers into a mystery of command. The Lance-corporal ‘brings in a manner, baptism, and a metaphysical order to the bankruptcy of the occasion’.¹¹³ The reference to baptism and metaphysical order divest the bankruptcy with meaning and ritual, with the commandments recalling the order of the Mass. The Mabinog’s Liturgy’ section of *The Anthemata* liturgically recounts a medieval Christmas through a Mass attended by Gwenhwyfar (Queen Guinevere) and throughout advent, makes sense of Christ’s birth in time and the birth which ‘*Lux fulgebit hodie*’, sheds light and radiance on darkness.¹¹⁴ *The Anthemata* opens in the middle of the Mass, at the moment of the consecration of the eucharist:

We already and first of all discern him making this thing
 other. His groping syntax, if we attend, already shapes:
 ADSCRIPTUM, RATAM, RATIONABILEM...and by pre
 -application and for *them*, under modes and patterns altogether
 theirs, the holy and venerable hands lift up an efficacious sign.¹¹⁵

The Mass is an anamnesis, and thus *The Anthemata* is an anamnesis, a re-calling of the different aspects that comprise the poet’s imagination, the Mass and the geological, religious and cultural formation of Western civilisation. Although Jones is cautious in his

¹¹² Jones, *The Anthemata*, p.79.

¹¹³ David Jones, *In Parenthesis* (London: Faber & Faber 2014), pp.1-2.

¹¹⁴ Jones, *The Anthemata*, p.221.

¹¹⁵ Jones, *The Anthemata*, p.49.

preface about reducing the poem to a purely theological stance, in recalling the sacrament of the eucharist at the beginning of the poem, Jones indicates that the poem itself, made by the poet sign-maker, is a sacrament intended to restore a lost wholeness in modern culture and civilisation.

For Jones, the artist and poet is analogous to the role of the priest; all are dependent on the sacramental. The artist, poet and priest or 'sign-maker' are placed in a similar role, having the 'specific task' of 'somehow or other, to lift up valid sign'.¹¹⁶ His visual images of the Mass depict this moment of sign-making, the moment in which the priest lifts up the chalice. A pencil sketch from the Trenches (1917) depicts soldiers genuflecting in front of the Priest ready to receive Holy Communion. His intricate watercolour *A Latere Dextra* (1949) depicts the Priest lifting up the chalice and consecrated host and altar boys kneeling before the altar. The picture is full of visual rhythms, from the architecture of the church, with its pillars framing the picture, to the Pentecostal wind in the guttering flames of the candles, the incense and the ringing of the bells, to the circular motifs throughout the picture which form halos. The picture also depicts the typological imagery which features throughout his work, as seen in the carving of the lamb of God in the right-hand side foreground on the side-altar, the doves carved into the columns and vaults of the ceiling and the Stations of the Cross, with the crucifixion above the altar and the statue of the Virgin Mary holding Jesus's wounded body when taken down from the Cross. The intense visual detail, the abundance of symbols and the flowers which adorn the painting all focus on the sacrament of Holy Communion.

¹¹⁶ Jones, 'Preface to The Anathemata', p.23.

Like Jones's visual depiction of the Mass in *A Latere Dextra*, Burne-Jones portrays eucharistic gestures in his art, as seen in his triptych *The Annunciation and the Adoration of the Magi* (1861). The central focus is on the reality of the incarnation in the Annunciation, which frames the central panel, and the birth of Jesus. The Kings and shepherds are depicted in a gesture of offering and adoration before Christ, who is the sign and the Word made flesh.

In his religious art, works such as *The Annunciation* (1876-9) and *The Morning of the Resurrection* (1886) (Figure 3.2) Burne-Jones visually portrays moments of revelation and reincarnation. In his painting *The Morning of the Resurrection* he depicts Mary Magdalene's comprehending the resurrection of Christ, accompanied by angels. The painting itself can be seen as a visual comprehension of the resurrection and a visual statement of Burne-Jones's idea about art having the 'power of bringing God into the world' and 'making God manifest.' In this respect, the painting has a redemptive quality, giving back as Burne-Jones said 'her Child that was crucified to Our Lady of the Sorrows'.



3.2. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Morning of the Resurrection*, (1886), Tate Britain, London.

When the painting was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery it was accompanied by the quotation from St John Chapter XX, v 14, "And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus." It represents Mary Magdalene's sight and recognition of Christ. The angels, Christ's presence, the open tomb and the background space of cave, which is shaped almost like a threshold, suggests the liminality between heaven and earth and the possibility of an afterlife. The painting held a personal resonance for Burne-Jones as it was on Easter Sunday that he heard news of the death of Laura Lyttelton, who had modelled as Mary Magdalene. He would inscribe the painting with her initials and later designed a peacock gesso memorial to her, which David Jones would have seen at Mells, with the peacock as a symbol of resurrection and the laurel tree which signified life. In both *The Annunciation* and *The Morning of the Resurrection* the angels, represented as being present in moments of human and spiritual significance, are in themselves liminal figure which hover between the spiritual and the physical and between human and divine worlds. The theological or spiritual elements of his art, including his non-religious or mythological paintings, support Burne-Jones's belief in the redeeming power of art and beauty.

Like Burne-Jones's triptych *The Annunciation and the Adoration of the Magi* and Jones's *A Latere Dextra*, Rossetti's first oil paintings *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1848-9) and *Ecce Ancilla Domini!* typify his rich use of Christian symbolism. Rossetti interprets and explains the symbolism of *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, in its accompanying sonnet 'Mary's Girlhood', for instance on the cloth of red is 'Tripoint' to teach that 'Christ is not yet born' and alludes to Christ's Passion; the lilies, tended by the young angel, prefigure the

Annunciation and the palm branch and the thorn, both 'seven-thorn'd' and 'leaved' on the floor symbolise her great sorrow and reward, again, alluding to Palm Sunday and the Passion.¹¹⁷ In *Ecce Ancilla Domini!* the embroidery of the three lilies by the young Mary is now completed and with its three flowers, echoes the lily held by Gabriel. There are the symbolic associations of the colours, white for purity, blue as the Queen of Heaven, red for the Passion, gold for divine status. Gabriel has an almost incarnate presence, hovering by the fire on his feet. Like Jones and Burne-Jones, Rossetti visually explores the incarnational in his art and poetry. In their sacramental nature and under the 'Art Catholic' label, Rossetti's paintings and sign-making simultaneously recall and foreshadow, as the Mass does for Jones, the remembrance of the annunciation and resurrection of Christ as an ethereal and material presence.¹¹⁸

As shown in the paintings and accompanying poem, Rossetti was, like Jones, concerned with representation, sign and sign-making. This is evident in his poem 'The Blessed Damozel'. The poem is concerned primarily with outward and visible signs and, as with Jones's notion of the sacramental, recalls the spiritual through these outward and visible signs, such as the dove and the living mystic tree. As explored in the Lawrence chapter, Rossetti endows the symbols in the poem and the Damozel herself with a material presence which is heightened through her separation from earth and her lover and her place in heaven. In this sense, Rossetti, like Jones, uses the symbolism to examine the incarnational quality of language,

¹¹⁷ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 'Mary's Girlhood' in *D. G. Rossetti's Poetical Works*, pp. 353-354 (p.354), 16-24.

¹¹⁸ In both his lectures on the Art of England, Ruskin singles out Rossetti's 'Virgin in the House of St. John' (1859) as representing the 'purity and completeness' in the materialistic and reverent approach of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's treatments of the life of Christ. John Ruskin, *The Art of England: Lectures Given in Oxford, Lecture I: Realistic Schools of Painting* (Kent: George Allen 1883) p.7.

adding a material quality. Isobel Armstrong argues the poem is concerned with how the transcendent mystical body is to be represented by an outward sign and is asking in 'what way we perceive the mystical body through the physical body and how we invest the material with significance'.¹¹⁹ Jones, like Rossetti and Lawrence, celebrates the body in 'Art and Sacrament', arguing that through sign-making, it can be seen as an aid towards a spiritual state, implying that the body itself is 'an infirmity or a kind of deprivation'. He sees the body as a 'unique benefit and splendour' to which we are committed 'by the same token we are to Ars, so to sign and sacrament'.¹²⁰ The Damozel's fleshiness explores the notion of transubstantiation and incarnation, with the mystical body being realised through the physical body. Rossetti uses the dichotomies in these signs, between the incarnate and the ideal, death and life and physical and spiritual love. Although Jones celebrates the body, Rossetti's poem extends this further to scrutinise the relationship or oppositions between romantic love and faith through the Damozel's expression of sexual desire and her longing to be reunited with her lover. She sees heaven as the means of being physically and spiritually reunited with her lover, praying for him to be with her and ultimately leading to his death. Rossetti's symbolism places an emphasis on ritual and liturgy, especially to prayer, connected to the notion of the ceremonial in Tractarian orthodoxy. John Henry Newman, as an espouser of Tractarianism, declared that he wanted 'a living church, made of flesh and blood, complexion, motion and action, and a will of its own'.¹²¹ The Damozel's figure is symbolically endowed with life in death, flesh, complexion and a will of her own but not motion or action. Conversely, Jones defined art as action. In this respect, the figure of the

¹¹⁹ Isobel Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics* (London: Routledge 1993), p.247.

¹²⁰ Jones, 'Art and Sacrament', p.165.

¹²¹ John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, (London: Penguin Books 1994), p.79.

Damozel represents art and the process of 'sign-making' through the formation of a visual and represented physical body and material signs occurring through the instigation of a mystical body. It also explores the reversal of this process, in representing a mystical body and spiritual truth through the physical and material.

Rossetti's most overt statement about art, and his own aesthetic ideals, occurs in his short story/manifesto 'Hand and Soul' (1850) and is set in the Middle Ages. The story is about a young artist Chiaro dell' Erma, who from youth loves art deeply. It is concerned with Chiaro's devotion to art and the soul of art. He feels that his art 'had always been a feeling of worship and service. It was the peace-offering that he made to God and to his own soul for the eager selfishness of his aim'.¹²² He then suspects that what he took for religious reverence in his work was no more than a worship of beauty. Similarly, art for Jones is religious and is in its nature bound to God and was concerned with beauty, not through worship but through its sacramental nature. Chiaro later realises that art is an expression of his soul, as Burne-Jones implied in his notion of art's calling. In dialogue with his soul, who appears before him as the image of a woman, he is told that to best serve God is to 'Set thine hand and thy soul to serve man with God'.¹²³ Chiaro's art must become devotional, as a sacramental rather than representational art, not merely for worship or service. The realisation of the sacramental nature of art is achieved through a revelation of Chiaro's inner life, as his soul bids him to paint her, to take his art, and as a 'servant of God' paint her thus.¹²⁴ With this

¹²² Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 'Hand and Soul', in *The Pre-Raphaelites: Writings and Sources*, III, ed. by Inga Bryden (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press 1998), pp.7-17 (p.10).

¹²³ Rossetti, 'Hand and Soul', p.14.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.15.

painting, Chiaro creates his masterpiece (his only work to hang in the Florentine gallery in 1847) and his devotional image, through which he acquires knowledge. The painting of his soul, when viewed in the latter part of the story, inspires awe in its 'literality' and its perception, portraying something seen yet a thing not 'to be seen of men'.¹²⁵

Likewise for Jones, art represents something that is significant of something greater. As Jones's writes about Hogarth's image, the image of Chiaro's soul is a *signa*, a sign of his reality, made to have a significance, standing independent of the viewer's reaction and with its meaning, standing alone of the artists' reality. The image implies the sacred in its teaching of the sacredness of the soul, and through Chiaro's sacrifice, which recalls God's own, in his devotion and for his art. The command to paint one's own soul also shows a belief in a subjective and Romantic art which is reflected in Jones's point about the artist's own reality in their work. However, Jones's view that this reality stands independently and that all humans are inherently sign-makers and sacramentalists implies a more objective view of art where the art stands independently to subjective meaning of the artist. In 'Hand and Soul' and the title of 'Songs of the Art Catholic' Rossetti expresses his aim for a sacramental art which would hold sacred meaning and consequences. It was to be an art of imaginative historical construction that would provide an example of a living and sacred art. Both 'Hand and Soul' and 'Songs of the Art Catholic' highlight his emphasis on the spiritual potential and divine nature of art but not a recovery of institutionalised sacramental forms. The story depicts themes which would preoccupy Rossetti across his career, namely the

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.16.

interconnection between love and faith and, as seen in the figure of the woman who appears before Chiaro dell' Erma, the incarnate and the ideal.

Jones, Burne-Jones and Rossetti, strongly felt the spiritual emptiness of their age and of its art and poetry. This is supported in Burne-Jones's claim that 'the more materialistic science becomes, the more angels I shall paint' and his love of 'the immaterial'.¹²⁶ These sentiments echo Yeats's, who followed Morris and Burne-Jones in his hatred of Victorian materialism and his praise of beauty, an aspect which informs all his work, his nationalism and occultism. Burne-Jones and Rossetti sought and portrayed an otherworldly beauty, a beauty which is spiritually distinct from contemporary and everyday life. Their works convey the timelessness and possibilities of beauty and desire beyond the material and modern world. For both Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, the sacramental and theological impacted upon their artistic processes. A sacramental view of art explores representation in art and the possibilities inherent in sign-making. However, for Jones, the doctrines and sacraments are a fundamental part of his faith. For the Pre-Raphaelites, the theological and sacramental are important to their artistic process but not as a rediscovery of institutionalised sacramental forms or doctrinal support of their personal faith or beliefs. Nonetheless, through a theological view of art, there is a shared emphasis and concern for Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites for spiritual and moral regeneration and for the redeeming power of art in what they saw as a remedial approach to civilizational decline.

¹²⁶ Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*, p.300.

The Pre-Raphaelites, Jones and Arthurian Legend

Early examples of Jones's work and their medieval subjects show how important the Pre-Raphaelites were to Jones's use of Arthurian sources and legend in both his visual and literary works. As Robichaud argues, Jones shows a 'markedly Pre-Raphaelite enthusiasm for medieval authors', particularly Malory who 'was an important catalyst in the development of his unique Modernist style'.¹²⁷ His enthusiasm for Malory is evident, in his visual depictions of scenes from *Morte D' Arthur* in *Merlin Land* (1930-32), *Guinever*, *The Four Queens* and *Trystan ac Essyllt* and through allusions in his literary works *In Parenthesis*, *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord* and essays such as 'The Myth of Arthur'. Malory was a constant source of influence for Jones's Arthurianism in both art and literature, as evidenced in his pencil, ink and watercolour *Chart of Sources for Arthurian Legends*, also known as *Map of Themes in the Artist's Mind* (1943). The chart names the historical events, cultural movements, authors and works from which the legends of King Arthur emerge; the thickest and most defined arrow leads from French and German Romance to Malory, the clearest inscribed word on the map. The chart also includes Geoffrey of Monmouth, Chrétien de Troyes's Arthurian writings and Tennyson in the bottom right hand corner. The various preliminary drafts for the chart show Jones's fascination with influence and historical sources for Malory's and Tennyson's Arthurian works. Jones notes that 'Tennyson used Welsh stuff as well as Malory' and that Malory 'got all his stuff from "the French book"', but may have used Anglo-Welsh material also, in the material of Gawain he uses French and

¹²⁷ Robichaud, *Making the Past Present; David Jones, the Middle Ages, & Modernism*, p.6.

Tennyson etc. follow him'. For Jones, Malory's 'M. D. [*Morte D' Arthur*] is the only book in which all the separate romances are made into one continuous story'.¹²⁸

Whilst the chart does not mention the Pre-Raphaelites or Morris, it does show their shared historical and for the Pre-Raphaelites, contemporary sources and influences. The evidence of their shared interest in the variations and history of Arthurian legends points to Jones coming to Arthurian influences, whether directly or indirectly, through the Pre-Raphaelites and Morris. Morris, Burne-Jones and Jones were all familiar with these variations of Arthur; in his essays 'The Myth of Arthur' and 'The Arthurian Legends' Jones traces the genealogy of the figure of Arthur and throughout his poetry alludes to Geoffrey of Monmouth's writings and Celtic sources. Similarly, Morris and Burne-Jones were familiar with the Old French Romances, such as those by Chrètien de Troyes, and a near-calligraphic manuscript from Kelmscott Manor shows Morris's translation of the Old French *Lancelot of the Lake*. Jones also owned a translation of this thirteenth-century text.¹²⁹ These writings brought the elements of courtly love, chivalric code and spiritual quests to the tales, and Malory's text presents Arthur as a Christian King; indeed, William Caxton's preface to the first printed edition of *Morte D' Arthur* reaffirms Arthur's historical and imaginative existence as a

¹²⁸ David Jones, 'Map of Arthurian Legend', Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LO3/3/Fol.1 and LO3/3.

¹²⁹ See Florence S. Boos, 'Where Have All the Manuscripts Gone? Morris's Autographs in Diaspora', *The Journal of William Morris Studies*, XXII:4, 2018, 4-14 (p.6). The article also includes a photograph of the manuscript of *Lancelot of the Lake*, featured on p.7. See also *The Library of David Jones: A Catalogue*, p.166.

renowned Christian king.¹³⁰ Through the fellowship of Arthur's knights of the Round Table, Malory too emphasises the themes of redemption, loyalty and unity.

In an interview in 1973, Jones states that he 'couldn't be without Malory'.¹³¹ Georgiana Burne-Jones states that *Morte D' Arthur* 'became literally a part' of her husband with 'its strength and beauty, its mystical religion and noble chivalry of action, the world of lost history and romance in the names of people and places'.¹³² Jones, like Burne-Jones, regarded Malory as the authentic English source of Arthurian legend. Both were critical about the treatment of Arthurian legend which followed the more romanticised version of Arthurian legend made popular by Alfred Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1859-1889), rather than Malory's *Morte D' Arthur*.¹³³ Morris and Burne-Jones continually returned to Malory, in their artistic collaborations, regarding his direct style as a confirmation of honesty and sincerity. Jones also found the notion that *Morte D' Arthur* lacks construction 'somewhat superficial', championing the 'imaginative power' of Malory.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ William Caxton, 'Caxton's Preface', in Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur: The Winchester Manuscript* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998), pp.528-530.

¹³¹ David Jones, 'Mabon Studios Interview, 31 August-3 September 1973' in *David Jones on Religion, Politics, and Culture: Unpublished Prose*, ed. by Thomas Berenato, Anne Price-Owen and Kathleen Henderson Staudt (London: Bloomsbury Publishing 2018), pp.283-301 (p.290).

¹³² Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 1 1833-1867* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited 1906), p.116.

¹³³ See Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*. David Jones, 'On the Difficulties of One Writer of Welsh Affinity Whose Language is English', in *The Dying Gaul and Other Writings* pp. 30-34 and David Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', in *Epoch And Artist*, pp. 212-259.

¹³⁴ Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', pp. 212-259, (p.248).

The Arthurian revival in Victorian England was a literary and cultural phenomenon, with the reinvention of Arthurian legends forming part of a new historicism and medievalism. Arthurian legends were revived, reinvented and retold not only in poetry and art but in the theatre, for example, the 1894 Lyceum Theatre's production of *King Arthur*, with which Burne-Jones was involved with costume and set design, and Wagner's musical drama *Tristan und Isolde* (1859) and in the Gothic Revival of design and architecture. For Inga Bryden, the Pre-Raphaelites created a 'psychological dimension' in their treatment of these myths and legends, notably in Morris's poem 'The Defence of Guenevere'.¹³⁵ Their workings with Arthurian tales and Malory hold a personal resonance, as seen in the tales of Tristan and Isolde and Lancelot and Guinevere. Malory was an influential source for literary and artistic treatments and accentuated the values of the courtly and chivalric which were adopted by Victorians in what Debra N. Mancoff calls an 'ethical medievalism and revivalist chivalry' as a marker of modern behaviour and ideals.¹³⁶ As with the historical sources, the nineteenth-century King Arthur held connotations of virtue and honour, emerging as a metaphor of national identity. Bryden argues that there was a strong Victorian tradition of using Arthur for epic poetic matter tied to nationhood, the sense of empire and morality and 'to change the position of poetry as a function of political discourse'.¹³⁷ Although Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones were part of the popular Victorian Arthurian revival, their workings with Arthurian legend and medieval sources are not intentionally imperialistic or nationalistic. Indeed, Morris and Burne-Jones were especially critical of imperialism and the connection

¹³⁵ Inga Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur: The Arthurian Legends in Victorian Culture* (Oxford: Ashgate publishing 2005), pp.2-3. For Bryden's discussion of Morris's 'The Defence of Guenevere', pp.104-8.

¹³⁶ Debra N. Mancoff, *The Arthurian Revival in Victorian Art* (Oxford: Taylor & Francis 1990), p.28

¹³⁷ Bryden, *Reinventing King Arthur: The Arthurian Legends in Victorian Culture*, pp.2-3

between British nationhood and Empire. Instead they sought to recreate a lost sense of romance and the spirit world of Arthurian legend.

The mythic and mystic quality of Arthurian legends offered the Pre-Raphaelites an imaginative alternative in an age of industrialisation. For Morris, the medieval era offered not only an artistic and literary inspiration, but a model for a way of life that combined art and society and valued authentic and individualistic craftsmanship and integrity. Morris and Burne-Jones saw their art and their Arthurian subject matter as a substitute for the materialism of Victorian England and as a vision of salvation in what they saw as a declining mechanistic society. Likewise, the Arthurian legends were used as an image of civilizational change and a declining society in modernist literature and art, largely through the image of the Waste Land and Grail quest. Eliot's *The Waste Land* uses the imagery to emphasise a moral, spiritual and aesthetic impoverishment, using the Fisher king to emphasise the absence of a questing hero trying to liberate or revivify the Waste Land or a stalled Grail quest.¹³⁸ Eliot's use of this myth and symbol and the use of allusion are exemplified in his own review of Joyce's use of myth in *Ulysses*, developing 'a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history'.¹³⁹ Likewise, in his review of Charles Williams's and C. S. Lewis's *Arthurian Torso* (1948), Jones claims that 'we have been forced to live history as Tennyson's

¹³⁸ Jonathan Ulliot, *The Medieval Presence in Modernist Literature: The Quest to Fail* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2016), pp.48-50.

¹³⁹ T. S. Eliot, 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. by Lawrence Rainy (Oxford: Blackwell 2005), pp.165-167.

generation was not, and that, plus the possibilities of a greater sense of the past [...] should count'.¹⁴⁰ Eliot's ideas about the use of myth show similarities with Jones's notion of recalling and sign-making within contemporary society. For Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, the image of the Waste Land, Grail quest and Sleeping Arthur are contemporaneous to their social and cultural climates. The combination of legendary subject matter, the imaginary spaces of the compositions and their ideas about the processes of creating art, reveal their search for a truthful and utopian art, holding underlying social and spiritual meanings.

Jones would have encountered visual depictions of Malory through the Pre-Raphaelites and their works inform the historical allusions and rendering of the historical, literary and mythological aspects of Jones's own Malory paintings. Mostly, the Arthurian works of the Pre-Raphaelites and Jones feature legends that are connected to Arthur rather than depict Arthur himself. The work of the Pre-Raphaelites, and Jones, create public and private versions of Arthur. Arthur tends to be a presence-in-absence, with the focus being predominantly on Lancelot and Guinevere, as seen for example in Morris's poem 'King Arthur's Tomb' where Lancelot meets Guinevere again and recalls their story. Similarly, Morris's 'Near Avalon' depicts the ship and journey that takes Arthur to Avalon upon his death; the association with Arthur is evoked but he is never explicitly mentioned. In Jones's poem 'The Sleeping Lord', like Morris's 'Near Avalon' and 'King Arthur's Tomb', the affinity with Arthur is implied rather than explicit. The public versions of Arthur tend to focus on Arthur's capacity as leader; one of the only Pre-Raphaelite paintings to feature Arthur

¹⁴⁰ David Jones, 'The Arthurian Legends', in *Epoch And Artist*, pp. 202-211 (p.205).

directly is Burne-Jones's *The Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* (1891-1896). Similarly, Jones depicts Arthur in his capacity as a leader, again, in 'The Sleeping Lord' and in his illustration *Merlin Land*, where Arthur lies wounded. Their private versions of the legends, within artworks and published poems, focus on Arthur as a king and husband, holding personal resonances for the poet and artist. When painting *The Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* Burne-Jones identified himself with King Arthur and Avalon as an amalgamation of his personal life and his artistic ideals.¹⁴¹ Arthur's synonymity to the Welsh landscape in 'The Sleeping Lord' is private in terms of Jones's personal connection to place and heritage. The lack of Pre-Raphaelite engagement with Arthur as a leader perhaps reflects their disillusionment with the Victorian public sphere and the associations that it held.

In his essay 'The Myth of Arthur', Jones points out that within his own time, the name Arthur evokes Tennyson and the *Idylls of the King* rather than Malory, the late Roman horse-troops, Celtic War-gods or an agricultural deity. For Jones, Malory and the English-French Arthurian sources are 'a connecting link between the tradition of Wales and that of England' and he is critical of how Arthurian material has been vitiated by 'kind of Tennysonian romanticism' which is very distinct from Malory and the Welsh deposits.¹⁴² He argues that 'we should feel, along with the contemporary twist, application, or what you will, the whole weight of what lies hidden – the many strata of it'.¹⁴³ This sense of exploring the many

¹⁴¹ Burne-Jones wrote to Georgiana Burne-Jones that 'I am at Avalon- not yet in Avalon...I shall let most things pass me by...If I even want to reach Avalon'. It is said that he mimicked the pose of King Arthur, from the painting, in his sleep. Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*, p.116 and p.340.

¹⁴² David Jones, 'On the Difficulties of One Writer of Welsh Affinity Whose Language is English', in *The Dying Gaul and Other Writings*, pp.30-34 (p.33).

¹⁴³ Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', p.234.

historical layers that comprise the tales of King Arthur is evident in Jones's own workings with the legends in his literary and visual works.

Jones's writing during the First World War and his response to the war in *In Parenthesis*, with its allusions to Malory, bring together his own lived experiences as a soldier and his interest in romance literature from before the war period. Thomas Dilworth argues that his late Victorian childhood imbued him 'with idealistic, patriotic, imperialist values' and that his early reading of Arthurian legend within this environment gave him a sense of the 'National Romance of imperial Britain.'¹⁴⁴ Medieval chivalry is held up as an ideal to a modern soldier in Jones's *The Quest*, through the example of a knight. Medieval chivalry was an ideal, Paul Fussell argues, espoused by well-known and popular literature of the late Victorian era, 'especially the Arthurian poems of Tennyson and the pseudo-romances of William Morris'.¹⁴⁵ The historical illustration of *The Quest* depicts the four figures who are involved in the quest; a Knight, a Damsel, Minstrel and Scholar.¹⁴⁶ The heavy outlines and poses of the figures show an indebtedness to the Pre-Raphaelite illustration which Jones was taught at Camberwell Art School and are reminiscent of Rossetti's and Burne-Jones's early illustrative works, such as Rossetti's 'The Lady of Shalott' for the Moxon Tennyson and his 'The Maids of Elfenmere' for William Allingham's *Day and Night Songs* (1854). These illustrations were an

¹⁴⁴ Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War* (London: Enitharmon Press 2012), p.19.

¹⁴⁵ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1975), p.11.

¹⁴⁶ For copyright reasons this image cannot be reproduced. The image is reproduced in Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War*, p.180.

influence for Burne-Jones too, as shown in his illustrations for Archibald MacLaren's book of Fairy tales, which he began in 1854.

In *The Quest*, the Knight, Damsel, Minstrel and Scholar embark upon the 'Quest of the Castle called Heart's Desire'. Unlike Morris's prose romances, the tale is an allegory. On discovering the castle, the group find that it is a utopian society, but they find themselves unable to enter and each is entreated to return home to work honestly at each of their disciplines as this is the only way they might gain access to the castle. In this piece, medieval chivalry is held up as an ideal to be emulated and the invocation of the Knight to make war 'not but for the cause of liberty' and to 'strike not but to make men free' reinforces this ideal.¹⁴⁷ Whilst the idea of fighting for liberty may have an affinity with a Morris-like socialism, it also implies for Dilworth 'an altruistic belief in the Allied cause'.¹⁴⁸ Jones employs propagandist images of Arthurianism, medieval chivalry and battles. The imagery offers a comprehensive account of the moral causes of conflict. The castle acts as an allegory for God in heaven and is perpetrated as a guarantor of chivalric values. Jones's Illustrations, 'Is there Peace?' (1917), 'Germany and Peace' (1917) and 'Captive Civilisation and the Black Knight of Russia' (1918) were published in *The Graphic* magazine while he was in the trenches. They employ Arthurian imagery to depict Germany and England as two knights battling for the maidens 'Peace' and 'Civilization'.¹⁴⁹ The use of Arthurian imagery was an embodiment of the national consciousness. In Autumn 1916, during the Battle of the Somme

¹⁴⁷ David Jones, *The Quest*, reproduced in Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War*, pp. 180-183 (p.182).

¹⁴⁸ Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War*, p.183.

¹⁴⁹ Reproduced in Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War*, p.144-5 and 189.

and when Jones was back in London on leave, Burne-Jones's *The Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* went on show at Burlington House, a central piece in a national exhibition organised by Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. The painting had not been displayed since the year of Burne-Jones's death in 1898. Edward Poynter, president of Royal Academy and Burne-Jones's brother-in-law, encouraged a patriotic display of Britain's handicrafts and design and emphasised the symbolic relevance of Burne-Jones's painting of King Arthur and its resurgence of chivalric values of courage, fidelity and self-sacrifice. In this way, the exhibition used Burne-Jones's painting as an appropriation of a private, contemplative work of art for a public purpose. In line with Poynter's exhibition, Jones's early writings and drawings demonstrate his initially romantic view of the First World War.

By the time Jones enlisted he had read most of the works which would inform *In Parenthesis*. The allusions to Malory in *In Parenthesis* are predominantly to Lancelot and to Knights. For example Dai Greatcoat, John Ball's comrade, is reminiscent of Malory's Knight Dai 'de la Cote male taile' (the badly-shaped coat) whose name is Breunor le Noire and vows not to remove his coat until his father's death is avenged, through warfare or malicious actions. Writing *In Parenthesis* many years later, Jones was disillusioned with his own early idealisation of the war with 'the exploitation of our youthful innocence' and their heads having been 'filled with a good deal of nonsense as to the nature and need of that struggle'.¹⁵⁰ Malory presents the disintegration of Arthur and the Round Table which Jones

¹⁵⁰ David Jones, 'Essay on Adolf Hitler', in *David Jones on Religion, Politics, and Culture: Unpublished Prose*, ed. by Thomas Berenato, Anne Price-Owen and Kathleen Henderson Staudt, pp.57-99 (p.59).

uses to reflect the effects of the War. In contrast to his earlier writings, these allusions to the past chivalric world in *In Parenthesis* present images of cultural breakdown and the moral uncertainty of the war. In this respect, Jones's use of Arthurian legend and allusion changes, and his use of medieval and Celtic material stands counter to the globalised world of economic and military imperialism. Jones celebrates Welsh and Celtic cultures in his attempts to recall and evoke the origins of the West, particularly in *The Anathemata*.¹⁵¹ For Jones, Arthurian legends are a continuing tradition in the face of change or what he saw as civilizational decline in the twentieth century. In his essay 'The Myth of Arthur' (1959), Jones defines the function of Arthurian legend:

To conserve, to develop, to bring together, to make significant for the present what the past holds, without dilution or any deleting, but rather by understanding and transubstantiating the material, this is the function of genuine myth, neither pedantic nor popularizing, not indifferent to scholarship, nor antiquarian, but saying always: 'of these thou hast given me have I lost none'.¹⁵²

Here Jones is concerned with how myths and legends can continue to be significant and how they should be conserved through representation, again, how the material is understood and transubstantiated into the present. He conveys how myth, especially Arthurian legends, provides a sense of universality and a shared imaginative history. Jones notes of the 'Arthurian thing [...] that there is no other tradition at all equally the common property of all the inhabitants of Britain'.¹⁵³ The commonality of Arthurian legends reaches back to the past, offering images or ideas which are valid to the present and the future. For the Pre-

¹⁵¹ See Thomas Goldpaugh and James Callison, 'Introduction', in *David Jones's The Grail Mass and Other Works*, ed. by Thomas Goldpaugh and James Callison (London: Bloomsbury Academic 2019), pp.1-23 (pp.3-4).

¹⁵² Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', p.243.

¹⁵³ Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', p.216.

Raphaelites, the commonality of these legends provides a shared imaginative past which ties into their own vision and to the Victorian Arthurian Revival. However, for Jones the 'concept and the universality are married to the local and the particular'.¹⁵⁴ For instance, the figure of King Arthur in Jones's work signifies a regional polarisation, connected to Wales, and a tradition which is 'equally the common property of all the inhabitants of Britain'.¹⁵⁵ For Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, the commonality of Arthurian legends reaches back to the past, offering images or ideas which are valid to the present and the future. The artist must convey these images with what Jones calls 'a kind of transubstantiated actual-ness', providing both a sense of permanency and 'now-ness', a complex of the contemporary, myth and ritual.¹⁵⁶ Jones's, Morris's and Burne-Jones's workings with Arthurian legends all convey a sense of the personal combined with the universal and of the past impacting upon the present. Jones develops Arthurian legends further than the Pre-Raphaelites to consider King Arthur's historical implications and origins, particularly in Welsh traditions. In Jones's work and that of the Pre-Raphaelites, the legends are readapted and are used as King Arthur himself appears, in times of decline, with the promise of reawakening.

Jones outlined the various meanings and associations of Arthur in the romances and as a historical figure:

Arthur is the conveyer of order, even to the confines of chaos; he is redeemer, in the strict sense of the world; he darkens the Lombard threshold only with his weapon; his potency is the instrument of redemption [...] Always the consolidator, the saviour

¹⁵⁴ Jones, 'The Arthurian Legends', p.210.

¹⁵⁵ Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', p.216.

¹⁵⁶ Jones, 'The Arthurian Legends', pp.209-210.

and the channel of power, the protector and gift-giver, and more significantly for us “the Director of Toil”.¹⁵⁷

Here Arthur is tied to his legendary associations in Celtic and medieval mythologies and historically, as a military defender. Throughout his writings, Jones identifies Arthur as ‘The Director of Toil’ which he uses in *In Parenthesis* and cites in his notes as among the ‘titles attributable to Arthur’.¹⁵⁸ In ‘The Sleeping Lord’ Arthur has ‘*long* has he been the Director of Toil’ as the leader against invasion, and in *The Anathemata* Guinevere is ‘the spouse of the Director of Toil’.¹⁵⁹ Jones identifies the phrase, in *The Anathemata*, as having been used in a fragment of early Welsh writing. The phrase ‘the Director of Toil’ was used in a medieval Welsh poem ‘The Battle of Llongborth’, celebrating the hero Geraint son of Erbin, in the manuscript known as the Black Book of Carmarthen.¹⁶⁰ It is likely that this is where Jones derived the phrase from but it is a striking phrase in relation to Jones’s notion of the Arts and Crafts and the Ruskinian emphasis on labour. Jones makes a distinction between Arthur the man and Arthur of romance, highlighting how the version of King Arthur handed down to the middle ages echoes mythological traditions from Celtic Britain. The Arthur of the Welsh bardic verses and *The Mabinogion*, where he appears most prominently in the story ‘Culhwch and Olwen’, is a more mythological figure who inhabits the landscape and is more of a leader or warrior. Jones tentatively traces the etymology of ‘Arthur’ from ‘Gaulish inscriptions’, with the ‘Ar’ having derived from various Celtic and Pre-Christian Gods, such as Artaius, a war-deity and Artio, a female deity symbolised by a bear. Jones states that this is

¹⁵⁷ Jones, ‘The Myth of Arthur’, p.237.

¹⁵⁸ David Jones, *In Parenthesis*, p.82 and notes, p.209.

¹⁵⁹ David Jones, ‘The Sleeping Lord’, in *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments*, pp.70-96 (pp.78-80) and David Jones, *The Anathemata*, p.197. The italics are Jones’s own.

¹⁶⁰ John Matthews, *King Arthur: Dark Age Warrior and Mythic Hero* (London: Carlton Books Ltd 2004), p.29.

conjectural and suggests a sequence in the evolution of Arthur from 'Bear Goddess – God of the soil – God of weapons – Romano-British general – Christian King'.¹⁶¹ Jones describes him as the 'redeemer' and 'saviour', becoming synonymous with Christ. This is the Arthur that emerges in Jones's late poem 'The Sleeping Lord'. King Arthur is a figure who emerges and is readapted at a time of irrevocable decline, offering hope in uncertain times.

The Holy Grail

Malory's *Morte D' Arthur* tells the story of how the Knights depart from the Round Table on a quest to discover the Grail, the 'holy vessel', the Chalice which Jesus used at the Last Supper which holds the blood of Christ. The Grail is also a vision of God which can only be seen by one who has led a pure life. Sir Lancelot, Sir Percival and Galahad all have different visions of the Grail. Lancelot, because of his adultery with Queen Guinevere is prevented from entering the chapel of the Sangrail and sees a hazy image of the Grail. Percival has a vision of the Grail, seeing a damosel dressed 'all in white' with 'a vessel in both her hands' which made him feel 'whole'.¹⁶² Galahad alone is able to fulfil the Grail quest and look on the Grail when no other can. Christine Poulson notes that the decline of society, Arthur's Kingdom and the Round Table, begins with the quest for the Holy Grail where the whole of Arthur's court depart but only few knights return. Poulson argues that for Malory 'the quest represents the triumph of spiritual and ascetic values over the secular, courtly, chivalric, but

¹⁶¹ Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', p.233.

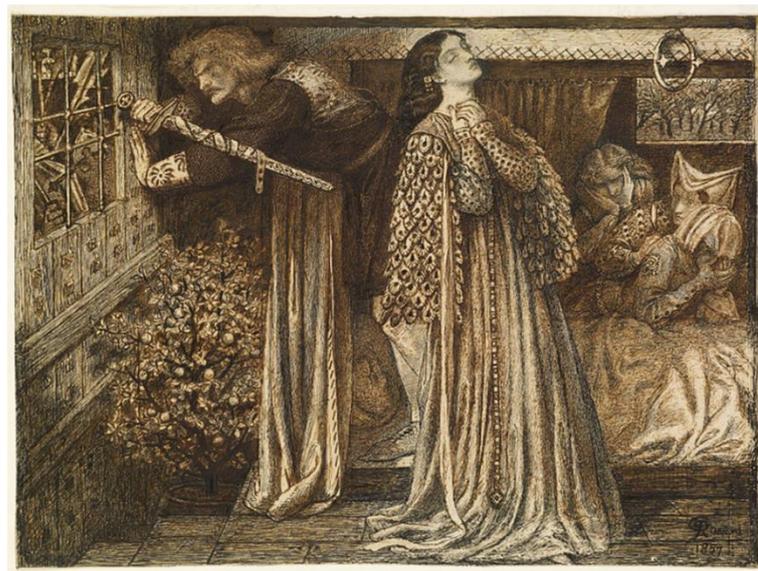
¹⁶² Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur: The Winchester Manuscript* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998), p.292.

it is a victory touched by sorrow, signifying as it does the end of Arthur's kingdom'.¹⁶³ Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites focus on the same moments as Malory; where Lancelot enters into Guinevere's chamber, in which she is held captive, and Lancelot's episode at the chapel of the Sangrail or at the Chapel Perilous. For Jones, these episodes exemplify the importance of visualised narratives associated with the artists and designers connected to the Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts movements. They are particularly focused on the figure of Lancelot and how he represents the conflicts between religious and romantic love and the sacred and profane. In connection to the sacramentalism in the artistic theories of Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, the Grail quest and the Chalice or cup, as a symbol of transubstantiation, represents for them the triumph of the spiritual over the material and exemplifies their aesthetic values. For Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites, it is a sign of spiritual and artistic regeneration. The following section focuses, firstly, on Jones's and Rossetti's visual renderings of Lancelot in Guinevere's chamber, and then on Lancelot at the Chapel Perilous and the imagery of the Waste Land, exploring both visual artworks and Jones's references to this episode in his poetry.

Rossetti's pen and ink drawing *Lancelot found in Guinevere's chamber* (1857) (Figure 3.3) and Jones's *Guinever* (Figure 3.4) explore the tensions between religious and romantic love, visually rendering the moment in which Lancelot enters Guinevere's chamber (Malory XIX, 6). In Rossetti's image, Lancelot is looking out of the window, sword in hand, whilst in

¹⁶³ Christine Poulson, *The Quest for the Grail: Arthurian Legend in British Art, 1840-1920* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1999), p.3.

Jones's painting, Lancelot enters through a barred window on the right. As previously mentioned, *Guinever* was the painting of which Jones said, 'I am a Pre-Raphaelite', and this can be seen in the intense visual detail in all aspects, both the background and foreground, of Rossetti's and Jones's artworks. Guinevere is presented differently in the two images. Rossetti depicts her as a medieval damsel whereas in Jones's painting, she lays naked. However, in both images, Guinevere is placed in the foreground and portrayed in a passive pose, with her eyes closed and her hands clasped to, or around, her neck. Both artworks create a sense of confinement and entrapment through the representation of space and Guinevere's captive state, heightened by Lancelot's position around a window.



3.3. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Lancelot found in Guinevere's chamber*, (1857), Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.



3.4. David Jones, *Guinever*, (1938-40), Tate Britain, London.

In these pictures, Rossetti and Jones show Lancelot, the most paradoxical of the Grail heroes, to be flawed by his affair with Guinevere and yet he is posited as a saviour figure. Paul Hills and Ariane Bankes note that according to the allegorical tradition, the love of Lancelot and Guinevere is analogous to that of Christ for his bride, the Church.¹⁶⁴ In Jones's picture, Lancelot's inclined head and cross-legged pose echo the pose of Christ on the crucifix hanging above Guinevere's head on the left-hand side of the picture. In this sense, Guinevere's bed corresponds to the altar behind her, with the crucifix set between two candles, and is therefore suggestive of the eucharist. Rossetti's picture is not as profusive as

¹⁶⁴ Ariane Bankes and Paul Hills, *The Art of David Jones: Vision and Memory*, p.130.

Jones's in terms of its religious imagery, but the apple tree at the head of the bed and the small image of trees on the right hand side of the picture, connote their sexual temptation.

Similarly, the conflict between temptation and salvation is shown in Jones's second Malory watercolour painting *Four Queens* (Figure 3.5), where above Lancelot's head is the fruit tree from Eden, implying, like Rossetti's image, his temptation and downfall. Morgan Le Fay and three other enchantresses and queens are contending for Lancelot's love (Malory, VI,3). Lancelot is depicted, again, as both a saviour and fallen hero, who instead of Guinevere, is the reclining figure. He is shown withstanding their enchantments and the attempted seductions of the queens, connoting his resistance for his love of Guinevere.



3.5. David Jones, *The Four Queens find Lancelot Sleeping* (1941), Tate Britain.

The landscape of *Four Queens* is both ancient, with the ruined chapel, ancient stones and horses on the hills, and modern, recalling the battlefields of the First World War. Lancelot also wears a helmet and has an affinity with the frontispiece of *In Parenthesis* (1936).¹⁶⁵ His pose recalls a soldier lying on the battlefield and the tombs of medieval knights with his feet resting upon a dog, like the medieval effigies Jones had seen on his visit to Ottery St. Mary. He is at once a modern soldier and Christian medieval knight and like Jones's poem 'The Sleeping Lord' is identified with the land.

A particular focus for the Pre-Raphaelites and for Jones is Sir Lancelot outside the chapel of the Sangrail or at the Chapel Perilous. In Malory, Lancelot is healed by the Holy Vessel of the Sangrail at King Pelles's castle, possibly the guardian of the Grail (e.g. the Fisher King or the Maimed King in other versions). There are numerous allusions to Lancelot and the Chapel Perilous in *In Parenthesis*. Scholarship has paid close attention to Jones's allusions to Malory and to Lancelot, offering divided criticism which looks at these allusions as heroic or as an ironic critique, a way to question the ethical validity of participating in the War.¹⁶⁶ In Part 3 'Starlight Order' of *In Parenthesis* Jones describes night-time march towards the front line:

Past the little gate,
into the field of upturned defences,
into the burial-yard—

¹⁶⁵ Dilworth notes the affinity between these depictions of Lancelot. Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, p.218.

¹⁶⁶ See Oliver Bevington, 'Introduction: David Jones, Letter to Neville Chamberlain, 18 December 1938', in *David Jones on Religion, Politics, and Culture: Unpublished Prose*, ed. by Thomas Berenato, Anne Price-Owen and Kathleen Henderson Staudt, pp.11- 36 (pp.23-30). Jonathan Miles, 'King Arthur and the Somme' in *Backgrounds to David Jones: A Study in Sources and Drafts*, pp.78-9 and the 'In Parenthesis' section in Thomas Dilworth, *Reading David Jones*.

the grinning and the gnashing and the sore dreading—nor saw he any light in that place.¹⁶⁷

In the accompanying notes, Jones adds that this section was inspired by Book VI, chapter 15 of Malory. In this part, Lancelot rides to the Chapel Perilous and ties his horse to a 'little gate' and Jones quotes 'little gate', 'grinned' and 'gnashed' directly from the text.¹⁶⁸ The image of the Chapel Perilous also arises visually in his painting *Chapel in the Park* (1931-32), displaying the view from his bedroom at Rock Hall, the home of Helen Sutherland. Jones had these Arthurian connections in mind when painting the image, referring to the church at Rock as 'the Chapel Perilous' and the nearby site of Lancelot's castle, Joyous Guard, which is also supposedly the place of his burial.

Other allusions to Lancelot in *In Parenthesis* are to his quest for the Grail. Slumbering outside of the Grail chapel, of which he is unable to gain admittance, he witnesses the healing of a knight by the Grail and discovers his unworthiness, due to his love for Guinevere, to obtain it. The opening section of Part 4 of *In Parenthesis* 'King Pellam's Launde', which Jones notes is inspired by Malory, XIII, 19, signals the arrival of dawn and Lancelot's lament: 'So thus he sorrowed till it was day and heard the foules sing, / then somewhat he was comforted'.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, Lancelot's failure to enter the Grail Chapel is captured by Rossetti and Burne-Jones in their works on the subject. It was the subject of Rossetti's mural at the Oxford Union, *Sir Lancelot's Vision of the San Grael*, in which Lancelot is prevented from entering the chapel

¹⁶⁷ Jones, *In Parenthesis*, p.31.

¹⁶⁸ Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, p.114.

¹⁶⁹ Jones, *In Parenthesis*, p.59.

and has fallen asleep before the shrine full of angels, while between him and the chapel is the image of Guenevere. Guenevere stands with her arms extended within the apple tree. The shrine full of angels is on the left-hand side, with the Angel of the Sangrail kneeling down before the altar holding the eucharist, the chalice and bread, in his hands.¹⁷⁰

In Burne-Jones's work this episode is visually rendered in his collaboration with Morris and their shared enthusiasm for *Morte D' Arthur*, which culminated in his designs for the series of six tapestries telling the story of the Holy Grail, woven at Merton Abbey between 1891-1895. For Morris and Burne-Jones, the Holy Grail quest was the most complete sequence in Malory and the subject lent itself to pictorial representation with its symbolism and dramatic scenes. Burne-Jones wrote that the 'San Grael story is ever in my mind and thoughts continually. Was ever anything in the world beautiful as that is beautiful?'¹⁷¹ The tapestries capture the dramatic or most memorable scenes from the narrative.¹⁷² The tapestries showcase a form of recreating and retelling stories, different yet similar to painting. Burne-Jones's Arthurian vision and compositions show an interplay of colours and medieval heraldry. *The Failure of Sir Launcelot to enter the Chapel of the Holy Grail* tapestry, depicting Lancelot asleep by the chapel, with the angel poised in the entrance and his horse standing behind him and shield hanging in the barren tree, is very similar in composition and design to Burne-Jones's painting *The Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the San Graal* (1896)

¹⁷⁰ Suzanne Fagence Cooper, 'Burne-Jones as Designer' in Alison Smith, *Edward Burne-Jones*, pp.197-213 (p.205).

¹⁷¹ Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*, p.333.

¹⁷² The tapestries are entitled *The Knights of the Round Table Summoned to the Quest by the Strange Damsel, The Arming and Departure of the Knights, The Failure of Sir Launcelot to enter the Chapel of the Holy Grail, The Failure of Sir Gawaine, The Ship and The Attainment*.

(Figure 3.6). The position of the slumped Lancelot is reminiscent of Rossetti's mural which Burne-Jones would have seen when working with him on his own mural at the Oxford Union. These two depictions of Lancelot are reflected in Jones's Lancelot in *Four Queens* and *In Parenthesis*, lying in rejection and surrender outside the chapel.



3.6. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the San Graal*, (1895 - 1896), Southampton City Art Gallery.

The Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the San Graal is not a decorative image of the Grail but a dark, mystical picture which depicts Lancelot asleep whilst the angel stands watching at the entrance of the chapel. The light emitting from the chapel illuminates the bodies and the angular folds of drapery of Lancelot and the angel. The landscape is dark and austere creating a sense of desolation that is enforced by the desolate landscape with Lancelot's shield entangled in the bare tree and the empty pool. The image of the waste land in *The*

Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the San Graal becomes a recurring motif in Jones's work. The title of 'King Pellam's Launde' itself evokes a barren landscape, and No Man's land, in connection to the Grail legend. In *The Anathemata* Lancelot is the 'cult-man' who stands 'alone in Pellam's land' and in an accompanying note Jones defines 'King Pellam in Malory's Morte D' arthur' as 'the lord of the Waste Lands and the lord of the Two Lands'.¹⁷³ Jones's engraving *He frees the Waters in Helyon* (1931), like the desolate landscape of Burne-Jones's painting, evokes a waste land of maimed tress and stars in which the unicorn stands. In 1929, Jones wrote to Jim Ede that he was reading 'a very interesting book about the Grail legend'. This book was Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* (1920) and Jones explicitly mentions Weston in *The Grail Mass*, exploring how medieval Grail romances originated in pagan fertility rituals.¹⁷⁴ Weston's study shows a twentieth-century academic respectability to the study of the genealogy of Arthur and to the interest in a historical Arthur, which would appeal to Jones's archaeological framework. Like the *Holy Grail* tapestries, there is a heraldic quality to Jones's engraving, combining the symbols of Lance and Cup, the Holy Grail and Unicorn (the fable of the unicorn that cleanses a poisoned pool with its horn, caught by a virgin and murdered by a hunter). The engraving, using the symbolism from Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*, identifies the spear (lance) and cup with ancient fertility symbols. Weston emphasised the connection between the grail legend and the reoccurrence of sexual archetypes. As Muriel Whitaker argues, the engraving through complex allusion portrays 'the erotic union of the fertility rite' transformed 'into a Crucifixion, Atonement, and gift of

¹⁷³ Jones, *The Anathemata*, p.50.

¹⁷⁴ Jones, *Dai Greatcoat*, p.26.

Grace', with the unicorn plunging its horn into the pool, 'the revitalising sexual act', and the lance connecting the animal's wound with the Grail chalice standing on an altar cloth.¹⁷⁵

In Part 7, 'The Five Unmistakable Marks' of *In Parenthesis*, Jones again notes Book VI, chapter 15 of Malory in Dai's boast where he refers to the 'thirty in black harnesses', 'great limbed and each helmed' to 'fetch away the bloody cloth', referring to thirty great knights who surround Lancelot at the Chapel and scatter before his approach.¹⁷⁶ He enters the Chapel to find the sword and bloody cloth needed to heal Sir Meliot de Lorges but sees 'no light but a dim lamp burning'.¹⁷⁷ The knights confront him again after he has left the Chapel and the repeated use of the episode in *In Parenthesis* signals commencement of an approach or an attack. Similarly, the Grail symbols of the lance and cloth are important in Morris's poem 'The Chapel in Lyonesse', first published in *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856). The poem is a spiritual drama formed through a dialogue between Sir Galahad, Sir Ozana and Sir Bors, set in a medieval church. The quest of Ozana and Gawain is joined together with that of Galahad's quest for the grail. Sir Bors finds Galahad in the chapel and Lancelot and Galahad find shields in the Grail quest. Within the chapel, the sick knight, Ozana, who like the knight in Malory, cannot be healed due to an unconfessed sin. Ozana bears many similarities to Lancelot but is, in Morris's poem, permitted to enter the Chapel. One of the principal symbols of the grail is the bleeding spear which Ozana has been wounded with and sometimes is depicted as laying on a white and red cloth spread over the altar. In the poem the spear lies deep within Ozana's breast and a 'samite cloth of white and

¹⁷⁵ Muriel Whitaker, 'The Arthurian Art of David Jones', *Arthuriana*, 7:3 (1997), pp.137-156 (p.145).

¹⁷⁶ Jones, *In Parenthesis*, p.180

¹⁷⁷ Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, p.115.

red' is spread over him, like Jones's allusion to bloody cloth in *In Parenthesis*. The spear and the wounds which 'no man [...] could spy', also symbolic of the Fisher king, are instead spiritual symbols.¹⁷⁸ The movement from 'Christmas-Eve to Whit-Sunday' is the period symbolically encompassing Christ's life, from birth to the Pentecost.¹⁷⁹ Pentecost is the day on which the Grail originally appeared and when wonders happen at Arthur's court.

The portrayal of the interior of the Grail Chapel and the signs and signa of the Mass are important to the Pre-Raphaelites' and Jones's sacramental and aesthetic thinking. In Burne-Jones's *The Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the San Graal* and Rossetti's mural, the Angel of the Sangrail stands guard at the entrance to the chapel, and in Rossetti's, holds the eucharist. In *The Anathemata*, the persona's allusions are to the communion chalice and pre-Christian equivalents, as they ask 'How the dish/ that holds no coward's food? / How the calix/ without which/ how *the* re-calling?' Similarly, Jones's poem 'The Grail Mass' is a narrative poem of the Mass, and ends with Lancelot seeking to get into the Grail Chapel:

In the north porch
Lake-wave Launcelot
beats against that
varnished pine
his Aryan pommel
fractures the notices for the week
he would see
right through that chamber door
he would be
where the Cyrenian deacon
leans inward
to relieve the weight
he too would aid the venerable man

¹⁷⁸ William Morris, 'The Chapel in Lyoness', in *William Morris's Prose and Poetry*, pp.214-217 (p.214), 7-15.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

surcharged with that great weight.¹⁸⁰

In Malory, this is the closest Lancelot gets to achieving the Grail and emphasises how salvation depends on integrity of will as Lancelot strikes the door of the Chapel, splintering the 'varnished pine' to get in. In watching the Mass and imagining himself to be 'where the Cyrenian deacon' is, positioned next to the celebrant of the Mass, Lancelot, the Priest and the deacon all become one in Christ, seeking salvation at the moment of consecration. The narrative of the Mass is filled with 'his special signs' and 'signa' and is essential to Jones's thinking of art.¹⁸¹ Like Jones's chalice pictures, Morris's flower symbolism in 'The Chapel in Lyonesse' connects to the grail legend with the lily and the rose, echoing the colours of white and red of the cloth, connecting to the Eucharist. Galahad plucks a 'wild rose' from among 'the lilies tall' and lays the rose across Ozana's mouth.¹⁸² The Grail quest offered symbols and themes which Jones, Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones return to throughout their works. The combination of legendary subject matter, the depictions of Lancelot and the sacramental nature of the Grail depict a vision of spiritual salvation, which is important for the Pre-Raphaelites' and Jones's artistic processes and their ideas about decline or destruction.

¹⁸⁰ David Jones, 'The Mass', *David Jones's The Grail Mass and Other Works*, ed. by Thomas Goldpaugh and James Callison pp.26-29 (p.29).

¹⁸¹ Jones, 'The Mass', p.26.

¹⁸² Morris, 'The Chapel in Lyonesse', 53.

Arthur in Avalon or The Sleeping Lord

As one of the concluding poems of Jones's third volume of poetry, 'The Sleeping Lord' explores the development of the myth of Arthur through its Celtic associations and intricacies, its relationship to Christianity and to civilizational and ecological change, particularly developing King Arthur's symbolic potential. The poem is rich in allusions to scripture, legends and folklore, and connects various cultures, including the Roman, Celtic and Anglo-Christian, in order to examine the complexity and universality of the myths and the traditions that are ties to culture and place. All these provide a context for the chief sign and symbol of the poem, the figure of the Sleeping Lord. In this section, I examine the figure of the Sleeping Lord in Jones's poem and close with a comparison of Jones's and Burne-Jones's portrayals of the Sleeping Arthur and the surrounding environment.

The poem opens with, and is composed of, a series of questions about the Sleeping Lord and where he lies:

And is his bed wide
Is his bed deep on the folded strata
Is his bed long
Where is his bed and
where has he lain him¹⁸³

The persona's questions open up considerations about the location, manner and physicality of the Sleeping Lord's resting place and one overriding question: Who is the Sleeping Lord?

¹⁸³ David Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments*, pp.70-96 (pp.70-71),.1-5.

King Arthur is the primary symbol of the poem, implied by the poem's basis of a belief central to Arthurian myth, particularly in Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, that Arthur never truly died but awaits the moment he is needed to return. According to Malory's telling, many have said that upon Arthur's tomb is written, 'Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus'. ('Here lies Arthur, king once, king to be').¹⁸⁴ Jones incorporates the inscription from Arthur's tomb from Malory in 'The Lady of the Pool' section of *The Anathemata*, 'For, these fabliaux say, of one other such quondam king *rexque futurus*'. In the accompanying footnote, Jones quotes directly from Malory about the belief that Arthur will be reawakened and the words on his tomb (Malory, XXI, 7).¹⁸⁵ The 'Sleeping Lord' is, then, concerned with spiritual regeneration. Arthur is dormant, physically absent from the poem yet at the same time marginally present, like a distant memory brought to life through the persona's questioning and associations. Arthur is thus a myth, a historical and a cultural deposit situated in Britain's past and tradition. The 'folded strata' under which the Sleeping Lord lies hints at the many layers of meaning and civilisational changes behind the legend of Arthur and within the poem itself.

In 'The Sleeping Lord', Arthur has an affinity with Christ. This is implied by the title, alluding to Jesus as the 'sleeping Lord' in Milton's *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* (1629), and within the structure of the poem itself, as a tripartite or triptych, involving three people, consisting of three parts and alluding to the Christian Trinity. It is further implied in Jones's

¹⁸⁴ Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, p.517.

¹⁸⁵ Jones, *The Anathemata* p.14.

inspiration from Malory's medievalised and Christianised narrative of Arthur, when he claims of Arthur's death, that 'men say he shall come again, and he shall win the Holy Cross'.¹⁸⁶ In the poem, Arthur is the maimed king with 'wounded ankles' whose injuries are equated with mythological 'Achilles' heel', 'the eternally pierced feet' of Christ and perhaps Oedipus.¹⁸⁷ His physical wounds signify mortality and death, as the Sleeping Lord's bed is also his grave. It signifies a life-in-death, indicated by these signs, and in terms of Arthur and Jesus, the promise of resurrection and spiritual renewal. His sleep holds both regenerative power and dormant potential. There is a union of divinity and humanity in Jesus and Arthur. The Christ-Arthur figure becomes the 'saviour', conveying a sense of sacredness and connecting in one image, the living landscape, Christianity and Pre-Christian Celtic mythologies.

The central part of the poem introduces Arthur's attendants and household, the Foot-Holder, the Candle-Bearer and Priest, who celebrate the presence of their lord through a Christian requiem. In Arthur's Chapel, Arthur's priest prays for the dead, listing the names of people little known and memorialises a tradition largely lost. The Priest evokes memories of the history of the island and prays for 'all the departed of the Island' and 'for the departed of the entire universal orbis', for the early Christian missionaries to Britain, the Roman Christians, the Celtic or Brittonic Christians and the non-Christian Celts.¹⁸⁸ The Priest of the Household is able to show the links between the secular and the sacred mythologies that

¹⁸⁶ John Milton, *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, in *The Poetical Works of John Milton* (London: Macmillan and Co. 1934), pp.485-495 (p.492),.242. Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, p.517.

¹⁸⁷ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', pp.72-73, 72-91.

¹⁸⁸ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.86. See Elizabeth Ward, *David Jones: Mythmaker* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1983), p.199.

inform Jones and his surrounding culture. Through this ritual, Jones displays the interchangeability between religious and cultural values, between a historical culture before Christianity and then sanctioned by Christianity. This is articulated in Jones's essay 'The Arthurian Legend', where he expresses his belief in the validity of the 'the identification of the grail with the Horn of Plenty'.¹⁸⁹ Thomas Dilworth argues that the continuity between Arthur and Jesus emphasises the continuity and distinction between the Priest and Jones, as the poet. For Dilworth, Arthur is the 'object of the poet's questioning and occupies the historical past' whereas Jesus is the 'object [...] of the priest's praying, and occupies the furthest recession of the past that his prayerful imagination reaches'.¹⁹⁰ Yet both the Priest and Poet continue to emphasise the affinity between Arthur and Jesus through a temporal movement and link between Arthur's household and the Last Supper and the Passion of Christ. Standing next to Arthur is the candle-bearer holding a candle 'that flames upward/ in perfection of form/ like the leaf-shaped war-heads/ that gleam from the long-hafted spears/ of the lord's body-guard'.¹⁹¹ Fire constitutes 'one of Three Primary Signa' of Jesus and the light is a liturgical symbol of Easter, for the resurrection and the ascension, the 'LUX PERPETUA' that shines for the sleeping dead and offers the hope of a new beginning.¹⁹² The 'leaf-shaped' flame also continues the natural imagery of the poem.

The 'war-heads' and the 'long-hafted spears' can be seen as a reference to the historical Arthur, which this section of the poem is also concerned with. The consideration of this

¹⁸⁹ Jones, 'The Arthurian Legends', p. 203.

¹⁹⁰ Thomas Dilworth, *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones* (London: University of Toronto Press 1988), p.334.

¹⁹¹ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.77.

¹⁹² Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', pp.77-87.

version of Arthur begins with the speaker's remark 'so whether his lord is in hall or on circuit of the land, he's most like to be about somewhere' and questions whether Arthur is seated 'below or above the centred hearthstone'. Here the poem contains the setting of the historical sixth century within a twentieth-century narrative present. It presents an image of Arthur as a king and warrior, seated at his 'board on the dais wearing such insignia as is proper for him, his head circled with the pale-bright *talaith* of hammered-thin river-gold'.¹⁹³ The persona conveys a heroic construction of Arthur, '*long* has he been the Director of Toil', as solely the leader of resistance against invasion in 'the continuing power-struggle/ for the fair lands of Britain'.¹⁹⁴ He embodies a resurgence of the chivalric values of courage, fidelity and self-sacrifice, traditionally associated with the later image of Arthur as figurehead and defender of Britain. In this respect, Jones highlights the loss and death of the historical and Celtic Arthur to the medieval and mythological imagination. This sense of loss bears upon Jones's contemporary moment and the longer history and power-struggles of the twentieth century.

The Christ-Arthur figure of the Sleeping Lord offers resurrection and restoration, leadership and redemption. There is a sense of strength and vulnerability in the sleep of Arthur, emphasised by Jones and by Pre-Raphaelite images of Arthurian legend, in particular in Burne-Jones's Romantic treatment of Arthurian legend. Burne-Jones presents the sleeping lord lying amidst a motionless scene with suspended animation, conveying a sense of

¹⁹³ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.77.

¹⁹⁴ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.78-80.

timelessness. Burne-Jones's painting *The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* presents Arthur lying on his golden bier. The painting has tended to be viewed as biographical and as a homage to Morris who had died in 1896. *The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* (Figure 3.7) highlights Burne-Jones's enthrallment with Arthurian legend.



3.7. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* (1891-1896), Ponce Museum of Art, Ponce, Puerto Rico.

The golden canopy positioned over Arthur's body depicts scenes from the Holy Grail. It is architectural, of both a Byzantine and medieval influence and is surrounded by a garden filled with trees and flowers. In a way, there is a symbolic relevance of Burne-Jones's painting of King Arthur. Burne-Jones depicts the public role of Arthur in Pre-Raphaelite art, using these liminal spaces and timeless worlds to portray social dissonance with the modern world and identification with the heroism that they associate with the past. For Jones, the Sleeping Lord represents his dissention with modern civilisation and ecological change. When painting *The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* Burne-Jones described the picture as his 'chief dream' and that it represented how he 'was *at* Avalon – not yet *in* Avalon.' For him,

the painting depicted what he deemed as the only truth, 'that beauty is very beautiful, and softens, and comforts, and inspires, and rouses, and lifts up, and never fails.'¹⁹⁵ Burne-Jones's depiction of Avalon is one inspired by beauty, surrounded by the natural world. Burne-Jones's Arthur, like the Sleeping Lord, holds a redemptive power and a dormant potential, as the figures surrounding King Arthur are waiting to awaken him. One figure stands watching out of the door, others stand waiting and listening, and others hold musical instruments, as if they are ready to awaken the King if there is need for him.

The persona in Jones's poem reflects upon the Lord's continual state:

Yet he sleeps on
Very deep in his slumber:
How long has he been the sleeping lord?¹⁹⁶

Despite the physical inactivity of the Sleeping Lord, the act of sleeping itself, in both Jones and Burne-Jones's work, is a metaphor for death, dreams and a religious quest. This quest is one of awakening. In Burne-Jones's paintings, such as *The Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* and *The Briar Rose* series, sleep acts, not as a retreat, but as a social and aesthetic confrontation, as these figures and more widely, society itself awaits to be awoken from cultural decline. As in Burne-Jones's *Sleeping Beauty*, the candle-bearer stands guard over the sleeping figure in the briar in Jones's poem:

the resistant limbs
Of the tough, gnarled *derwen* even
lean all to the swaying briary-tangle

¹⁹⁵ Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, volume 2 1868-1898*, p.125 and p.340.

¹⁹⁶ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.96.

that shelters low
in the deeps of the valley-wood
the fragile *blogyn-y-gwynt*¹⁹⁷

There is a sense of timelessness conveyed in Jones's landscape but also a foreboding of destruction, with the image of the 'tough, gnarled' oak protecting the 'fragile' wood anemone. Jones's use of Welsh names for the foliage here explicitly links the Sleeping Lord to the Welsh landscape and to the Celtic roots of the Arthurian myth. The protection and profusion of nature and the element of the quest (the Holy Grail) is reflected in Jones's watercolours, such as *Tangled Cup* (1951) and his other chalice pictures. Jones's series of chalice paintings are centred on the Mass and the mystery of faith. They are highly symbolic images with the glass chalices and, like Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose* paintings, display a geometrical arrangement of the flowers, thorns and stems. The term 'Calyx', the Latin term for Chalice, here may also refer to its botanical meaning, to describe the husk or protective layer around a flower bud. The translucent glass chalices holding the water, signify life and baptism, and the intertwined flowers and thorns growing out of the chalice, with allusion to the Passion of Christ, are signa and symbols of regeneration, sacrifice, rebirth or awakening.

¹⁹⁷ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.74.



3.8. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Briar Wood*, (1885 and 1890), Buscot Park, Oxford.

In Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose* paintings, the growth of the Briar Rose, and its intertwining flowers and thorns, invades the paintings, especially in *The Briar Wood* (1874-84) (Figure 3.8), looping around the structures and sleeping figures. Similarly to Jones's chalice pictures, the briar rose is representative of the quest and of the awakening or regeneration of the sleeping figures, one of the only living forces in the painting. In discussing the *Briar Rose* series, Caroline Arscott argues that the 'growth of the briar represents a free flowing line of vital force that refuses to respect the organisational principles of layered protective boundaries'.¹⁹⁸ In *The Briar Wood*, the tangled briar contains the shields of knights who slumber below them, losing their heraldic or heroic quality as they are reclaimed by the surrounding natural world. Nature is a vital force in 'The Sleeping Lord' and the 'briary-tangle' creates a natural and physical enclosure, as in Burne-Jones's paintings. The Knight

¹⁹⁸ Caroline Arscott, *William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones: Interlacings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2008), p.115.

who stands at the left-hand side of the first canvas is the only figure who is awake, regarding the sleeping figures, and his quest to break through the entangling briar to revive beauty and reanimate the world, capturing the advent of change which his arrival will set in motion. Some critics have read the lack of action in both the *Briar Rose* series and *The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon* as a form of moralistic and imaginative escape. Larry Lutchmansingh has noted the utopian quality of Burne-Jones's use of the fairy tale, especially in his *Briar Rose* series, in which Burne-Jones creates 'a sense of enchantment as the medium of an emancipatory potential'.¹⁹⁹ This sense of enchantment and the recovering of lost unities is an important aspect to his mythological works. For Jones and Burne-Jones, the image of sleep offers spiritual renewal of a culture and tradition. Burne-Jones's image of Sleeping Beauty is likened to Arthur's sleep or the Sleeping Lord, in the sense of the promise of change and transformation that will ensue after they are awoken. For both of them, these figures represent a social, aesthetic and environmental awakening.

In Jones's poem the Sleeping Lord has the strength to redeem the land. His resting place is described in terms of geography and geology, being 'north of Llanfair-ym-Mullat' and 'south to carboniferous vaultings of Gŵyr'.²⁰⁰ The spatial setting of the poem, as far as it is specified, is in the Mountains of Breconshire and the Welsh landscape, a recurrent part of Jones's Arthurian landscape. The Welsh setting is central to 'The Sleeping Lord', particularly as a place where Jones explores the allegorical and Arthurian connections to the landscape

¹⁹⁹ Larry D. Lutchmansingh, 'Fantasy and arrested desire in Burne-Jones's Briar Rose Series', in *Pre-Raphaelites Re-viewed* ed. by Marcia Pointon (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1989) pp.123-139 (pp.124-125).

²⁰⁰ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.71, 6-8.

and the link between the past and contemporary landscape. Yeats claimed that 'If Morris had set his stories amid scenery of his own Wales, for I had known him to be of Welsh extraction and supposed wrongly that he had spent his childhood there' then his poetry 'would have entered into our thought and had given perhaps to modern poetry a breadth and stability like that of ancient poetry'.²⁰¹ Jones does precisely what Yeats expected of Morris, drawing symbols and inspiration from Wales, combining an ancient and modern poetry to create a thematic unity. Jones was interested in origins and the foundations of the legends. Beneath the medievalised and Christianised versions of Arthurian legend, Jones perceived 'unplumbed deeps and recessions [...] of primeval growth'.²⁰²

The Sleeping Lord is also simultaneously linked with the Palaeolithic skeleton (which Jones writes, in a letter to Alan Jones in 1972, is very deliberately connected to the Gwyr burial of the Palaeolithic Nobilis in the Easlanet burial site in Britain²⁰³) and the landscape:

posited with care the vivific amulets
of gleam- white rodded ivory
and, with oxide of iron
ochred life-red the cerements
of the strong limbs
of the young *nobilis*
the first of the sleepers of
Pritenia, *pars dextralis*, O! aeons & aeons²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ Yeats, *Autobiographies*, p.150.

²⁰² Jones, 'The Myth of Arthur', pp.234-235.

²⁰³ David Jones, letter to Alan Jones (1972), Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers, NLW. MS. 23866D.

²⁰⁴ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.71.

In his essay 'David Jones and The Break', Wilcockson connects this passage to Morris and to archaeological discoveries in the nineteenth century and to the process of sign-making in prehistoric artworks.²⁰⁵ The persona details the 'vivific amulets' and 'oxide of iron' buried with the Palaeolithic lord, according to the rights and customs of his times. They form a geological bed for the 'strong limbs' of the Sleeping Lord to rest on. The geological foundations at the beginning of the poem open up into a wider questioning in the third part of the poem about the Sleeping Lord's position in the landscape and whether he rests in the land or is the land itself:

are the hills his couch
or is he the couchant hills?
are the slumbering valleys
him in slumber
are the still undulations
the still limbs of him sleeping?
Is the configuration of the land
The furrowed body of the lord ²⁰⁶

The different parts of the landscape either support the Sleeping Lord or are different parts of his body, as the 'couchant hills', the 'undulations' and 'the furrowed body' of the land. The Sleeping Lord then becomes a mythic giant, like Finn McCool, who is synonymous with the landscape and the land or nation itself. In this respect, Arthur is identified as being part of Britain and Wales itself. Through the Sleeping Lord's synonymity with the landscape, the land itself is shown to be inseparable from its culture and the land and culture, in the poem, are subject or wounded by industrialisation or the despoliation of the landscape. If the land

²⁰⁵ Colin Wilcockson, 'David Jones and "The Break"', pp.129-130.

²⁰⁶ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.96.

is the Sleeping Lord himself, his wounds represent the destruction of nature and the landscape. The ecological perspective of 'The Sleeping Lord' is similar to Morris's environmentalism. As previously mentioned, Wilcockson cites Morris's 'The Beauty of Life' in connection to Jones's 'The Break'. In this essay, it is cited in relation to art-making rather than ecological thought. Morris was troubled by the harm that industrialisation had upon the natural world, questioning in his lecture 'The Beauty of Life': 'how can you care about the image of a landscape when you show by your deeds that you don't care for the landscape itself?' In the same lecture, he laments that 'mankind, in striving to attain to a complete mastery over nature, should destroy her simplest and widest-spread gifts'.²⁰⁷ The poem depicts Jones's concern with the despoliation of the landscape of South Wales and the physical changes from the Tudor times in the demand for smelting of metal, to the deforestation of this landscape for mining in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the dangers it faced in the twentieth century. In this way, the sleep of Arthur gives a promise of environmental renewal as the persona asks and eulogises at the very end of the poem:

Does the land wait the sleeping lord
Or is the wasted land
That very lord who sleeps? ²⁰⁸

The Sleeping Lord unifies many themes that preoccupied Jones and bring these themes together under this one central image. In doing so, Jones seeks to conserve and develop 'genuine myth', by transubstantiating the past and its cultural significance for the present.

²⁰⁷ William Morris, 'The Beauty of Life', pp.538-564 (p.556 and p.539).

²⁰⁸ Jones, 'The Sleeping Lord', p.96.

As one of Jones's last poems, 'The Sleeping Lord' depicts the mythological, historical, literary and ecological preoccupations that Jones continued throughout his work in dialogue with the Pre-Raphaelites. As a writer and as a visual artist, Jones's dialogue with the Pre-Raphaelites is most explicit through their shared Arthurianism legends and themes, particularly their messages of spiritual and moral regeneration, their sense of tradition in the face of historical and cultural change, and their shared passion and sense of authenticity that they found in Malory. His aesthetic theories portray his affinity with Pre-Raphaelite conceptions of art and artistic practices, firstly through Arts and Crafts practices at the various artistic communities in which he worked, and in his later art theories, which explore the link between art and theology through Catholic rituals, sacrament, and sign-making. The Pre-Raphaelites were closer to Jones's position of sacramental art than he himself recognised or acknowledged. As a writer and artist who is very much aware of his influences, his Pre-Raphaelitism is intentionally part of his modernist aesthetic and continually shapes his visual, literary and critical writings.

Conclusion

In the Pre-Raphaelites, modernist writers found direct connections between the arts and literature. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones respond to Pre-Raphaelitism across various art forms, from poetry and novels, plays and critical writings to visual artworks, emphasising the cross-media aesthetic and unification of the arts. Throughout their works, these three writers demonstrate a sustained awareness of the aesthetic and cultural implications of Pre-Raphaelite art and literature, a tradition with which they had grown up through their early exposure to Pre-Raphaelite literary and visual works. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones follow a Pre-Raphaelite example as both artists and writers, but this extends further for Jones in terms of its direct application and influence on him as a professional visual artist. The Pre-Raphaelites continued to be part of Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's artistic and social networks: Yeats was, in his early life, a frequent visitor to Morris's Kelmscott House in Hammersmith and to meetings of the Socialist League and kept a lasting friendship and correspondence with May Morris; Lawrence discussed their works with his female network in Nottingham and met members through his friendship with Ford Madox Ford; Jones studied their works at Art School and met associates of the Pre-Raphaelites and they formed part of discussions with his contemporaries, particularly his friend Harman Grisewood. The Pre-Raphaelites were crucial to their artistic and literary development and shaped their self-definition and perceptions. Anecdotal information, quotations, allusions, and references to particular artworks or visits to exhibitions reveal a significant familiarity with Pre-Raphaelite poetics, verse and visual art among these three authors, and in modernism more widely. In this thesis I have argued that the sustained focus on the Pre-Raphaelite legacy for early-twentieth century literature and art reveals a wider rich intertextual and aesthetic

connection which has not previously been fully appreciated or expected. Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's strong literary and artistic dialogue with their Pre-Raphaelite predecessors demonstrates how the Pre-Raphaelite legacy is implicated in the making of modernist literature.

Through these three cases, this thesis has endeavoured to re-evaluate the importance of the Pre-Raphaelite legacy to the formation of modernism, and notions of how the modernists themselves engage with their predecessors. It has reconsidered the lifelong engagements of Yeats, Lawrence and Jones and how their self-consciousness use of Pre-Raphaelitism, whether public or private, reveals the diversity and range of its influence on modernist writers, both individually and more generally. This thesis has sought to challenge existing criticism which has previously denied modernism's engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism. The Pre-Raphaelite legacy and the radicalism of the group, are of interest to both specialist and non-specialist audiences, as shown through recent exhibitions, accompanying catalogues, and both fictional and critical works. This thesis has also sought to extend the understanding and range of Pre-Raphaelitism, across different forms and modernist experimentation, by exploring the inspiration the modernists took from second phase Pre-Raphaelitism as a movement. Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's engagements with Pre-Raphaelitism are more complex and substantial than previous studies acknowledge, incorporating a Pre-Raphaelite legacy within the context of their own times and through their individual experimentations with different forms.

There is no extant study which focuses on the Pre-Raphaelite influence, as a movement, on modernism. The thesis has reassessed the biographical and critical engagements of the modernists with the Pre-Raphaelites, however, it has primarily focused on the active and imaginative response of the modernist writers to the Pre-Raphaelites. For modernists, such as Yeats, Lawrence and Jones, Pre-Raphaelitism, as an interart movement, was an imaginative resource, responding to the Pre-Raphaelite use of myth and inspiring their constructions of an imagined past. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones specifically identified the Pre-Raphaelites as precursors in regard to the notion of revolt, of making the past 'new', and the radicalism of their rebellion against establishments in their subjects, techniques, styles and ideas. In this way, the Pre-Raphaelites offered them, a model for an imagined past and for the challenging of views within their own times, either through direct response to them or emulating them. For instance, Lawrence shows the importance of Swinburne's poetics to his own thinking and notions of emancipation directly through his intertextual references to Swinburne's Proserpine poems in his own poetry and all three versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Through his use of intertextuality, Lawrence is emphasising the radicalness of Swinburne's poetics and how Swinburne's own challenges within these poems, in terms of religion and sexuality, are still controversial and relevant to Lawrence's own time and thoughts on individual revelation and emancipation. For Yeats, Morris used the past and mythological constructions as a basis for his own utopianism and politics. For Jones, the medievalism of the Pre-Raphaelites offered an alternative model through which to comment on cultural, spiritual and civilisation decline. In doing so, the three writers demonstrate the radical nature of Pre-Raphaelitism and its continued relevance.

Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's attitude towards the Pre-Raphaelites is often inconsistent and outwardly changes across their careers. Yet their imaginative, creative and intellectual engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism is an ongoing presence in their works. They all respond to the key figures of Pre-Raphaelitism for their generation, D. G. Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones. Yeats's depictions of female mythological figures follow the heroines of the neo-romantic movement by adopting Rossetti as a model, as shown in paintings such as *Proserpine* and *Astarte Syriaca* and their accompanying sonnets. Lawrence engages with Rossetti's poetics and both his and Burne-Jones's artworks, through specific references to paintings and poems in *The White Peacock* and his female protagonists modelled on the aesthetic style of the Pre-Raphaelites throughout his works. Lawrence's use of symbolism and treatment of the Persephone myth points to a continuity with Rossetti's poetics and the treatment of the myth in his painting. Jones was familiar with Rossetti's poetics and visual art, but his influence extends further for Jones than the influence on Yeats and Lawrence, to an aesthetic theory and attachment grounded in Christianity, specifically Catholicism. Unlike Yeats and Lawrence, whose attitudes are often rooted in Christian thinking, Jones's Catholic religion is a fundamental part of his poetics and aesthetic. Jones, Rossetti and Burne-Jones all outline sacramentalist views of art, exploring representation in art and the possibilities inherent in sign-making. Jones's high modernist aesthetic differs from Yeats's and Lawrence's in the extent of its formal experimentation. Jones, like Eliot in *The Waste Land* (which Jones praised), collates a series of references, historical texts and imaginative sources through which to explore the present. In this way, Jones's practice of 'excavation', as explored in the Jones chapter, relates to modernism more widely, with its awareness of the meanings, allusions and formation of other texts and of intertextual references. Jones's

'excavating' practice is part of his uniqueness as he delves deeper into the layers behind each word, its origins and its use of over time. He has more of an archaeological awareness of history and time that goes further back than other writers, but is always conscious of 'nowness' and how to innovate tradition, history and language. The Pre-Raphaelites are not as archaeological as Jones in terms of historical exactness but they show this same awareness in their presentation of mythologies and medievalism. They were fascinated with excavating the layers of meaning behind these tales and with the authenticity of the original texts.

Across the three chapters, I have traced the personal, critical and imaginative interactions between Yeats, Lawrence and Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites. All three chapters examine how modernist writers were inspired by the Pre-Raphaelite construction of the imagined past. For all three figures, this past is created through myth and legends and become the standards by which they measure their present society. However, they each draw upon different aspects of Pre-Raphaelitism in their own visions. For Yeats, Morris mythological poetry such as *The Earthly Paradise* and *Sigurd the Volsung* provided a model for his Celtic revivalism. Morris's own reaching back to the past and his socialist and utopian visions appealed to Yeats's nationalist purposes, presenting a nation freed from modernisation and materialism. For Lawrence, Pre-Raphaelite paintings and legends viewed through a Pre-Raphaelite lens, as seen in his workings with the *Lady of Shalott* and *Persephone*, offer him a means through which to explore depictions of women in the context of women's emancipation within his own era. Jones, draws on the medievalism of the Pre-Raphaelites,

emphasising the authenticity of Malory and Arthurian legend. For Jones, the Arthurian legend offers a means of regeneration and a spiritual meaning to remedy what he saw as civilisational decline. Each chapter shows how these writers focus on a different aspect of the Pre-Raphaelitism, engaging with the Pre-Raphaelites' own material and with the same source material as the Pre-Raphaelites. Through these workings with Pre-Raphaelitism and the same source material as the Pre-Raphaelites, all three writers respond to the representation of women, to a form of utopianism derived from a Pre-Raphaelite heritage, and use Pre-Raphaelitism's literary and visual work in their modernist preoccupations on sexuality, gender, politics and religion.

Predominantly through Rossetti's works, all three modernist writers respond to the Pre-Raphaelite portrayal of women. For Yeats, this was as previously noted, through his use of myth. Lawrence's engagement with Pre-Raphaelite art and literature, in works such as *The White Peacock* is strongly linked with left-wing politics and the movement for women's emancipation, to an extent which has been unrecognised. In the Lawrence chapter, I wished to offer a more nuanced view of Lawrence's portrayal of and interactions with women. As outlined in the chapter, this view has been inspired by biographical works and by critics such as Feinstein and Harrison. In doing so, I feel that it is important to explore the complexity around this issue through Lawrence's own writings, their contradictions and his engagement with Pre-Raphaelitism, rather than following the repudiation of Lawrence which has often occurred in feminist criticism. Current and recent critical works, such as those mentioned in the chapter on Lawrence, are likewise discussing and re-evaluating the controversy and

reputation that surrounds Lawrence, particularly in his representation and engagement with women. Jones explores the stereotypes of female beauty in Victorian and Western culture in his listing of Pre-Raphaelite literary allusions and paintings in his *Wedding Poems*. As well as his aesthetic theories, Jones had a personal and professional interest in Burne-Jones which, like Rossetti's and Morris's work, informs his visual and literary portrayals of Arthurian legend.

For Yeats, his most important and life-long influence was Morris. Yeats valued many aspects of Morris's life and work, seeing in it the achievement of individual purpose, aesthetic vision and social concerns. He had an extensive knowledge of Morris's works and reworked his prose romances into his plays as well as his influence on his political attitudes which extended into Yeats's cultural nationalism, his establishment of the Abbey Theatre and his position in the Irish Senate. The utopianism of Morris's vision and Arts and Crafts movement was an inspiration to Yeats, Lawrence and Jones. The influence of Morris's thought on Lawrence's work and his wider influence has often been overlooked, as I have endeavoured to show in this thesis. Jones's interest in Morris and the Arts and Crafts, is reflected in his friendship with Eric Gill and his time at Arts and Crafts communes. All three writers express an admiration for Morris, particularly in shaping their responses to anti-industrialism, the role of art in society, the Arts and Crafts, environmentalism and utopianism. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones are indebted to these political and aesthetic movements and they interact with the criticisms made by Morris and Ruskin; these three writers, from English, Irish and Welsh backgrounds, represent or implement different national appropriations of Pre-Raphaelitism and the Arts and Crafts. In this regard, these three figures probe the importance of location

and heritage, using Irish, English and Welsh, as well as Greek and Icelandic mythologies, promoting a respect for cultural and ancient or native traditions. Yeats, Lawrence and Jones highlight the universal themes of these mythologies and legends, in the historical, psychological and emotional complexities of the tales, using these as a way to engage with the present and their own historical moment. The Pre-Raphaelite fascination with the past, myths and legends and artistic heritage is apparent throughout Yeats's, Lawrence's and Jones's work. Through their engagement with Pre-Raphaelite works, Yeats and Lawrence simultaneously draw on a cultural inheritance whilst making new their vision of myth. Morris provided the model for Yeats's refashioning of Celtic myth. Lawrence's treatment of myth aligns with Swinburne and Rossetti, exploring female sexuality, the sense of selfhood, and the dualities inherent in the figure of Persephone. For Jones, the Pre-Raphaelites are a significant influence for his Arthurianism, as seen in poems such as 'The Sleeping Lord', where he traces the genealogy of the Arthurian legend from Celtic sources and Welsh origins, Malory's *Morte D' Arthur* to nineteenth-century portrayals. Whilst this thesis has developed the links between these three modernist writers and the Pre-Raphaelites, it is by no means exhaustive; further possible lines of enquiry include Yeats and Burne-Jones, Lawrence and Morris, and Jones's interest in small printing presses and the Arts and Crafts.

This thesis has focused on male artists and writers whose conception of Pre-Raphaelitism is that it was predominantly a masculine movement. Recent and current scholarly work is rethinking this aspect of Pre-Raphaelitism.¹ The women of the Pre-Raphaelite circle are also

¹ Kirsty Stonell Walker, Fanny Cornforth, *Stunner: The Fall and Rise of Fanny Cornforth* (Lulu Publishing 2006) and Jan Marsh, *Jane and May Morris: A Biographical Story, 1839-1938* (London: Rivers Oram Press/ Pandora List 1986), *The*

a subject of wider appeal, with the recent *Pre-Raphaelite Sisters* exhibition (2019-2020) at the National Portrait Gallery, London, being the first major exhibition to focus solely on these figures. It specifically focused on the contributions of twelve women, including Lizzie Siddall, Effie Millais, Jane Morris, Georgiana Burne-Jones and Evelyn De Morgan. The exhibition explored the significant roles they played as artists, models, muses who supported the artistic output of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the work which they also produced. Prominent figures, such as May Morris, are now being considered in their own right. This was evidenced in the exhibition of her work (2017-18) at the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow, the first since the 1980s.² Siddall is also increasingly being recognised as an influential artist and poet.³

Much has been done to reclaim Siddall's work and reputation in her own right, but less known is that these attempts began in the early twentieth century. H.D.'s and Violet Hunt's biographies of Siddall, *White Rose and the Red* (1948) and *The Wife of Rossetti* (1932), use Pre-Raphaelitism as a source for their feminist writings while also critiquing the masculine aspect of the movement and the constraints placed on women in art. H.D., Hunt, Rachel Annand Taylor, May Morris and Evelyn De Morgan were all prolific twentieth-century writers

Collected Letters of Jane Morris, ed. by Jan Marsh and Frank C. Sharp (Suffolk: The Boydell Press 2012), Jan Marsh, *Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood* (London: Quartet Books Ltd 1985), Judith Flanders, *A Circle of Sisters: Alice Kipling, Georgiana Burne-Jones, Agnes Poynter and Louisa Baldwin* (London: Penguin 2001) and Henrietta Garnett, *Wives and Stunners: The Pre-Raphaelites and Their Muses* (London: Pan Macmillan 2012).

² See the accompanying book, *May Morris: Arts & Crafts Designer*, ed. by Anna Mason, Jan Marsh, Jenny Lister, Rowan Bain and Hanne Faurby (London: Thames & Hudson 2017).

³ Some of her poetry has been featured in anthologies of Victorian or Pre-Raphaelite poetry including *The Pre-Raphaelites: From Rossetti to Ruskin*, ed. by Dinah Roe (London: Penguin 2010) and Jan Marsh *Elizabeth Siddal 1829-1862: Pre-Raphaelite Artist* (Sheffield: Ruskin Gallery, Collection of the Guild of St George / Sheffield Arts Department 1991). *My Lady's Soul: The Poems of Elizabeth Eleanor Siddall*, ed. by Serena Trowbridge (Brighton: Victorian Secrets Limited 2018). This places all of Siddall's extant poetry together for the first time into one volume.

or artists who worked with the Pre-Raphaelite legacy in their own work. Their use of Pre-Raphaelitism is tied to their feminism or the suffrage movement and re-appraises Pre-Raphaelite women models and artists. Yet Pre-Raphaelitism is a neglected influence on late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century feminism. The relationship between Pre-Raphaelitism and early twentieth-century feminism is a complex one which includes critique as well as endorsement of particular Pre-Raphaelite artists. Beside the critical attention that H.D. has received, to reclaim the works of Hunt, Taylor, Morris and De Morgan alongside canonical female modernists, would be the logical next step after the work on this thesis, and a welcome scholarly development.

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