

Yeats's Archetypal Eternity in *The Wild Swans At Coole*

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Abstract

This paper seeks to address those archetypal images embedded in Yeats's "The Wild Swans at Coole" (October 1916), which are summoned up to provide a context through which Yeats blatantly illuminates the central motif of the poem, that is, the soul's eternity. By applying Philip Wheelwright's archetypal criticism into the poem, this paper tries to demonstrate that there is a direct correspondence between the poet's quest for his whole vision of personality and his creative flourish in art. The current study, hence, is undertaken to suggest that through swans as a major image that rules the mood of the whole poem, the poet discovers his ideal self in nature and restores the unity of his whole being. This task will be accomplished by bringing to light specific affinities between the theme of the timeless ideals of art and the immortal beauty and love of the imperishable swans.