

## Self-Sacrifice as an Unwelcome Gift: Subjectivity and Individuality in W. B. Yeats's *Calvary*

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**Abstract:** This paper analyzes *Calvary* with the focus on Yeats's ideas of subjectivity and individuality. The play is part of the *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921). It was inspired by Oscar Wilde's prose poem "Doer of the Good" (1894) and the formal techniques of Japanese Noh Theatre. The paper examines both the continuities and discrepancies between Oscar Wilde and Yeats in their spiritual and aesthetic affiliations and Yeats's use of Christian imagery, iconography, and narrative related to his system of Subjective-Objective antinomy. In exploring the theme of subjectivity, the debate between Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida that centers on the idea of hospitality is deployed to explain the relationship between the Christ figure and the other characters in the play.

**Key words:** Yeats, *Calvary*, subjectivity, individuality, hospitality

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**제목:** 환영받지 못한 선물로서의 자기희생: 예이츠의 『캘버리』에 드러나는 주체성과 개인성 연구

**우리말 요약:** 본 논문은 예이츠의 다른 희곡작품에 비해 비교적 덜 알려진 『캘버리』를 주체성과 개인성이라는 주제 아래 집중 분석한다. 『무용수들을 위한 4대극』(1921) 중 하나인 『캘버리』는 오스카 와일드의 산문시 『선의 실천가』(1894)에서 영감을 받았고 일본 고전극 '노'의 형식과 기법을 차용한 극이다. 본 논문에서는 오스카 와일드와 예이츠의 정신적이고 미학적인 연관성과 차이를 조명하고 이를 바탕으로 예이츠의 주체-객체의 이율배반적 체계와 관련 있는 기독교적인 이미지, 도상, 이야기의 차용에 대해 논의한다. 또한, "환대"의 개념을 둘러싼 레비나스와 데리다의 논쟁을 통해 『캘버리』에 등장하는 그리스도와 다른 인물들의 주체성 및 그들의 관계를 살펴본다.

**주제어:** 에이츠, 『켈버리』, 주체성, 개인성, 환대

**저자:** 홍문영은 TDC에서 석사를 마치고 동 대학에서 톰 머피의 드라마에 드러난 일상의 공간성에 대한 박사논문을 준비 중이다.

## I

In his Nobel laureate speech, W. B. Yeats emphasized his role as a dramatist, even prioritizing his dramatic need over the poetic one. Nevertheless, Yeats's drama has not garnered sufficient attention critically or performatively. When his drama takes the center stage of literary criticism, it was seen mostly as an inspirational source for the modernist drama of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter.<sup>1)</sup> In his essay, "Yeats and the Drama," Bernard O'Donoghue outlines several reasons for the poor reception of Yeats's plays, such as the lack of criticism surrounding the substance and subjects of the plays, elitist exclusiveness, the esotericism of the themes, and the difficult poetic language. There are, of course, a few exceptions. *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, *At the Hawk's Well*, and *Purgatory* have received significant attention for varying reasons. *Calvary*, one of Yeats's lesser-known works, deals with the story of Christ's crucifixion and his episodic encounters with Lazarus, Judas, and the Roman Soldiers. The play was inspired by Oscar Wilde's prose poem, "Doer of the Good" (1894). Using the form and techniques of Japanese Noh Theatre, Yeats refashioned Wilde's story into a short yet fascinating play and included it for his own collection in the *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921). With its numerous artistic inspirations and allusions and its realization of Yeats's idea of Christ, *Calvary* deserves more attention than it has received individually or as a part of his oeuvre.

This essay will analyze *Calvary* under the theme of the tragic conflict between subjectivity and individuality variously embodied in the play's characters: subjectivity defined as one being the agent of one's thoughts and

actions, free from outside influence, and individuality as the self that possess particular qualities that distinguishes oneself from another.<sup>2)</sup> Seen in this light, subjectivity is concerned with self-consciousness in itself whereas individuality refers to self-consciousness against and in relation to the other. Subjectivity for Yeats is inward-looking and expressive, individuality outward-looking and communicative. The paper will first focus on the figure of Christ and how he is dramatized as the core of subjectivity in the Yeatsian vision. It will then see how the other characters stand within his vision. In explaining the theme, Wilde's idea of individuality will be set against Yeats's own. The debate on the idea of hospitality between Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida will also be introduced as it helps to understand Yeats's idea of subjectivity. Their ideas offer a challenging view on how individuals are defined in relation to others. Subjectivity is asserted through resisting and opposing the conditional relationship formed between individuals.

## II

One of Yeats's primary inspirations in *Calvary* is the Noh Theatre, through which Christ is portrayed as a noble subjective individual. Christ meets Lazarus, Judas, and the Roman Soldiers as he climbs the road to Calvary. Each of the characters is paradoxically displeased with his situation or represented in shocking ways as to render his presentation widely different from what we see in the Bible. Lazarus resents being resurrected. Judas takes pride in his deliberate betrayal. The Roman Soldiers are gamblers interested in Christ's cloak, dismissing his presence altogether. Out of the four roles in the Noh play—the *Shite* (main actor), *Waki* (supporting actors), *Hayashi* (musicians/chorus), and *Kyogen* (actors during interlude)—Christ takes the role of the *Shite* wearing a mask, which represents the spirits from history and

literature (“The Roles in Noh Plays”). The *Shite* is presented in an elegant and stylized way, enhancing the gracefully symbolic nature of Christ. Richard Taylor notes how *Calvary* is adopted from the Noh play *Kakitsubata*, which shows the spirit of the Flower. The spirit’s beauty represents the road to salvation and enlightenment and it will win people over to the Lord, thus symbolizing “permanence or endurance of the individual personality” (Taylor 156). The Flower spirit becomes Christ in *Calvary* and, like the Flower spirit, Yeats’s Christ possesses “individual personality,” without the divine traits. Christ is represented as a noble individual spirit whose form and concept is taken from the Noh.

Christ is given the symbol of the lonely white heron, representative of both his subjective and objective nature. The chorus in the play describes the heron as “white,” which is the color of innocence. The heron is also “shivering in a dumbfounded dream,” just as Christ is dreaming the events of the play that make up his Passion. It is “half-famished,” showing the poor and depraved state of Christ. It is “moon-crazed,” where the moon is the determiner of subjectivity and objectivity in its different phases (*Selected Plays* 157-58). The heron is analogous to the lonely Christ who “dreams His passion through” and climbs the hill like a “dreamer” (158).

Moreover, the flute of bone is “taken from a heron’s thigh” (158), so the sound of flute evokes the image of the symbolic heron. Yeats noted that:

such lonely birds as the heron, hawk, eagle, and swan, are the natural symbols of subjectivity, especially when floating upon the wind alone [. . .] while the beasts that run upon the ground, especially those that run in packs, are the natural symbols of objective man. Objective men, however personally alone, are never alone in their thought, which is always developed in agreement or in conflict with the thought of others and always seeks the welfare of some cause or institution, while subjective men are the more lonely the more they are true to type, seeking always that which is unique or personal. (Jeffares and Knowland 167)

For Yeats, objectivity is a collective, unifying force in which individuals are de-individualized and assimilated into greater wholes such as nature, fate, society, and God. Conversely, subjectivity is separating and pluralistic, having the opposite pull of objectivity. The Christ character in the play is an intensely subjective man who is forced into becoming an objective one: the process of salvation puts Christ into relations, in thought and body, with those that are saved. Yeats uses the bird-symbolism to “increase the *objective* loneliness of Christ,” who has “died in vain” (Jeffares and Knowland 167, emphasis added). A series of betrayals that he will suffer in due course is a double loss: Christ sacrifices his yearning for subjectivity and takes on the objective form in order to save those who, in their turn, refuse to accept his objective importance. Christ’s self-sacrifice is a transformative, or more precisely, degenerative process from a subjective person to an objective individual. When his objectivity, in the form of a savior, is rejected by those who are saved, Christ is able neither to maintain subjectivity nor to obtain objectivity. Thus, the tragedy of Christ lies in the fact that he becomes objectively lonely. The chorus recites repeatedly, “God has not died for the white heron” (*Selected Plays* 158), to highlight the tragic suffering of Christ which derives from Christ (God)’s failure as a subjective man (white heron). Not only has he lost his subjective self-sufficiency, but he is also trapped in his assigned role as savior—an echo of the Old Man in *Purgatory*.

Yeats’s appropriation of Christ as a symbol of his own philosophy parallels Oscar Wilde’s use of Christ for his artistic and political ideas. Yeats and Wilde both hated the “mob”<sup>3)</sup> or the public, seeing them as an ignorant, conforming mass, as opposed to the elite individual who reaches self-perfection. They saw the mass as self-oppressive, surrendering their freedom and individuality voluntarily or carelessly. Although their reasons differ in many ways, both Yeats and Wilde stress the importance of the individual and the risky courage to oppose the mass. For Wilde, Christ was

someone who asked everyone to be themselves and who set an example of such a principle. Wilde saw Christ as a romantic poet and artist, an aesthete like himself, as he explains in *De Profundis* and *The Soul of a Man Under Socialism*. In *De Profundis*, he writes that Christ was “the true precursor of the romantic movement in life [. . .] the nature was the same as that of the nature of the artist, an intense and flamelike imagination” (1027). Wilde also notes that as a “Supreme Individualist,” Christ had “all the colour-elements of life: mystery, strangeness, pathos, suggestion, ecstasy, love” (1033). Similarly, in *The Soul of a Man Under Socialism*, Christ has realized the perfection of self and is courageously bold enough to go against the public. Wilde claims pithily that “The message of Christ to man was simply ‘Be Thyself’” (1179). Moreover, Wilde interprets Christ’s view of the poor and rich in terms of the difference between those who have a personality and those who lack one: “You should give up private property. It hinders you from realizing your perfection” (1180). The individuality that Wilde stresses is echoed in Yeats, albeit with different focus and tones.

Referencing the individual mind of Christ, Yeats wrote in an 1897 essay called “William Blake and His Illustrations to the Divine Comedy” that

The historical Christ was indeed no more than the supreme symbol of the artistic imagination in which, with every passion wrought to perfect beauty by art and poetry, we shall live, when the body has passed away for the last time [. . .] Those who are cast out are all those who, having no passions of their own, because no intellect, have spent their lives in curbing and governing other people’s lives by the various arts of poverty and cruelty of all kinds. (214-15)

Christ’s value lies precisely in his “artistic imagination” of beauty and poetry, which is necessarily individualistic by nature. Brian Arkins argues that Yeats’s Christ is not merely a man concerned with human problems but a man who

belongs to Phase 22 in Yeats's visionary system, possessing a subjective and antithetical imagination (32). Terence Brown explains that "religious speculation and system-building are inseparable in Yeats's mature intellectual processes" and are "not at all one that deals in piety, faith or good works, but in systematic knowledge and structured ritual and organized power" (32). Although Yeats and Wilde both emphasize the individualistic nature of Christ as a man, Christ, for Yeats, is not completely secularized, retaining a transcendental element.

In addition to seeing Christ as part of the Yeatsian vision, Yeats aligns Christ's subjectivity-objectivity with the antinomian "Unity of Being" which he describes in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* and "A General Introduction for My Work." The definition of self-realization and self-perfection as well as the wearing of the mask and antinomy differs from the Wildean one. Unlike Wilde, who saw the mask as an artistic device and a literary persona which allows truth to be conveyed,<sup>4)</sup> self-realization for Yeats reaches its perfection in the "Unity of Being" in the way his gyres work. For the poet, the mask enables a person to be his self and anti-self at the same time. In "A General Introduction for My Work," Yeats mentions that Christ is "a legitimate deduction from the Creed of St Patrick" and "is that Unity of Being Dante compared to a perfectly proportioned human body, Blake's 'Imagination,' what the Upanishads have named 'Self'" (384). Christ clearly consists of Dante's "perfectly proportioned body," a physical quality, Blake's "imagination," a spiritual quality, which thus becomes the unified "self." The unity, which constitutes the core of self-realization, is done through the mask. Yeats writes in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*:

I think all happiness depends on the energy to assume the mask of some other life, on a re-birth as something not one's self, something created in a moment and perpetually renewed [. . .] where one loses the infinite pain of

self-realisation [. . .] If we cannot imagine ourselves as different from what we are, and try to 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 code, is therefore theatrical, consciously dramatic, the wearing of a mask. (*Major Work* 413)

In *Calvary*, Christ wears a mask. He assumes a second self in a similar vein to having an “artistic imagination.” The mask is the second self, and it is through the working of opposite forces within man that the antinomian selves can reach perfection. The philosophy behind the mask transforms the play in a way that highlights its symbolic nature. The play is not to be seen as naturalistic or realistic but symbolic and expressive, signifying the art and philosophy behind what it presents—the unity of being and self-perfection through antinomies.

The Passion of Christ in *Calvary* is a “dream,” as opposed to Wilde who saw it as an aesthetic tragedy. The dream setting is evoked by the lyrical chorus, the bare setting, and the symbolic theatrical effects. The action and setting is minimal and is mostly told by the chorus. The Passion is an endless cycle of re-enacting Christ’s dream, a style appropriated from the Noh play and involves the audience’s imaginative pictorialization of what is being recited. When Katharine Worth describes Yeats’s bare-staged plays in terms of “the drama of the interior,” she means that “we are continually reminded that we are engaged in constructing a world out of nothing” (175). The audience has to fill the scene imaginatively as the musicians verbally and musically portray the road to Calvary as well as the mocking crowd and the “cross that but exists because He dreams it” (*Selected Plays* 158). It is an illusion and we believe what we do not see. It is significant that we see the actors taking on a role because in the Yeatsian definition, our individuality and subjectivity is a role-play, assuming a second self through imagination—an enactment in the mind akin to wearing a mask. The dance stresses the



ideas of fate, repetition, ritual, and non-change. Christ is committed and trapped in his destined role.

Christ's crucifixion in *Calvary* can be interpreted both as impotency and self-perfection. The conclusion of the play is quite poignant as Christ cannot do anything but accept his fate. Christ cries, "My Father, why has Thou forsaken me?" and the musicians sing that "God has not appeared to the birds" (*Selected Plays* 163). In their commentary on the play, A. Norman Jeffares and A. S. Knowland write that "Christ's *Calvary* consists in the discovery of the limits of His power," and "The Savior is impotent to impose his unity of the recalcitrant duality of the world" (169). On the other hand, Knowland in his book *W. B. Yeats Dramatist of Vision* argues that Christ is "in the perfection of his self-hood which he has achieved in the voluntary and paradoxical surrender of his self in the will of his father" (161). Christ's "self-hood" as a man is achieved through a total surrender of oneself. This does not mean Yeats's Christ is an orthodox one in which Christ dies so that Christ as God can accomplish salvation. The crucifixion is an ultimate declaration of self. It may seem that impotency and self-perfection are ideas that are contradictory to and exclusive of each other. However, the juxtaposition of two opposing ideas achieves a new meaning when seen from a different light.

### III

From Levinas's viewpoint, Christ's self-offering can be seen as a transcendental act towards infinity. Christ's relationship with God reveals Levinas's ethics towards the Other. Instead of attempting to understand the Other as an object of comprehension through our projection, emotion, and empathy—which is self-serving,—we acknowledge the Other as it is, as the unknown and unknowable. This Other is an absolute Other that is separate

and completely different (non-same being) from us. It is impossible for us to conceptualize or understand the Other within our own interiority. Therefore, we have to acknowledge, welcome and receive the Other as the absolute Other. As Levinas writes in *Totality and Infinity*, “To approach the Other in conversation is to welcome his expression [. . .] is therefore to receive from the Other beyond the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity” (51). Thus, Christ’s cry at the very end of the play, “My father, why has thou forsaken me?” (*Selected Plays* 163) may prove Christ’s incomprehension and his full acceptance of this separate absolute Other, who is ultimately God. It is this separation—not identification with—from the Other by which our subjectivity is achieved: “Subjective existence derives its features from separation” (Levinas 299). It follows that “Separation is individuation,” and the self and the other reach “separation positively, without being reducible to a negation of the being from which it separates. But thus precisely it can welcome that being. The subject is a host” (299). Christ asserts his subjectivity through the act of absolute welcoming.

Even though Christ is the main figure in *Calvary*, his presence is only half of the picture. The other characters are fully individualized by Yeats. Their unexpected reactions further differentiate the play from more conventional interpretations of the biblical story. As aforementioned, Yeats used Wilde’s prose poem “Doer of the Good” as the originary source of his play. Wilde’s story tells Christ’s episodic encounters with the leper, the blind man, the adulterous woman and Lazarus. Despite Christ’s healing, they are as dissatisfied and sinful as ever, contrary to our expectation. Similarly, Lazarus, Judas and the Roman soldiers in *Calvary* dismiss Christ in an attempt to assert their freedom and individuality. Not only can Christ be seen as the fully individualized subject, but the antagonists also assert their own subjectivity.

In Wilde’s “Doer of the Good,” the leper has become an alcoholic, the

blind man a lecher, and the adulterous woman continues to live an immoral life as she believes that her sins are forgiven anyway. Lazarus is found weeping:

And when He had passed out of the city He saw seated by the roadside a young man who was weeping. And He went towards him and touched the long locks of his hair and said to him, 'Why are you weeping?' And the young man looked up and recognised Him and made answer, 'But I was dead once and you raised me from the dead. What else should I do but weep?' (901)

The story ends here in Wilde's prose, but this perspective of a displeased recipient of God's blessing is further elaborated in Yeats's version of Lazarus:

LAZARUS: You took my death, give me your death instead.

CHRIST: I gave you life.

LAZARUS: But death is what I ask.

Alive I never could escape your love,

[...]

But now you will blind with light the solitude

That death has made; you will disturb that corner

Where I had thought I might lie safe for ever.

CHRIST: I do my Father's will

LAZARUS: And not your own;

And I was free four days, four days being dead. (*Selected Plays* 159-60)

In both instances, our expectation of their reactions to Christ's redemption is subverted. In *De Profundis*, Wilde writes that Christ "always loved the sinner as being the nearest possible approach to the perfection of man" and "To turn an interesting thief into a tedious honest man was not his aim [. . .] in a manner not understood of the world he regarded sin and suffering as being in themselves beautiful, holy things, and modes of perfection" (1037). Wilde

saw crimes and sins as carriers of an aesthetic value which enhances the uniqueness and individuality of people. For Yeats, individuals are within the working opposites of subjectivity and objectivity, which further questions the ethics of the relationship between these characters.

As to the other characters, they see Christ's love as oppressive of life and freedom. Lazarus is given the love and life of Christ, but he does not want this. The gift is absolutely binding in that Christ demands Lazarus to follow the divine law. While Lazarus seeks death, Judas is angry that all men are in Christ's power. Judas complains:

I could not bear to think you had but to whistle  
 And I must do; but after that I thought,  
 'Whatever man betrays Him will be free';  
 And life grew bearable again. And now  
 Is there a secret left I do not know,  
 Knowing that if a man betrays a God  
 He is the stronger of the two? (*Selected Plays* 161-62)

To this question, Christ responds that it was part of his prophecy that someone would betray him. Judas counters that he is not just "someone" but an "I," free from outside influences and refusing to be part of Christ's scheme. Judas wants to be acknowledged as an individual and not a nameless "somebody." He keeps emphasizing the "I" as the subject of his actions. Richard Allen Cave explains that Lazarus and Judas "actively resist the obligations" because "they see Christ's consummate act of love as imposing on them. Both are obsessed with self" (339). Both have strong desires to be independent and resist the binding relationship with Christ.

Seen from Derrida's framework of "hospitality," Christ and the other characters have failed to fully welcome each other. Absolute hospitality should not pressure or obligate the Other into behaving in particular ways. The Other

should not surrender their otherness in order to welcome the “host” and obey his command of absolute hospitality. In *Of Hospitality*, Derrida remarks that “Hospitality must not pay a debt, or be governed by a duty: it is gracious, and “must” not open itself to the guest either “conforming to duty” or even [. . .] “out of duty”” (83). Christ’s act of love towards the other characters is forcing them to reciprocate; it imposes an obligation on them to fulfill his expectations. Therefore, when the other characters reject his love and diverge from his expectations, it is not a betrayal nor is it unethical.

Lazarus and Judas are betraying Jesus by denying his hospitality. Nevertheless, in Levinas’s ethics of hospitality, betrayal cannot exist. True hospitality requires a total unconditional altruism towards the Other. Derrida makes a distinction between the “unconditional/unlimited” law of hospitality and “conditional” hospitality. Although Christ may have achieved reconciliation with God by offering “total hospitality,” the other characters do not see it that way. Derrida writes,

there would be an antinomy, an insoluble antinomy, a non-dialectizable antinomy between, on the one hand, The law of unlimited hospitality (to give the new arrival all of one’s home and oneself, to give him or her one’s own, our own, without asking a name, a compensation, or the fulfillment of even the smallest condition), and on the other hand, the laws (in the plural), those rights and duties that are always conditioned and conditional, as they are defined by the Greco-Roman tradition and even the Judeo-Christian one [. . .] in particular, across the family, civil society, and the State. (77)

From the perspective of the individuals, Christ’s hospitality is intrusive of their free will, as it obligates them to assimilate themselves to the expectations of Christ. Christ’s love and sacrifice turns out to be conditional. He provides salvation provided that others follow his rule. This is a give-and-take matter and not an unconditional love. The characters’ rejection

of Christ in *Calvary* is the rejection of that conditional hospitality.

In the same context of rejection, the Roman Soldiers show total indifference to Christ as person, only interested in getting the cloak of Christ by throwing dice, a symbol of chance and luck. The Second Roman Soldier says, "Whatever happens is the best, we say, / So that it's unexpected" (SP 162). The First Roman Soldier also points out that "One thing is plain, / To know that he has nothing that we need / Must be a comfort to him" (163). The soldiers dismiss the give-and-take relationship altogether. They do not want or need anything from Christ. They are not given any names and are only defined by the roles they play. They also dance (wheel) around the cross. This dancing symbolizes the circular nature of Yeats's vision and the ritual of celebration that is mythical rather than religious, reaching a trance-like climax in the play. All of the characters subvert the expectations of Christ and reject the moral constraints that Christ's hospitality demands of them.

#### IV

*Calvary* poses important questions about Yeats's idea of subjectivity and individuality. Yeats and Wilde both emphasize the individualistic nature of Christ as a man. While Wilde focuses on the aesthetic, romantic, and tragic traits of Christ, Yeats locates Christ at the core of his Subjective-Objective antinomian system. Christ achieves self-perfection and unity of being by assuming a second self, symbolized by the wearing of the mask. Equally, the mask for Wilde is another form of self—a literary persona that allows truth to be told. Yeatsian antinomy is significant in explaining his dramatic philosophy and style. The bare stages, minimalist style and adoption of the Noh theatre techniques reinforce his idea of subjectivity perceived by the audience. Yeats's play pushes the audience to constantly imagine and see the

work as a ritualistic role-play.

The significance of *Calvary* lies not only in understanding Yeats's visionary and dramatic principles but also in making us deeply aware of the polysemic nature of the relationship between the self and the Other. Christ achieves self-perfection through a total surrender of himself: he completes himself by losing his self. Christ's self-annihilation in *Calvary* amounts to a dramatization of Levinas's idea of hospitality that stresses absolute altruism towards the Other unconditionally, even without attempting to understand this Other. Nevertheless, Christ fails to form a mutually unconditional relationship with any of the other characters in the play. All the others assert their individual subjectivity by rejecting Christ's love. Their rejection is a dramatization of Derrida's idea that total hospitality is limited by conditional laws of hospitality. Christ's self-sacrifice is conditional, an unwelcome gift to the other characters because the gift morally constrains them. They are forced to follow Christ's life prescription that goes against their free will.

Despite its lack of popularity, Yeats's drama not only succeeds in inspiring future Irish dramatists but has much analytical and thematic value in itself. As O'Donoghue has diagnosed, Yeats's drama needs further examination with regard to its cohesive vision and overall meaning constructed out of and abetted by diverse formal inventions and experimentations.

## Notes

- 1) Katharine Worth, *The Irish Drama of Europe from Yeats to Beckett*. More recently, there have been two articles that attempt to establish a literary relationship of Irish provenance between Yeats and Brian Friel. See Hyungseob Lee, "The Yeatsian Presence in Friel's Drama" and "Brian Friel and the Re-inscription of Yeats in the Irish Dramatic Tradition."
- 2) According to the Oxford English Dictionary, subjectivity is "the quality or condition of viewing things chiefly or exclusively through the medium of one's own mind or individuality." Individuality is "the sum of the attributes which distinguish a person or thing from others of the same kind."

- 3) Yeats wrote in 1910, "I [ . . . ] hate the mob of casual men who are only one in moments [of] hysterical feeling, in its service, not in the service of the individual [ . . . ] The individual victory was but a separation from casual men as a necessary thing before we could become naturalized in that imaginary land [ . . . ] living under its own princes" (*Memoirs* 251).
- 4) In the "The Critic as Artist" Wilde says, "Man is least himself when he is self, give him a mask and he will tell you the truth" (CW 1142); As Worth notes, Wilde mask is "the mask he yearns towards, the mask of the heroic, unselfconscious, spiritual being" an opposition to the self-conscious self (107).

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