

Yeats's Introduction

to "The Tower" (Part III) (How
to see it)

secret, in other words, is a kind of inspired egotism (to secret of many great humanic poems (after all)) -
narcissistic self-absorption which enabled the poet to transmute even the simplest objects of his daily life - his house (a tower), his garden (full of roses), his possession (an old samurai sword) into symbols of highest order. He had certainly done this before, most notably, of course, with "Leda and the Swan", who became variously a symbol of beauty itself of "Latter Majesty", and of misguided womanhood. But such use of the beloved is traditional among poets, and it wasn't marriage "knitted" him into life (as he himself did) that Yeats was able to see such gold in the dross

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level of poetic achievement
he had never reached
before.

A third strain, however,
is also present, indeed even
present, in these poems, and this
is the bitterness of Ireland's
political situation, which seems
to have united the first
two strains we identified—
prophecy and personal reality—
into a third source of inspiration
for the poet.
Even more, to have

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discovered some of the simplest satisfaction of life for the first time at the age of fifty was cause for bitterness, as well as, more important, an opportunity to state his oldest theme of ageing; of passing time with fantastic new force and authority.

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