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Neil Mann

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A REVIEW OF  
“SOMETHING THAT I READ IN A BOOK”:  
W. B. YEATS’S ANNOTATIONS AT THE NATIONAL  
LIBRARY OF IRELAND, BY WAYNE K. CHAPMAN

Wayne K. Chapman, “*Something that I read in a book*”: *W. B. Yeats’s Annotations at the National Library of Ireland*, 2 vols. (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2022). Vol. 1: lxvi+475 (ISBN: 978-1-63804-000-2 [print]; eISBN: 978-1-63804-001-9 [ebook]) Vol. 2: lxvi+235 (ISBN: 978-1-63804-002-6 [print]; eISBN: 978-1-63804-003-3 [ebook])

*Reviewed by Neil Mann*

Though reading itself is one of the most private acts, the marks and notes that readers leave on a book’s pages can provide a fascinating insight into that act and the impact that a text may have. The two volumes of Wayne K. Chapman’s “*Something that I read in a book*”: *W. B. Yeats’s Annotations at the National Library of Ireland* (Clemson, 2022; YANLI hereafter) present a comprehensive account of the annotations—including inscriptions, page cutting, and general alterations to the books—in the library of W. B. and George Yeats.<sup>1</sup> This work is part of a larger project that takes on all the aspects related to the books acquired by W. B. and George Yeats, from a children’s *Arabian Nights* given to the seven-year-old Yeats by his father<sup>2</sup> to posthumous volumes of Yeats’s poetry.<sup>3</sup> As Chapman’s wide-ranging introduction clarifies, these two volumes focus on the annotated books, and as such only contain a selection of the books in the full library, which are listed in *The W. B. and George Yeats Library: A Short-Title Catalog (WBGYL)*.<sup>4</sup> Because W. B. Yeats was a writer and inveterate reviser, the annotations are not just related to the Yeatses’ reading, but also to the poet’s own work, and Chapman divides the two volumes into first *Reading Notes* and secondly, *Yeats Writings (sic)*.<sup>5</sup> The division, though unequal,<sup>6</sup> is also almost alphabetical, owing to the “happy coincidence of Yeats’s surname falling at the end of the alphabet” (xxxvii).<sup>7</sup>

Whether the two volumes are taken together or separately—and Chapman foresees possible separation by repeating his introductory matter in both volumes—they offer the student of Yeats a sense of the intellectual environment from which the artist’s creative world emerges, the background and influences, and the practicalities encountered by the publishing writer. The annotations bear witness to acts of reading, of reacting, of reflecting, of selecting, of thinking that something might be worth referring to later; the revisions in his own work

and the bibliographical and editorial work carried out by George Yeats provide a wealth of evidence about the practice of the author.

Chapman's two catalogues, and particularly the two volumes of *YANLI*, have been a labor of many years and of love, stretching back almost four decades and with the figure of the library's latter-day custodian, Anne Yeats, very much present, as is her house in Dalkey, "Avalon." Chapman's account of Anne Yeats and her generosity in allowing successive academics access to her parents' books and giving her own time is the warm center of his introductory essay.<sup>8</sup> However, Chapman is describing "a distinctly different collection of books than had existed at 'Avalon' from 1969 to 2002" (xxxvi), and the differences range from the books' arrangement and insertions to the actual books contained (see below).

As Chapman recounts, the Yeatses' library was catalogued initially by Anne Yeats herself, with Roger Nyle Parisious assisting as an archivist; the task was then taken up by Glenn O'Malley at the beginning of the 1970s, but cut short by his premature death. The baton was passed to Edward O'Shea, who produced *A Descriptive Catalog of W. B. Yeats's Library (YL)* in 1985,<sup>9</sup> which was immediately recognized as "a research tool which will transform and strengthen whole areas of research," being "not only a catalogue, but what will pass muster as an *ad hoc* marginalia for those who have at hand a good reference library."<sup>10</sup> Its deficiencies and weaknesses have earned justified criticism, but it has been an invaluable resource.

Chapman's catalogue reflects the extant collection held at the National Library of Ireland in Dublin. After Anne Yeats's death in 2001, her brother Michael and his wife Gráinne arranged for the books to be sent as a Heritage Donation to the National Library, and, as the library's annual report stated, "it became evident that the collection, as received, did not fully match the O'Shea catalogue; some items listed by O'Shea were not present, and, by way of compensation, some items were present which are not listed in the published catalogue."<sup>11</sup> Though some books recorded in *YL* seem to have gone astray, as have inserted letters and slips, Chapman has been able to include entries for "two rows of George Yeats's personal copies, isolated in the library at 'Avalon' and for that reason disregarded by O'Malley in his rudimentary list," which therefore "simply never made it into *YL*" (xxxvi).

Apart from this gap, however, O'Shea's catalogue reflects the books under Anne Yeats's curatorship and is as such also a historical record,<sup>12</sup> so it is not wholly superseded by the new catalogues. Thus, even though Chapman's *YANLI* is evidently seeking to amplify and improve on *YL*, he refers to it throughout, with a notation to indicate where his account is in agreement [*||YL*] or disagreement [*#YL*] with O'Shea's. Indeed, Chapman maintains a one-sided dialogue with *YL*, noting its records and flaws, but retaining a

generosity of spirit, despite occasional frustrations.<sup>13</sup> As the numbering of O'Shea's volume is used to provide the NLI's call numbers,<sup>14</sup> it is inevitable that both *WBGYL* and *YANLI* should include them, but Chapman also uses *YL*'s numbers in a supplementary role, relying upon *YL*'s convention of adding an asterisk to the entries that appeared in the Yeatses' library list from the 1920s to indicate a book's presence in that listing (see xxxi).<sup>15</sup>

Occasionally, Chapman seems to follow *YL* a little too closely or is forced to by the loss of insertions. An instance of both occurs with Henri de Jubainville's *Le cycle mythologique irlandais et la mythologie celtique* (1057, *YL* \*1047): "**Flyleaf:** as reported in *YL*, bears 'sketches of a sword and goblets.' | **Inserted** (but since removed), a horoscope, unidentified, bearing the birth date 22 Jan. 1897 and the notation: 'question Horn.'" It seems unnecessary to indicate how *YL* described the drawings and a slightly fuller new description might help the reader to see if the sketches relate to Yeats's attempts to construct Celtic Mysteries or other symbolic research.<sup>16</sup> As for the "horoscope," it is clearly an astrological chart related to a question or "horary," and John Kelly's chronology states that Yeats visited W. T. Horton on January 22, 1897,<sup>17</sup> while G. M. Harper refers to a note from Horton inviting Yeats to visit at 1:30 that day.<sup>18</sup> Thus, "question Horn" is almost certainly "question Horton," but without a copy of the original insertion, it is impossible to be sure.

....

In his introduction, Chapman envisages a number of scenarios for the ways that these catalogues might be used by the interested student of Yeats. The first is using the volumes in the Kildare Street reading rooms of the National Library of Ireland itself—"its best use is *beside* those materials rather than apart from them" (xxxviii)—though no doubt viewed also as a preliminary guide to researchers about what to select and request. In this case, readers have the physical book and annotations, and Chapman's volumes should serve as a form of map or aid to speed up selection and study. A second scenario is to use Chapman's indications and transcriptions with another copy of the same work in the same edition (or as close as possible), in order to reconstruct a working idea of Yeats's own readings and notes, as Gould foresaw with *YL*. In this case, Chapman's indications of emphasis and underlining become crucial, and his transcriptions become the only source of information for handwritten comments, but they enable the interested reader to gain a good sense of the poet's engagement with the books in question. A third scenario, and very much a preliminary stage in any process, is to read Chapman's book on its own, as a guide to Yeats's mind, his interests, and thought, surveying the titles that come up and reading through the annotations, focusing on those that promise more, whether theater, politics, theosophy, or whatever glints to the reader's eye. As Gould commented in 1986, "Yeats's library, as those who have used it

know, neither fulfils fantasies nor disappoints the enquirer. It is consistently challenging to preconceptions even when it rewards hunches" (YA4 269).

Having undertaken the task of listing and transcribing the annotations in the Yeatses' library, Chapman faces a number of difficult decisions. Is the task to record all annotations or only W. B. Yeats's, as implied by his subtitle "W. B. Yeats's Annotations at the National Library of Ireland"? Given some uncertain cases of handwriting, as well as the inevitable ambiguity of who underlined a passage or put a line in a margin, there will always be judgment calls, and most will be happy to trust Chapman's sense of which annotations have the Yeatsian touch. In practice, Chapman usually gives us "The Annotations in the Yeatses' Library at the National Library of Ireland"—admittedly a less smooth title and without the poet's name stamped on it, as preferred for publishing. Chapman was scrupulous to include both husband and wife when titling "The W. B. and George Yeats Library" for the short-title catalogue,<sup>19</sup> and though George Yeats is omitted from the title of the new catalogue, her presence is felt throughout both volumes of annotations. These vary from her bookplates and inscriptions to her own annotations and often lengthy copyings into books (see xl–xli). A third presence here is Ezra Pound, so that, despite having Yeats's own authority that, in his copy of Herodotus (894, YL \*885), "The Notes, markings, etc are all by Ezra Pound," these marks are duly reported (see also xli–xlii). The fact that Yeats made such a note also indicates both his awareness that the annotations might interest others and a certain self-consciousness. The same is true of his observation in the first volume of S. Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy* (1672, YL 1663) that the underlining of "The shifting nature of the world conceals the stable reality" was not his own reflection on nirvana but looked to a more sporting kind of stables and reality: "Marked by my wife who had opened the book | at random to find what horse would win at Punchestown. | W.B.Y." Such a comment is a useful reminder that a few of the lines or specks may not always mean as much as we might surmise.<sup>20</sup> In Andrew Lang's *The Making of Religion* (1095, YL \*1085), even Chapman is unsure whether there is "a stroke or ink blot at 'Dr. Charcot' in last paragraph" (1: 257).

We know that George Yeats's reading was also an important influence on her husband, through their daily conversation and shared interests, as well as the more special nexus of the automatic writing and the background of the system that produced *A Vision*, so it is completely appropriate that Chapman includes generally full accounts of her annotations. And Ezra Pound read with Yeats, read aloud to him, and stimulated him, not only during the winters in Stone Cottage, but also in London and Rapallo. The markings on the German text of Leo Frobenius's *Paideuma* (726, YL 715), a language that Yeats did not know, indicate a process in which either George Yeats or Ezra Pound

was communicating ideas—while *A Vision B* shows how those ideas were transformed (and distorted) in Yeats’s understanding of them.<sup>21</sup>

Other scribblers include former owners, and these are reported rather more according to the interest they are judged to have—they were part of the copy that Yeats may have read, after all. Thus, the annotations in Coventry Patmore’s copy of Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria* (412, YL 401) are outlined in greater detail than his notes in Laurence Oliphant’s *Scientific Religion* (1605, YL \*1496) or those of an anonymous owner of Meric Casaubon’s *A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed for Many Yeers between Dr. John Dee... and Some Spirits* (513, YL 501).<sup>22</sup> And even when it comes to Yeats’s own marginal strokes, there sometimes seems to be a similar principle. Where Yeats annotates to any degree, Chapman gives the corresponding text in the relevant volume, so that the reader can see what Yeats is responding to. Similarly, where Yeats underlines or puts a stroke in the margin, Chapman usually gives the text or some indication of the subject. In some entries, however, the references are only to page and line numbers, making it impossible to have any idea what is involved without recourse to the book itself.

To take examples somewhat haphazardly: Alfred North Whitehead’s *Science and the Modern World* (2274, YL 2258) is, as Chapman notes, “complexly annotated by Yeats and, naturally, is now challenging to report,” so even ample reporting entails selection of marks. For Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West* (1989, YL 1975), along with the occasional annotations, underlined phrases appear in full, and many marginal strokes are accompanied by the relevant text. For Cesare Lombroso’s *After Death—What?* (1157, YL 1145), the underlinings are spelled out in full, while the marginal lines merit only a brief summary. George Yeats’s notes in a copy of *Il Pimandro* (890, YL 882) are summarized as a “list of hermetic works,” without specification, as well as a “list of waiters, porters etc. with expected tips.” *Spirit-Identity and Higher Aspects of Spiritualism* (1409, YL 1397)<sup>23</sup> merits only the vaguer “Marginal strokes on pages 78, 79, 82, 83,” while various volumes of *Raphael’s Ephemeris* are described simply as “Heavily marked” (e.g., 1717, YL 1706), with “Moderate markings” (e.g., 1718, YL 1707; 1723, YL 1712). There is, therefore, something of a hierarchy of perceived interest in Chapman’s approach that is certainly justified but occasionally piques the reader’s curiosity rather than informing.

George Yeats had a habit of copying interesting passages into her books, and these are usually transcribed but seldom identified. Thus, her copy of Miguel de Molinos’s *The Spiritual Guide* (1345a, YL 1332a) contains passages from Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Browne’s *Religio Medici*, C. W. King’s *The Gnostics and their Remains*, and Francis Bacon’s *The Advancement of Learning*; yet only the first of these is identified, and that is because she herself includes the author’s name. In a book on reading, it would be helpful to give more

indication of what these annotations indicate that George Yeats had read.<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere, some copied lines go noted and recognized—for example, a quotation from Dante’s *Paradiso* in Italian copied into Yeats’s 1922 *Later Poems* (2406a, YL 2382a) is translated, referred to a modern edition, and back to an English translation in the Yeatses’ library (2: 75–76), though at other times recognition leads to naming rather than quotation, so that in a copy of Ezra Pound’s *Exultations* (1630a, YL \*1619a) “GY has transcribed . . . the original Spanish text of Lope de Vega’s ‘Song for the Virgin Mother.’” This variation in treatment creates a sense of unevenness, despite valid reasons for the difference.

This variation may be evidence of lesser interest or even a certain fatigue—Conrad Balliet, who compiled *W. B. Yeats: A Census of the Manuscripts*, wrote of how *his* “project [had] been a challenge as well as a chore”<sup>25</sup>—and, reading through the minutiae necessary to record the appearance of these many volumes, it is impossible not to feel sympathy for the sheer toil involved. It is entirely understandable that Chapman appears inspired by Blake, Boehme, Swedenborg, and Landor, but seems less engaged with some of the Yeatses’ (even) more niche interests.

Though there is possibly some unevenness in the level of engagement with different books in the first volume of *YANLI*, it feels as if the second volume is where Chapman’s personal interest is more fully active. When Yeats is commenting on his own work, we are offered a different form of insight: the correction, the second guess, the revision, as well as the collaboration between writer, publisher, editor, and printer. It is well known that Yeats did not regard publication as an end point or stasis and that he continued to reconsider the wording and form of his works over the years, so many of the books bear evidence of his later thoughts.

In particular, plays seem to have benefited from Yeats’s experience of seeing them in the theater, so that he seeks to amend the movement on stage, or the clarity or flow of the words. Books used as prompt copies, such as Bullen’s 1904 edition of *The Hour-Glass; Cathleen Ni Houlihan; The Pot of Broth* (2384, YL 2362), bear witness to the process of direction and rehearsal itself, in this case for *The Hour-Glass*, while Maunsell’s 1905 edition of the same three plays (2385, YL 2363), shows the poet revising the text to give a character more presence (in this case, Bridget in *The Hour-Glass*), even though these were not followed in any published version. Whole speeches are revised or added to *Deirdre*, for instance, in *Plays for an Irish Theatre* (2423a, YL 2397a) (see 2: 85–87).

W. B. Yeats’s corrected copies include both emendations of errata and improvements. A volume such as the 1922 Macmillan *Later Poems* (already a collection with revisions) (2406, YL 2382), shows particularly the latter. These are generally reported by line, for example, “P.226: line 9 of ‘Friends’

revised to 'Mind and delighted mind' in black lead pencil (as in *Later Poems*, London 1924)," or simply "P. 287: line 2 of 'On being asked for a War Poem' revised as noted in *VP* (first in *Later Poems*, London, 1926)," which is slightly more tantalizing for the browsing reader. One instance elicits more engaged comment—"Pp. 326–27: an elaborate revision of 'Solomon and the Witch' . . . The point of all this vigorous rewriting would seem to be to produce the playfully hypermetric lines 7–8," which are then quoted. There is also a more subjective reaction when speaking of Parkinson's transcription: "What is lost is quite amazing: a graphic impression of Yeats struggling to get those two lines right," justifying the reproduction of the pages in question and transcription (2: 73–75).

Almost as interesting and authoritative are George Yeats's corrections to the books in the library, some of which were followed in later editions, though others not, such as the corrections to *Autobiographies* (2334, YL 2316). Chapman here has common cause with O'Shea in giving prominence to "George Yeats's considerable role as bibliographer and editor of W. B. Yeats's work" (YL xix, cit. YANLI li). O'Shea saw Richard Finneran's writing about and practice in editing Yeats as calling "into question George Yeats's role as editor," and hoped his catalogue would "make possible an intelligent discussion of the issue" (YL xix, cit. YANLI li).<sup>26</sup> Chapman gives further evidence and support for accepting George Yeats's input in most cases, as outlined in his introduction (li–lii) and appendix II (2: 183).<sup>27</sup> Major sources for the dating of the poems include George Yeats's copy of Macmillan's 1933 edition of *The Collected Poems* (2344, YL 2323), where she notes that "The poems that have been dated in pencil | in this book are dated by authority of MSS" (2: 11).<sup>28</sup>

One unusual form of intervention comes in the treatment of the books related to Yeats's activity editing *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*. Here we see the work that went into reading and selecting the poems included in that rather controversial volume, and the testimony is found both in annotated tables of contents and in the negative space left by excised candidates for inclusion in the anthology. A more complete version of this cut-and-paste technique is seen in what Chapman terms "The 'Paste-Pot' Production of *Later Poems* (Macmillan, 1922; Wade 134)" (2: 163–80), which puts George Yeats to the fore again, and brings Chapman back to bibliographic puzzles surrounding a printing of *Responsibilities*, which he first examined in an article in *Yeats Annual*.<sup>29</sup>

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Much of this material requires some intimacy with W. B. Yeats's work and life for it to be appreciated fully, but it will also draw readers into the genetic development of the poetry and drama, the processes of creation and contingencies of life. Most often, perhaps, the library in both volumes delights the reader with the sudden shifts and thought-provoking mix provided by



alphabetic accidents, as well as the variety of voices that are added to the Yeatses' own. Within a few pages we can pass from Lily Yeats's copy of *Reveries Over Childhood and Youth* (2446, YL 2414), identifying family details with the immediacy and directness that comes from the memory of the poet's own sister, to some authorial revisions for that volume of autobiography (2447, YL 2415), juxtaposed with poetic revisions in a copy of Macmillan's 1921 *Selected Poems* (2449, YL 2417), and possible notes and selections for radio broadcasts in another copy (2449a, YL 2417a).

The appendices will serve as further avenues for exploration: the first two in particular trace publishing history and the making of books with the patience and detail seen in Chapman's *Yeats's Poetry in the Making*. Appendix III is perhaps more for those with a taste for the averages of baseball or cricket and other statistical curiosities, presenting a summary of annotated volumes in terms of the library as a whole. There is a subcategory of "significantly detailed items" (2: 185) and lists of "Highlighted Authors and Subjects" or "Highlighted Writings by WBY and Edited Works," but it does seem a little arbitrary. The "List of Signed and Associated Copies" in the fourth appendix gives an overview of the literary landscape of the early twentieth century, while the fifth appendix lists the volumes produced by the presses at Dun Emer and Cuala.

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This is a fascinating and extremely useful work as it stands; it will be more authoritative and reliable once numerous minor typographical and transcription errors and slips have been dealt with. A work such as this, with so many bibliographic details and textual minutiae, demands a painstaking meticulousness that is probably almost impossible on first publication, and the feedback from readers and critics will no doubt improve the accuracy significantly. The first volume is particularly marred by errata.<sup>30</sup>

As an example that is not particularly egregious, Lucy M. J. Garnett's *Greek Folk Poesy* (740, YL \*731), provides an idea of the problems. The list of annotations includes:

**P. 487:** in the footnote, the words "in Superstition, only as in vocable Powers" is underscored with a drawn line leading into the margin and the inscription: "Witchcraft | in w[hi]ch the | the greater | however | compells | the lesser." (1: 185)

Here the solecism of "words . . . is" is difficult to notice because of the quotation, while "in vocable" splits the word "invocable," a mistake that is not immediately obvious to a reader. The word "compells" may look like a slip but is typical of Yeats's spelling so is almost certainly right, yet it is less easy to be sure when a description at the end of this item renders the printed text's "Primitive" as "Primitave."<sup>31</sup> In the intervening lines, an American spellchecker is probably

responsible for turning the British text's "wilful" into "willful" (twice), while the book's original phrase "hence, from Material, were transformed into Spiritual, Beings" has been elided in the description of "underscorings, in lines 22 and 23, of the words 'from Material, and Spiritual, Being,'" (or else some intervening quotation marks are omitted).<sup>32</sup>

Such mistakes are not present throughout the volume, but they affect a significant number of entries. In the case of William Gordon Holmes's *The Age of Justinian and Theodora: A History of the Sixth Century A.D.* (911, YL 903), the typographic problems come singly but include "Homes" for Homer, "Milton" for Milion, "Sun-gad" for Sun-god, "modious" for modius, "practice" for practise, and "salve" for slave. Some of these are rare words, and the automatic changes introduced by software after careful typing can easily go unnoticed; these favor American forms—such as "practice" as a verb above<sup>33</sup>—and standard dictionary words—so Chaucer's "and in his hond a quene" becomes "and in his honed a queen" (377, YL 387).

The worst problems come in the transcription of foreign languages, whether from print or handwritten annotations. The printed Latin of Cornelius Agrippa (23, YL 24) is mangled, as are some of Yeats's more esoteric annotations.<sup>34</sup> Accents are often omitted in French or German, or adapted misleadingly, so that Leo Frobenius's phrase printed "ihrer großen Organität" becomes "ihrer grossen Organitaet" (726, YL 715). In his notes on Balzac, it seems unlikely that even as bad a speller as Yeats would commit "Etudes Philosopheque" (106, YL 106) for "philosophiques."

There is evidently a difference between transcribing printed text and the annotations in handwriting. Yet, if even printed text is not rendered correctly, it does throw transcriptions of handwriting into doubt. Some instances that are clear come when W. B. or George Yeats is copying a title or a passage. The relative legibility of George Yeats's own handwriting is offset by the fact that she is frequently writing in foreign languages, which causes problems. Her copy of *The Vita Nuova of Dante* (488, YL \*477) contains quotations from a lecture by Giosuè Carducci, which are badly distorted and go unrecognized, with Chapman commenting, "Evidently these notes were not copied from *La Vita Nuova* itself, possibly in GY's own Italian" (1: 156).<sup>35</sup> The quotations from Leonardo, Ludwig Börne, Ernest Renan, and Dante copied into a translation of *The Paradiso of Dante Alighieri* (482, YL 471) suffer similarly, and such things are readily checked via an internet search. Dante's own "dolce stil nuovo" (*sweet new style*), a relatively well-known phrase, becomes "dolce stel nuovo," and a quotation from *La Vita Nuova* gives the "esempio della sua bellissima figura" as "eseiapio della sua bellius cina figura" (1: 154).<sup>36</sup> Because George Yeats was copying, these passages can be checked against an original and so we can gain a clearer sense of what she wrote or intended;<sup>37</sup> that is not

the case with most of the other annotations, even in cases where the language being used presents fewer obstacles. In the case of a long quotation from Ernest Renan with several minor errors, the transcription is fortunately elucidated by the photographic reproduction of the relevant pages,<sup>38</sup> and it would make sense if more photographic evidence of the annotations were included, particularly where readings are doubtful or difficult. Chapman almost seems to recognize this in the case of a passage from Machiavelli's *Prince*, where a photograph shows what are described as "evidently six lines from Machiavelli (in quotes)," which are not transcribed.<sup>39</sup> Attractive though it is to have diagrams of the Tree of Life and sketches by Jack or J. B. Yeats, these are neither by W. B. Yeats nor the "Reading Notes" that the volume's title indicates, and most readers would probably be willing to sacrifice those illustrations for more images of Yeats's actual annotations, however difficult the handwriting may be to decipher.

Other slips come in the editorial additions or explanations. Thus, with volume 5 of the *Collectanea Hermetica* (397, YL 387), some Golden Dawn mottoes are mixed up, as are explications on Servius's commentaries on the Ninth and Fourth Eclogues of Virgil.<sup>40</sup> The correction of Yeats's "comment in time of [= 'on this by'] Augustus" seems both unnecessary and unjustified, as it refers to the period of Augustus's ascendancy not the emperor himself. The listing of Yeats's annotations is prefaced by a long comment about modern editions of the sources that Yeats cites and followed by a "glossary" of the volumes available to Yeats in his library and elsewhere, including speculated reading, all of which represents a level of apparatus that is not offered for any other work.<sup>41</sup>

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Despite such cavils, these volumes remain a rewarding source to deepen our understanding of the poet's mind and captivate the reader, not least for the unexpected surprises that they offer. Yeats himself noted, "Muses resemble women who creep out at night and give themselves to unknown sailors and return to talk of Chinese porcelain," and that "the Muses sometimes form in those low haunts their most lasting attachments" (AVB 24, CW14 19). His personal stock of thought and image draws on an eclectic variety of haunts both low and high and his Muses seem equally at ease in philosophical academies and shabby séances. In offering the whole range of the library and its annotations in such detail, Chapman has done a wonderful service to all of those interested in the poet.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Wayne K. Chapman's "Something that I read in a book": *W. B. Yeats's Annotations at the National Library of Ireland* (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2022; YANLI hereafter). In this review, references to books in the Yeateses' library are given by their catalogue number(s): the first is that of Chapman's YANLI, which is also that of his *The W. B. and George Yeats Library: A Short-Title Catalog* (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2019; WBGYL), and this is followed by the number used in Edward O'Shea, *A Descriptive Catalog of W. B. Yeats's Library* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1985; YL); see below for details. Page references to YANLI itself are given in the text in parentheses as volume number and page number; as the introductory material is repeated in both volumes with the same pagination in Roman numerals, these references are not prefaced by a volume number.
- 2 *Five Favourite Tales from Arabian Nights in Words of One Syllable* (689, YL 676) contains an inscription "To Willy from/ his Papa 1872," recorded in YL and mentioned in the introduction of YANLI (x), though not in WBGYL, and the item is not included in YANLI's listings. There are, of course, books older than the children's *Arabian Nights* in the library, both inherited and bought.
- 3 WBGYL includes a few books added to the library posthumously: *Last Poems and Plays* (London: Macmillan, 1940; WBGYL 2405, YL 2381), *The Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1949; WBGYL 2435, not in YL), and Joseph Hone's biography, *W. B. Yeats 1865–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1942; WBGYL 919, not in YL), as well as copies of Raphael's *Ephemeris* for 1939, 1940, and 1942 (WBGYL 1732–34, not in YL). WBGYL also includes *A List of Books Published by the Dun Emer Press and the Cuala Press founded in Nineteen Hundred and Three by Elizabeth Corbet Yeats* (n.p.: n.p., 1943), noting that it is "Extensively annotated" (WBGYL 1151, not in YL); this item does not appear in YANLI, but YANLI's second volume contains an appendix listing Cuala and Dun Emer books, including works from the 1940s and 1970s, in appendix V (2: 201–13). See also "The Library of William Butler Yeats: Guide for Readers," esp. section 4, accessed at <http://www.nli.ie/pdfs/mss%20lists/yeats%20librarylistforpublic.pdf> in August 2022.
- 4 *The W. B. and George Yeats Library: A Short-Title Catalog* appeared in 2006, available for free online at the Clemson University libraries website—[https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/cudp\\_bibliography/1/](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/cudp_bibliography/1/)—and it came out as a printed book from Clemson University Press in 2019. Of the 3,016 pieces listed in WBGYL, 744 are represented in YANLI (see ix), just under a quarter of the total, see appendix III (2: 185).
- 5 The phrase "Yeats Writings" strikes me as slightly awkward, stuck between "the Yeats library" (a term used by the National Library of Ireland) and "W. B. Yeats's Writings," a more natural phrasing. It does, however, follow the attributive use of Yeats in "Yeats manuscripts" or "Yeats studies."
- 6 As the page counts at the head of this review indicate, volume 1, at 542 pages, is somewhat less than double the length of volume 2, at 301 pages, and, putting aside the shared introductory material, more than double.
- 7 As "Yeats, W. B." even follows the rest of his own family, the annotated volumes after the gap are confined to a few copies of *Zadkiel's Astronomical Ephemeris*, with, as Chapman implies, no great violence done to alphabetic orthodoxy.
- 8 This section recalls essays remembering George Yeats, such as Richard Ellmann's "At the Yeateses" (*New York Review of Books*, May 17, 1979) and Donald Pearce's memories of "Hours with the Domestic Sibyl: Remembering George Yeats" (*Southern Review*, 28:3, July 1992).
- 9 See note 1 for bibliographic details.
- 10 Warwick Gould, "Editorial Miscellany," YA4 (1985) 269.

- 11 Cited by Chapman (xxxv–xxxvi): *Trustees Report 2002: Report of the Council of Trustees of the National Library of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2002* (Dublin: National Library of Ireland, 2003), 56. It is also excerpted in appendix B in the NLI’s “The Library of William Butler Yeats: Guide for Readers” (see note 3).
- 12 As a catalogue, the contents of *YL* were ordered strictly alphabetically rather than thematically as the books were shelved; on the shelving, see W. K. Chapman’s introduction to *WBGYL* and also “W. B. and George Yeats: The Writing, Editing, and Dating of Yeats’s Poems of the Mid-1920s and 1930s with a Chronology of the Composition of the Poems,” *YA15* (2002), 120–58, esp. n12.
- 13 The tone may seem slightly captious, for example, when it comes to the dating and application of drafts of a letter to T. Fisher Unwin—“*YL* summarizes the narrative of the letters without realizing that the issue at hand was the difficult terms of the contract between Yeats and Unwin for *Poems* (1895)”—but *YL* is then quoted in extenso and given due credit for the summary (2: 24). *YL*’s testimony is all the more important because these two drafts did not accompany volume 1 of the Shakespeare Head *Collected Works* (2345, *YL* 2325) to the NLI, though Chapman evidently saw them in Dalkey and they are close to the final letter in *Collected Letters* (*CL1* 402–3).
- 14 See the NLI’s “The Library of William Butler Yeats: Guide for Readers,” para. 1 (see note 3).
- 15 See also *YL* ix and also Edward O’Shea, “The 1920s Catalogue of W. B. Yeats’s Library,” *YA4* (1985) 279–90.
- 16 The Mysteries include rituals relating to Ireland’s Four Treasures, including the Sword of Nuada and Cauldron of Dagda, which in turn correspond to the tarot suits of swords and cups. See Lucy Shephard Kalogera, ‘Yeats’s Celtic Mysteries’ (PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 1977 [UMI 77-22,121]).
- 17 J. S. Kelly, *A W. B. Yeats Chronology* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 41.
- 18 G. M. Harper, *W. B. Yeats and W. T. Horton: The Record of an Occult Friendship* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1980), 19–20.
- 19 One slightly awkward change is the shift from the spelling “catalog” in the *Short-Title Catalog* to the usage of “catalogue” in the volumes under review. Though O’Shea had something similar, when Garland’s *Descriptive Catalog* was followed by a partial listing related to “The 1920s Catalogue” in *Yeats Annual* 4, that can be attributed to crossing the Atlantic and to a different publisher’s house style.
- 20 Without that note, it would be all too tempting to take this and the preceding sentences—“Nirvana is the simultaneity which is the support of all succession. Concrete time loses itself in the eternal.”—as related to Yeats’s conceptions of eternity and time.
- 21 Yeats did read the English translation of *The Voice of Africa*. Though the book is not in his library, his notes are in Rapallo Notebook E (NLI MS 13,582). For consideration and transcriptions see Matthew Gibson, appendix A in *Yeats, Philosophy, and the Occult*, ed. Matthew Gibson and Neil Mann (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2016).
- 22 A few calls may be a little uncertain without further detail—it seems probable that an inscription in Alan Leo’s *Astrology for All* (1114, *YL* 1104) that has George Yeats’s bookplate, “Dunsany | 24 July 1878;” is her note of his birth date, so it is unclear why Chapman adds “(a previous owner?),” unless the hand is different or for another reason, which could be explained briefly (1: 259).
- 23 William Stainton Moses’s name is supplied as “[Moses, William Stanton],” a minor error repeated from *WBGYL*, and also *YL*.
- 24 The Yeatses later owned three editions of *Religio Medici* (297, 298, 299; *YL* \*289, 290, 291), but the other works do not feature in the extant library or in the catalogue from the 1920s.
- 25 Conrad A. Balliet, with the assistance of Christine Mawhinney, *W. B. Yeats: A Census of the Manuscripts* (New York: Garland, 1990; Routledge, 2016), xviii.

- 26 *The Poems of W. B. Yeats* (1983) and *Editing Yeats's Poems* (1983), to which Chapman adds *The Poems: Revised* (1989) and *Editing Yeats's Poems: A Reconsideration* (1990).
- 27 See "W. B. and George Yeats: The Writing, Editing, and Dating of Yeats's Poems of the Mid-1920s and 1930s with a Chronology of the Composition of the Poems," *YA15* (2002), 120–58, and *Yeats's Poetry in the Making: Sing Whatever Is Well Made* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), appendix A, 229–45.
- 28 Also of major importance are Macmillan's 1917 *Responsibilities and Other Poems* (2444b, *YL* 2412d), the 1919 *The Wild Swans at Coole* (2477b, *YL* 2444b), the 1922 *Later Poems* (2406b, *YL* 2382b), multiple copies of the posthumous *Last Poems and Plays* (2405 and 2405a–c, *YL* 2381 and 2381a–c), and Benn's 1927 *W. B. Yeats* (2470a, *YL* 2315a).
- 29 "The Annotated *Responsibilities*: Errors in the *Variorum Edition* and a New Reading of the Genesis of Two Poems, 'On those that hated "The Playboy of the Western World," 1907' and 'The New Faces,'" *YA* 6 (1988) 108–33 (see also 234–45), and as chapter 3 in *Yeats's Poetry in the Making: "Sing Whatever Is Well-Made"* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 55–77. This is an instance where Chapman upbraids O'Shea: "This is *not* 'another copy' of the 1916 first edition, as reported in *YL*, but a copy of the 1917 revised printing" (2: 102).
- 30 I must disclose an interest here, having helped to look over the copy for the second volume.
- 31 From the context of the relevant note, there is also the possibility that the word transcribed as "however" is "power": "In Witchcraft, indeed, as in Superstition, Causes are conceived, not as Relations, but as Powers; yet there is this prodigious difference that, in Witchcraft they are conceived as subject Powers; in Superstition, only as invocable Powers," so that Yeats would be summarizing that in witchcraft "the greater power compels the lesser," as "however" implies mild disagreement.
- 32 A further trivial proofing detail is that the closing quotation mark is reversed, but this is not readily shown in quoted text.
- 33 A similar shift changes the final word of a quotation from *Purgatory* from "offence," as printed in Yeats's play, to the US spelling "offense" on the first page of the Introduction (xix).
- 34 Agrippa's Latin is printed in a clear roman typeface, despite using tildes for some nasals, so the errors are not attributable to black letter or unclear text. As an example, in the quotation "Sed illud sciendum est, quod numeri simplices *significamnt res diamas*: denarij, coelestes: centenarij *terrestre simillenarij, quæ future sunt seculi*" (1: 4, my emphasis), the italicized words substitute Agrippa's "significant res divinas" and "terrestres; millenarij, quæ futuri sunt seculi." An annotation, presumably Yeats's, transcribed as "Rasith no Qilgallion" (1: 8) must represent "Rasith ha Gilgallim" or a variant transcription of the Cabalists' *Primum Mobile*.
- 35 It seems unfair to think that George Yeats would produce such poor Italian as "Con una viscone di morte prossima incomincio la Vita Nuova il l'amore e la poesia de Dante, una sistore di morté presenté hê in mezzo la emanazione pui fantasticamente appassionatu, una visione di dopo morte termina l'amor suo terreno é il libro giorenile, per aprerne un altro de meracdo edi eternatea" (for "Con una visione di morte prossima incomincia la Vita nuova e l'amore e la poesia di Dante, una visione di morte presente nê in mezzo la emanazione piú fantasticamente appassionata, una visione di dopo morte termina l'amor suo terreno e il libro giovenile, per aprirne un altro di miracolo e di eternità"—see Giosuè Carducci, *L'Opera di Dante* [Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1888], 19).
- 36 Because Dante's original was published in 1294, there are variant spellings or modernizations; the form given here corresponds to what the quoted version indicates.
- 37 Neither Carducci, Börne, nor Renan is mentioned in *YANLI*, however, and an indication of source would be expected here.
- 38 Ernest Renan, *Études d'histoire religieuse* (Paris : Michel Lévy Frères, 1857), 23.

- 39 In *The Inferno of Dante Alighieri* (481, YL \*470), Figure 9 shows GY's copying of the opening of chapter XXV of *Il Principe* on Fortune. The library contains an English translation of this work (1204, YL 1191), though whether it is because he is Italian, accented, or just so well known, Niccolò Machiavelli is deprived of a first name in this catalogue, as in *WBGYL* and *YL*.
- 40 "S[apere]. A[ude]." is identified as Frank Coleman rather than William Wynn Westcott, who is put with Coleman's motto, *Audi Et Aude*, expanded repetitively as "A[ude]. E[t]. A[ude]." Marius Servius is given as 'Servius [Marius]' and a comment on Eclogue IV.4 is explained parenthetically as "according to Eclogue [IX.47] last age is tenth." (The index compounds confusion by giving "Servius Marius (Pustula)," the name of a "Nosferatu" from the World of Darkness vampire mythos.)
- 41 This is probably the fruit of Chapman's own interest in Macrobius's commentary on Cicero's work, evidenced in "Metaphors for Poetry": Concerning the Poems of *A Vision* and Certain Plays for Dancers" in *W. B. Yeats's "A Vision": Explications and Contexts*, eds. Neil Mann, Matthew Gibson and Claire V. Nally (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2012), 217–51, at 242–43.