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## The Dancer and the Heart's Desire: W. B. Yeats and the Theatre of Modernity

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**Abstract:** Yeats's image of the dancer is selected precisely for its conceptual fluidity as an embodiment. The dancer/dance paradoxically symbolises that which is not merely symbolic, it evokes an art, a social practice, and, as 'brightening glance', an inter-subjective physical action, experientially felt at the moment of participation. If the leaf, the blossom or the bole can act as symbols of the Chestnut tree they do so as metonyms, parts of the whole whose power of representation derives from shared, contiguous being. The dance, likewise, may function as an artwork but does so as a dimension of nature and culture, wherein the subject must labour, in despair or pleasure.

**Key words:** Yeats, dancer, dance, artwork, theatre of Modernity

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**제목:** 댄서와 가슴의 욕망: W.B. 예이츠와 현대극

**우리말 요약:** 예이츠는 개념적 유동성을 정확하게 구체화시키기 위해서 댄서의 이미지를 선택했다. 댄서/댄스는 역설적으로 단순히 상징적인 것만을 상징하는 것이 아니라, 예술, 사회적 관습을 상기시키고, “번쩍이는 시선”으로서 참여의 순간에 경험적으로 느끼는 상호주관적 육체적 반응을 나타낸다. 잎, 꽃 혹은 줄기는 밤나무를 상징한다면, 이것들은 메토님으로서 그런 역할을 하는데, 전체의 부분들의 표현의 힘은 공통적으로 공유되는 것에서 유래한다. 댄스는 마찬가지로, 예술작품으로서 기능할 한다면, 자연과 문화의 차원에서 그런 것인데, 이때 댄서는, 고통이든 기쁨이든, 최선을 다해야 한다.

**주제어:** 예이츠, 댄서, 댄스, 예술작품, 현대극

**저자:** 벤 라비타스는 런던대학교, 연극공연학과, 연극사 교수이다. 레비타스 박사는 데이비드 홀드먼과 『W.B. 예이츠의 맥락』을 편집, 간행했다 (케임브리지대학출판사, 2010년).

## I

In his essay “A People’s Theatre” W. B. Yeats sought to recalibrate his dramatic purpose, answering the social and political crisis of 1919 with a new aesthetic credo. He wrote:

As a drawing is defined by its outline and taste by its rejections, I too must reject and draw an outline about the thing I seek, and say I seek, not a theatre but the theatre’s anti-self, an art that can appease all within us that becomes uneasy as the curtain falls and the house breaks into applause. (Fitzgerald 130)

The Irish National Theatre had for fifteen years been at the centre of the Irish revival, a protagonist in the cultural nationalist struggle as well as a place of provocation, questioning the nature of that struggle. Now, at this moment in the early years of the War of Independence, Yeats sought to find new distinction in theatrical modes, situating an interior, subjective nuance to counterpoint the outer signals of theatre’s social dynamics: the curtain, the house, the applause. To appease “all within us” by opposing these external figures of public approbation, Yeats sought a closer attention to a sense of self through a medium more sensitive to an instinct of alienation, a dissentient unease adrift in consensus. In a typical manoeuvre, he set this in epochal, even cosmic terms: what he seeks not merely the theatre’s anti-self, but the anti-self of “visible history.” He goes on:

That counter longing having no visible past, can only become a conscious energy suddenly, in those moments of revelation which are as a flash of lightning. Are we approaching a supreme moment of self-consciousness, the two halves of the world separate and face to face? (Fitzgerald 132)

Such oppositional imagery suggests a final face-off between subjective ("aristocratic") awareness and objective (democratic) prescription, the dialectical antimonies of *A Vision* fixed in polar opposition. Yet the electrifying revelation had been delivered by a more mercurial messenger. This was the figure of the dancer, a figure not content to remain a literary image, but insistent on the manifestation of disturbing, bodily presence. An essential aspect of what constituted the anti-theatre was also that which was essentially constitutive of theatricality itself—the essence of physical liveness. For Yeats's anti-theatre had been found in the creative impetus of a formal breakthrough: *Four Plays for Dancers*, composed 1916-1921 under the influence of Noh theatre form: *At the Hawks Well*, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, *The Only Jealousy of Emer* and *Calvary*.

In fixing on the dancer as anti-theatre's defining characteristic Yeats was doing something other than revivifying a ritual theatre. Rather, the ritual elements of such forms built on symbolist ambivalence in the face of expressionistic force, to evolve forms metaformally critical both of modernity and of modern theatrical form. If there is a Nietzschean impetus moving "The People's Theatre" it is not *The Birth of Tragedy out of the spirit of music*, celebrating Wagner as the heir to Dionysian power (Moses 561-79), but *The Case of Wagner*, Nietzsche's apostasy against his former mentor, condemning his opera as a form of "*Theatrocracy* [...] a form of demolatry [...] a plebiscite against good taste," and urging by way of "A diagnostic of modern soul [...] a resolute incision into the contradictions of instincts."<sup>1</sup>

Yeats mobilised his dancers in view of such ambivalence, part of an ongoing conjecture brought on by revolutionary action that fretted at the complicity of stage-play in conjuring violence. Yeats would, soon after the establishment of the Irish Free State, influentially describe the National Theatre as key to the revolutionary "stir of thought" during a period of "long gestation," leading from the fall of Parnell to the Easter Rising. If in his

1897 essay “The Celtic Element in Literature” had happily imagined writing driven by the archaic ritual of “tumultuous dance among the hills or in the depths of the woods, where unearthly ecstasy fell upon the dancers” (*Early Essays* 132), by the time Yeats gave form to “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen,” the image of Loie Fuller’s “floating ribbon of air” surrenders to an image in which ‘evil gathers head: / Herodias’ daughters have returned again’ (*Poems* 214). Reflecting on the *fin de siècle*, it was no longer the literature of natural revelry, but Salome’s dance of decadence that filled the frame.

The potent influence of Noh on Yeats is well established: what I would like to consider here is the backward look, glimpsing the dancer of an earlier formal shift, revisiting a point of crisis, inviting reflection on the dialectics of the outer forms of theatre and its “anti-self” of inner revelation, the paradox of subjective and objective dynamics that remain rooted in the anxiety of bodily expression and its gestural connection to social and political change.

## II

In his introduction to “Certain Noble Plays of Japan” (1916) Yeats made the proposition that it is through the intimate apprehension of the moving body that depths of mind may be found. As he put it, describing the experience of watching Michio Ito dance, shorn of the framing glare of theatricalised light:

There, where no studied lighting, no stage-picture made an artificial world, he was able, as he rose from the floor, where he had been sitting cross-legged, or as he threw out an arm, to recede from us into some more powerful life [...] he receded, but to inhabit as it were the deeps of the mind. (*Early Essays* 165)

Yeats had explained his attraction to Noh as for a form with the discipline of refined taste and ritual practice, honed in centuries of aristocratic culture. But it also, tellingly, returned Yeats to the beginnings of theatrical modernism in the symbolist movement and its resonances for Irish revivalism. The refined Japanese warrior caste whose form Noh had served were in Yeats's eyes "soldiers, whose natures had as much of Walter Pater as of Achilles," with a sensibility that would have appreciated "the painting of Puvis de Chavannes, the poetry of Mallarme and Verlaine" (*Early Essays* 172-3). This perception of Noh refracted through the 'trembling veil' of the 1890s was in part a confluence of preoccupations. At the time Yeats was processing Noh form, he was in the throes of setting down his autobiographies, finding in memoir of "The Tragic Generation" a swirl of revelation and symbolist proclivity that retrospectively refocused his sense of self. He wrote of that era:

I am certain that there was something in myself compelling me to attempt creation of an art as separate from everything heterogenous and casual, from all character and circumstances, as some Herodiade of our theatre, dancing seemingly alone in her narrow moving luminous circle. (*Auto* 247)

This evocation of his emerging identity as a writer receding from the world into a more powerful inner life is striking. The dance is compelling but kept at one remove. Although "The Tragic Generation" deals compassionately with Wilde's fall from grace, the figure of the theatrically exposed Salome is veiled. The biblical story depicting the dancer who demands the head of John the Baptist from her step-father Herod Antipas, at the behest of her mother Herodias, had long been a subject of literature and art: but only Wilde had transfigured the tale by rendering it in drama, culminating in dance. Yeats chose the title of Mallarmé's unfinished dramatic poem *Herodiade* (1866, published in translation by Arthur Symons in 1896) rather than his fellow

Irishman's play, perhaps to disguise an anxiety of influence, and perhaps to reclaim Oscar Wilde's voluptuary in making her luminous whirl a centripetally driving sensibility, intent on a tightening gyre, inward and downward to the depths of the mind rather than upward and outward to the pushing world.

The diaphanous disguise of Yeats's debt to Wilde would only be fully shed in his late dance works reworking Salome in *The King of the Great Clock Tower* (1935). But at this turning point, turning back to dance forms, the choice of image recaptures an unresolved tension between his cultural commitment as a public Irish nationalist and his symbolist resolve for subjective emphasis. Returning to a prior point of departure—*The Trembling of the Veil* concludes in the transitional year of 1897, as Yeats turned from the *fin de siècle* to the Irish Literary Theatre—his Herodiade beckons with a thrown out arm back to an earlier dancer, and forward to future forms.

For in evoking the Herodiade Yeats struck up new parallels in performance culture, reconnecting his fortunes in the service of the Abbey with the dynamics of an international avant garde. While he had spent twenty years carving out a place for verse drama in the life of his emerging nation-state—a project he now doubted—*Salome* had spun from its symbolist axis in London and Paris to act as a signature of modernist style in theatres from Barcelona to Moscow.<sup>2</sup>) The genealogy of Michio Ito's dance form, as Sylvia Ellis has noted, owed as much to the modern, western forms of dance he had encountered in the work of Nijinsky, Mary Wigman and while studying Eurythmics at the Decroze School in Hellerau, Dresden, as it did to the traditional practice of Noh. Feeding off the dynamic transition of symbolist writing into expressionist theatricality that had propelled Salome across Europe's stages, Ito arrived to perform *At the Hawks Well* in April 1916 as a key performer for Yeats, not simply because he was able to draw on the inspiration of Noh's courtly forms, but because he tied him back into

the European avant garde from which Yeats had been otherwise detached by his Irish adventures.

Susan Jones' study *Literature, Modernism and Dance*, has connected Yeats's interest in dance to a compelling interest in "writing the body," commanding a symbolic dancer in a manner that follows Frank Kermode's famous evocation in *The Romantic Image* of Salome as "all movement, yet with a kind of stillness [...] there is nothing but the dance, and she and the dance are inconceivable apart" (Jones 33). Yet this seems to miss the more questing interrogation in Yeats's inquiry into the physical movement as a necessary extension of poetic speech, that presents an additional capacity to gesture into the "deeps of the mind," a phrase repeated three times in "Certain Noble Plays of Japan." As he reiterates, "a deep of the mind can only be approached through what is most human, most delicate, we should distrust bodily distance, mechanism and loud noise" (*Early Essays* 166).

Implied in this search for a composite art form, "verse, ritual, music and dance in association with action" (*Early Essays* 165), is a pared down *gesamtkunstwerk*, but with a more modernist emphasis on contrast and contradistinction than harmonious integration. In place of Wagnerian confidence, such form suggests a misgiving in a language lapsed into crisis. Whereas in his early poem "The Song of the Happy Shepherd" Yeats had observed that of all modern modes in "dreary dancing past us whirled [...] Words alone are certain good" (*Poems* 5), the belated search for an anti-theatre suggests a departure from verse speech into a supplemental conjunction of forms. The cascade of modernity, that world against which the imaginative arts must push back, has exposed the literary arts as modes of mechanism or bodily distance, requiring an infusion of ancient performative forms—folk or elite traditions that offer lived engagement with imaginative states. Erika Fischer Lichte has theorised that modern theatre can be construed as an aesthetic response to what she calls a "performative turn,"

whereby late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe, dominated by a literary mentality, responded to an increasingly unfamiliar and experientially encountered world by developing forms of theatre alert and responsive to the ensuing performative dissonance. In conjoining Noh-inspired departures with a return to the 1890s, Yeats was searching out just such a juncture of crisis, which, in combination with the Parnellite schism that had set the revival in train, had brought new force to dance as a mode metatheatrical critique, a school of avant-garde commentary within theatrical form.

Reconnecting with the early 1890s invites reassessment of his first staged work *The Land of Heart's Desire* as a work prototypically reflexive of its function as a lived practice, and as an experientially encountered departure from literature into performance form, a dancing partner for Salome. For Wilde's *Salome* and Yeats's *The Land of Heart's Desire* can be considered dual daughters of Herodias, not simply of a new literary rendering of the dancing body, *a la* Mallarmé, but of the transposition of dance into hybrid contact with narrative dramatic speech, reflexively commenting on each; enactments mobilising the dancer in a formal synthesis. Written within a year of one another—Wilde's in 1892, Yeats 1893—Yeats succeeded in getting his play to the stage first, at the Avenue Theatre's production, first with John Todhunter's *A Comedy of Sighs*, and then G. B. Shaw's *The Arms and the Man*, in the Spring of 1894. (Wilde's work was delayed by censorship; its first Paris production, while Wilde was still in prison, in Paris in 1896.) This is the inception of a heightened form of theatre, engaging a theatricalised world in a medium that might share its ever-changing *modus operandi*. It augured in a theatre of and for modernity.



III

*The Land of Heart's Desire* tells the story of Mary Bruin, a young newly wed, tempted by an Irish faery who appears in the form of a child, to surrender her mundane life for the lure of a mythic realm. The dramatic pivot of the play is, as Ann Saddlemyer observed, the entrance of the otherworldly voice from beyond the door. Yet there also a formal pivot, from the literary evocation of otherworldly release to its manifest, physical intrusion into realism's restraining domesticity. Mary Bruin's encounter with the faery child is not merely the depiction of a mythic Irish tradition, but a point of departure from script into dramatic intervention and thence to an excess of theatricality manifest in dance. Mary's bookish distraction from the mundane posits a challenge to routine materiality, encapsulated in her father-in-law, Maurteen Bruin's, question: "Colleen, what is the wonder in that book, / That you must leave the bread to cool?" (*Variorum Plays* 183) But her subsequent incantatory plea signals a more active, performative imprecation, requiring embodied response:

Come Faeries, come take me out of this dull world,  
For I would ride with you upon the wind,  
Run on the top of the dishevelled tide,  
And dance upon the mountains like a flame (*Variorum Plays* 192)

When the voice of the faeries responds with its evocative *ekphrasis* in song, "While the faeries dance in a place apart, / Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring, / Tossing their milk-white arms in the air," it continues the momentum away from the literary to the more expansive dimensions of live performance on stage, confirmed by the faery child's decisive declaration: 'Here is level ground for dancing; I will dance', finally consummated in the ensuring foreshortening of her sung verse as a springboard to the dance itself.

That stage instruction, “*she dances*” gives the gnomic marker wherein dramatic literature surrenders to that which it cannot encompass (*Variorum Plays* 194-5; 200).

The disruptive entrance of the faery child into the peasant cabin, and her subsequent dance, shows that while *The Land of Hearts’s Desire* is a prime example of dramatic model ‘the stranger in the house’ (Greene 51), it is also a play showing that ‘the stranger’ is also a ‘strangeness’: the unfamiliar, or de-familiarising, form that intrudes into the house of realist narrative and carries with it the power to disrupt the normative materialism of domesticity. In this case, the uncanny ageless childhood of the faery child is doubled in the unfamiliarity of the theatrical symbolism that has given her form.

Unlike *Salome’s* dance of the seven veils, however, the dance in *The Land of Hearts’s Desire* travels in a geopolitical direction. The faery child represents Irish myth as well as being an attempted manifestation of its power. Church and State are her hindrances. Some Protestant wishful thinking is evident in Yeats’s proposition that she could entice the Priest into disposing of the crucifix, (“The tortured thing!” she cries, “Hide it away!”) (Greene 199) but the peasant cottage is securely located the domain of colonial sensibility, as the peasant family find more meaning in the prospect of Marteen’s “sock of yellow sovereigns” than a cultural heritage that might command spiritual conviction. Like the “Lake Isle of Innisfree,” *The Land of Hearts’s Desire* construes the context of visionary departure in a farewell to a deadening Imperial capital. If in that poem the phrase “on the roadway, or on the pavements grey” (*Poems* 35) denotes the tired urban trap from which the poet yearns to escape, *The Land of Hearts Desire* looks beyond the four walls of the peasant cabin to the auditorium the Avenue Theatre, making the faery call to “come away” a call to arms, a return to an Ireland armed with theatrical potencies, to make cause against the yellow-gold sovereignty of British materialist, Imperial culture.<sup>3)</sup>

On the other hand, one cannot compare *The Land of Heart's Desire* and *Salome* without noting the very different desires in play. Salome's vengeful, necrophiliac defiance of Jokannan's ascetic morality, and her own subsequent execution carries an ideological freight not geopolitical but sexualised and gendered. Given an additional charge by the imprisonment and death of Oscar Wilde, *Salome* took on a resonant potency, bespeaking a defiance of censorship in which the sexuality of women and gay men challenged taboo. If, as Wilde put it in *de profundis*, he became "a man who stood in symbolic relations to the art and culture of my age" (Wilde 162), *Salome* was the embodiment of those relations, dramatizing Desire as a dimension of the social action of theatre itself. That in part accounted for its world conquering success. *The Land of Heart's Desire*, however, although a play precipitated by unrequited desire, depicts a rejection of sexual love in favour of a desire for a mythic symbolic condition. A play written for a Florence Farr's ten year old niece, Dorothy Paget, *The Land of Heart's Desire* posited pleasure in the dance as entirely sexless. Yet it is anything but childlike: and we may dispute Declan Kiberd's assessment of the play as mawkish Victoriana or a "Celtic Peter Pan of the Western World" (Kiberd 130). The part of the child is rather one of uncanny presence, dissonantly articulating Yeats's poetic register as he signals his rejection by Maud Gonne (in theory, out of devotion to Irish national culture, although in fact in preference for her lover Lucian Millevoeye).<sup>4</sup>

Thus, if Wilde's and Yeats's dances both result in death, *The Land of Heart's Desire* is a play that contemplates the sacrifice of the 'warm heart' of worldly love to national cultural duty. The subordination of physical longing to esoteric spiritualism and Celtic objectives, was a theme returned to again in *The Countess Cathleen* and *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, the latter of which could be described as a radical revision of *The Land of Heart's Desire*, in which Maud Gonne herself is incarnated as the Nation, the dance replaced with a

paratheatrical blurring of the boundaries between theatrical speech and propagandist address. Subsequently, *On Baile's Strand*, *The King's Threshold*, and *The Shadowy Waters* each explored avenues to a mythic realm held apart and the cultural political project it is held to serve. Alongside such forays can be traced the active engagement of Yeats as impresario and defender of theatrical freedoms—particularly the work of Synge—and growing disillusion with the “People’s Theatre.” Among such developments, a central theme in Yeats’s journals during the combative first decade of the National Theatre was the concept of the anti-self, conceived as a theatricalised mask, capable of turning the deeps of Yeats’s mind outward to face a forceful context:

There is a relation between discipline and the theatrical sense. If we cannot imagine ourselves as different from what we are and assume that second self, we cannot impose a discipline upon ourselves, though we may accept one from others. Active virtue as distinguished from the passive acceptance of a current code is therefore theatrical, consciously dramatic, the wearing of a mask. It is the condition of arduous full life. (*Auto* 347)

The mask and the dancer; the deeps of the mind and the condition of arduous life; each antimony seeks to reconcile to its opposite, its anti-self, in constantly shifting relation. In “Certain Noble Plays of Japan,” Yeats declares: “I have invented a form of drama [...] distinguished, indirect, and symbolic, and having no need of mob or press to pay its way” (*Early Essays* 163). But Yeats’s dialectical, Blakean sensibility returns to the materials of theatre and its media as a work in progress, building on past innovations and frustrations: the same essay reflects on his radical implementation of non-representational scenography, using “those admirable ivory-covered screens invented by Gordon Craig” used for the first revival of *The Land of Heart's Desire* (and *The Hour Glass*) in 1911, as well as his failure to find time amid the pell-mell of dramatic situation in *The Kings Threshold*, to find lyric that

might evoke “the few trees and rocky fields of modern Gort” (*Early Essays* 171). *The Land of Heart's Desire* which had languished for unperformed for fifteen years, while Yeats considered it overly sentimental and “unmanly,” staged this comeback as his sense of the anti-self grew toward the possibility of an anti-theatre amid further revivals at the Abbey in 1912, 1917, and 1925 (Curtis xxi). The energy of Yeats's first staged work began to reassert itself as his urge to pare back ornamental speech opened space for the dancer to remerge, emphasised in its comparative mobility by being placed in a relative frieze: “all the players except the fairy child as still and statuesque as possible” as he noted approvingly in his introduction to *Plays and Controversies* (1923) (*Variorum Plays* 212).

#### IV

In returning to dance with the reinvigorated Noh, Yeats's reach back to *The Land of Heart's Desire* threw a bridge between theatrical transitions, reconnecting the revolutionary period to the epochal shifts of the 1890s. Mobilising his awakened sense of theatrical contestation, found in defending Synge, it was a move that opened a conduit to European connection, via dance and physical theatre, first through Michio Ito and then with Ninette de Valois, who had choreographed *Salome* twice before becoming Yeats's inspiration for further experimentation and founding the Abbey ballet company. In doing so Yeats would only confront again the imbrication of subject in social process, not least as he relinquished authorial control to dance-theatre collaboration, inviting in forces of avant garde sublation. As Yeats decides in “Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen”: “All men are dancers and their tread / Goes to the barbarous clamour of a gong” (*Poems* 212). The location, or situation, of the dancer acts then as a figure testing as well as

representing the relation of the subject to art, or in more philosophical and political terms, of individuality to community and of agency to predetermination. In reconceptualising this imbrication of influences, Yeats's model of intertwining gyres elaborated in *A Vision*, corresponded to the continuities as well as the tensions between the inner life and the outer world of such forms. Dancers move in the space between social practice and art, and Marie Bruin's decision to follow the faery dancer makes her a sister to Salome, a "daughter of Herodias" insofar as her movement is towards modernity and its activism, rather than a withdrawal. Yeats's question in "Among School Children," "How Can we know the dancer from the dance?" sets and answers this interrelation as a performative causal conundrum:

Labour is blossoming or dancing where  
 The body is not bruised to pleasure soul,  
 Nor beauty born out of its own despair,  
 Nor blear-eyed wisdom out of midnight oil.  
 O chestnut tree, great rooted blossomer,  
 Are you the leaf the blossom or the bole?  
 O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,  
 How can we know the dancer from the dance? (*CW1* 219)

We may distinguish the dancer from the dance easily enough if we construe each to exist in its narrower sense: telling *a* dancer from *a* dance, considering the individual who dances rather than an anonymous dancer, just as we may historicise a dance by differentiating dances, their variety, grammar and genealogy: observing the semiotic act as it alters an aesthetic field. As Selma Jeanne Cohen has observed, 'to a real dancer, Yeats's concept is apt to seem unrealistic—their training has afforded them plenty of bruises' (Cohen 162). But Yeats's image of the dancer is selected precisely for its conceptual fluidity as an embodiment. The dancer/dance paradoxically

symbolises that which is not merely symbolic, it evokes an art, a social practice, and, as “brightening glance,” an inter-subjective physical action, experientially felt at the moment of participation. If the leaf, the blossom or the bole can act as symbols of the Chestnut tree they do so as metonyms, parts of the whole whose power of representation derives from shared, contiguous being. The dance, likewise, may function as an artwork but does so as a dimension of nature and culture, wherein the subject must labour, in despair or pleasure. By the same measure the poem must acknowledge that the literary image cannot aspire to know the dance in its fullness. Reflecting on his confrontation with school children, a history of embattled theatricality and his sublimated desire for Maud Gonne, Yeats posits the dancer as the centre of the theatre of modernity: that form alone that admits uncertain good, a mythic form in tension with embodied movement, a dancer that serves to sustain the paradox of the corporeal symbol, whose masked presence presents the self occluded by the modern world.

## Notes

- 1) Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner* [1888], 42, 60. Emphasis original. R. F. Foster notes Yeats's familiarity with this text, *W. B. Yeats: A Life, vol. 1: The Apprentice Mage* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), 584.
- 2) William Tydeman and Steven Price, *Wilde: Salome* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996). Landmark included productions by Lugné-Poe in Paris 1896; Max Reinhardt in Berlin 1902-1903; Nikolai Evreinov in Moscow 1908 (banned by the Tsar); Margarita Xirgu in Barcelona 1910; Alexandr Tairov (Moscow again) 1917; Georges and Ludmilla Pitoëff (Paris again), 1922.
- 3) Yeats's choice of title alluded to the utopian impulse popularised in Edward Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* ('Ah, Love! Could thou and I with Fate conspire/To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire!/ Would not we shatter it to bits—and then/ Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire.') But the play resolves to jettison utopian lyricism for theatrical action, thereby making *The Land of Hearts' Desire* an attainable object brought nearer by cultural intervention.
- 4) See Adrian Frazier, *The Adulterous Muse: Maud Gonne, Lucien Millevoye and W. B. Yeats* (Lilliput, 2016).

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