Wyndham Lewis, M. R. James and Intertextuality
Part I: Ghosts

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I
Penelope Fitzgerald’s *The Gate of Angels* (1990) was justly praised by reviewers for the way in which she introduced into her novel of pre-Great War Cambridge a thinly disguised portrait of Montague Rhodes James, then Provost of Kings and a renowned Biblical scholar. At this period M. R. James was gradually acquiring what has proved to be his enduring claim to distinction, fame as one of the greatest writers of supernatural tales. Fitzgerald, though, was not the first to use *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (1904) and his subsequent collections as a means to anatomise sexual distinctions, class barriers and intellectual treachery in twentieth century England. There is at least one of WL’s later creations that to a significant degree mirrors a MRJ story. Indeed, as this essay will go on to argue, the echoes of MRJ’s writings are detectable much earlier in WL’s scrutiny of modern British culture.

II
In ‘Pish-Tush’ (*Encounter*, February 1956), Miss Jevons, a middle-aged spinster of private means living alone in London is befriended by a lonely female ghost. When their relationship is wrecked by the interference of a patronising neighbour, the evicted ghost takes her revenge and contrives the death of the jealous old bachelor. With a D.D.T. spray the busybody’s chosen instrument of exorcism, ‘Pish-Tush’, at first sight, might seem far from the ruthless climb to position in the early nineteenth century Anglican hierarchy which is the motive for the crime in ‘The Stalls of Barchester Cathedral’ (*More Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, 1911). There, intent on displacing his superior, the ambitious cleric resorts to murder and thus finds himself fatally haunted. The odd couple intimacy between spinster and ‘spook’ in ‘Pish-Tush’, the skirmishing between the sexes that turns nasty when the patriarchal ‘Nosey Parker’ succumbs to steely feminine will-power, and the sardonic tone assumed by the narrator – such a comic-sinister mixture, of course, is vintage Lewis. In other respects though, the parallels in structure, imagery and idea between WL’s and MRJ’s stories are too complex and numerous to be coincidental. In both a scarcely visible but tactile and softly spoken ghost is, initially, apologetic for the intrusion (Stalls, 281–2; Pish, 125). On manifesting itself, the ghost resembles a small animal. Both ‘spook’ and human respond to physical contact in similar fashion. In a wood-carving, there was ‘what seemed a softness . . . and [then] a sudden movement’, ‘a cat – a large one by the feel of it’ (Stalls, pp. 280–1, 285–6); ‘rather . . . like a mouse’, ‘something like a piece of fish [but] the dead fish was alive’ (Pish, pp. 125, 134). In both stories such mundane concerns as the need to catch the post or its arrival (Stalls, pp. 281–2; Pish, p. 140) have crucial plot-functions. In both a feud between a man and woman leads to a gruesome death by supernatural means. The final encounter with the vengeful spirit is made in the course of everyday life, some mysterious force precipitating the fall down the staircase (Stalls, p. 286), or, throttling when the victim places his head on the pillow (Pish, p.141–2). True, ‘The Stalls’ takes place in a nineteenth century cathedral close, nevertheless, MRJ uses a modern setting for ‘Casting the Runes’ (again MGS)
where, also, there is a whispering ghost and a deadly horror lurks beneath the pillow (CGS, pp. 249, 252). As for Miss Jevons’s maisonette (worryingly close to ‘the slums of Victoria’—p. 131) it is near Westminster Cathedral too.

‘Once is an instance. Twice is a coincidence. But three times for the student of comparative literature becomes grounds for comparison.’ The fact that these two stories display so many close affinities leads one to suspect more extensive and profounder relationships. As the literary antecedents of ‘Fish-Tush’ become clearer, other clues emerge that suggest MRJ’s example was operative elsewhere in WL’s writings of the post World War II era. At first all that there seems to be is the supernatural puppetry in Self Condemned (1954) – which, though shocking in that context, does not seem immediately relevant here. Then, prompted by the malign ‘Happy New Year’ with which the ghost in ‘The Stalls of Barchester Cathedral’ greets the doomed cleric, one remembers a macabre disturbance of respectable domesticity in Monstre Gai, the sequel to The Childermass.’ Newly arrived in an area of the After-world that mirrors aspects of both Welfare State and London Blitz, Pullman and Satters are befriended by Mannock. Their host has a family resemblance to a number of MRJ’s characters. Living in much the same enclosed and privileged bachelor world as the antiquarian’s circle, WL’s ‘very superior, sensible Englishman’ turns out to have his secrets, some darker than others. He is well connected with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which attempts to rule Third City. Not unlike certain establishments with which MRJ was intimately acquainted, this Latter Day Purgatory is a largely male community that has practically forgotten the specific educational intention of its Founder. After a while, too, we detect an even stronger whiff of a particular ghost story hanging around Mannock’s own ‘skeleton in the cupboard’. Compare, for instance, his domestic arrangements with the appalling discovery made by Mr Thomson, a young man from Cambridge in ‘Rats’; behind a locked inner door stirs one of the un-dead (CGS, pp. 616–7). ‘No man can die here’, Pullman is informed by a friend of Mannock. ‘There are few families who have not one or more mortal remains: some human wreck, incapable of occupying any position in social life, or indeed in physical life of any kind. They keep them in some cupboard or drawer . . . . They often create a stink in some small flat, which is recognised by all visitors.’ Pullman, with amazed eyes, gazed at his host, who buried his face in his hands’. Shortly after this, Pullman discovers that ‘Mannock had a secret drawer of this kind’ (MG, pp 18, 24).

A second world conflict followed by the Cold War and then revelations of the Death Camps (Soviet as well as Nazi): such horrors had brutally redefined normality. Thus challenged the ghost story form (if it was to be of use to WL) needs must have undergone a metamorphosis and approached the greater profundity and amplitude of epic or tragedy. Significantly two of WL’s most respected friends had been experimenting with such a generic transcendence. To express his own doubts concerning the Easter Rising and its consequences for the Free State, Yeats had appropriated the Japanese Noh drama, into which he transposed Celtic ghost stories. From at least as early as The Waste Land, Eliot ‘may be said to make a “secondary” use of [supernatural tales], by means of references to specific ghost stories or at any rate to the stock of clichés they regularly employed which would be familiar to the reader in advance. These allusions create a haunted atmosphere, a mood of metaphysical dread that for Eliot was cognate with a state of spiritual alienation’. The English ghost story is married to the Oresteia in The Family Reunion, to Dante’s Divine Comedy in ‘Little Gidding’. Something like that collage incorporating specific fragments of the minor within the major genre is glimpsed at the apocalyptic close of WL’s trilogy as Pullman is put under angelic arrest. There The Human Age confronts the dilemma.
posed by the likes of Pound: for such a repentant collaborator as Pullman what measure of mercy is just? An answer is suggested when a message of some reassurance is delivered, paradoxically, in a threatening, almost disembodied whisper reminiscent of the M. R. James ghost.

III

The accumulation and the intensity of these MRJ reminiscences in ‘Pish Tush’ and the fact that other possible parallels are evident in *Monstre Gai* and *Malign Fiesta* encourages further exploration. In turn, this raises questions of how and when could WL have become acquainted with MRJ?

By the late 40s, MRJ’s fiction was well known, inexpensive editions having been available for more than a decade. A selection from *The Collected Ghost Stories* (1931) had first gone into paperback in 1935; soon after Penguin published *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (1937). By the early 50s, however, WL had lost his sight. Froanna or Agnes Bedford might have read to him from one of the available paperback anthologies or the collection (itself many times reprinted); maybe WL heard some of these stories broadcast. It seems less likely, though, that such readings were his first encounter with MJR’s work.

After all WL’s interest in ghosts goes back to at least the Great War. In *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937), though WL recalls the Western Front in terms of the Gothic novel, the sardonic echoes of Peacock do not entirely disguise the waking nightmare. ‘No Norman Keep in ivy-clad decay was ever so romantic as Ypres, literally swarming with ghosts even at high noon (in the moonlight you could not tell which were the quick and which the dead)’. The installment of *The Apes of God*, published in the *Criterion* (February 1924) before the book had been separated from the ‘Joint’ project, is headed with a note by WL in which Zagreus is called ‘an important ghost’ (p. 124). Of all the figures in that novel, though, the most ‘psychic’ is Dan, the character based on Yeats, whose ideas on the Afterlife exercised such an enduring influence on WL. It was only in *The Childermass* development from ‘Joint’ that the characters clearly remain ghosts. Nevertheless WL often resorts to the ghost story genre in the figurative language he uses, sometimes with great eloquence, to expound the arguments deployed in *The Art of Being Ruled* (1926) and *Time and Western Man* (1927). Although *Men without Art* (1934) attacks the current enthusiasm for popular genres (especially the detective novel), ghost stories escape WL’s anathema. *The Revenge for Love* (1937) ends poignantly with a psychological haunting.

What WL’s biographers have apparently also failed to register is his acquaintance with the author of the first comprehensive essay on MRJ’s ghost stories. About a decade and a half before her critical survey was published in 1934. Mary Butts seems to have discussed literature with WL. It was in this period that he did drawings of her. Briefly married to John Rodker, whose Ovid Press in 1919 published the *Fifteen Drawings* portfolio (as well as poems by Eliot and Pound), MB may have been one of Pound’s many conquests; certainly she is listed by EP as a friend of Yeats. Ford, and McAlmon also were among her intimates and, whatever WL’s reservations about the latter, he would have appreciated her literary tastes, her dislike of Gertrude Stein, her devastating critique of Bloomsbury, and not least her shrewd assessment of his own qualities. Similarly, publishing as she did in the sort of Little Magazines with which WL was all too familiar, rumour of her developing literary views cannot have escaped him. It is unsurprising, therefore, that she and her ex-husband figure in *The Apes of God* (1930), MB’s earlier relations with Aleister Crowley supporting the suggestion that ‘the Great Beast 666’ himself may have contributed to the characterisation of Zagreus.
'When I was a child', MB begins her essay on MRJ, 'I found out what a short story could be. Particularly – I was too young to remember the writer’s name – a story called ‘Lost Hearts’. It was one of those discoveries that last a lifetime'. Having early fallen under the spell of this ghost story (that, in its macabre amalgam of child sacrifice and the occult, anticipates facets of The Childermass) it is clear that she had continued enthusing intelligently about MRJ’s writings for over three decades. Such evidence argues that MB could have been an important link between MRJ and the WL circle.

IV

However MB was not the only responsive critic of MRJ in the 20s. The reactions of the first reviewers could be crass; even The TLS Dec 4 1919 hardly ventures beyond a notice of availability in mentioning ‘the two other collections of stories that the Provost of Eton has published’. The Eton connection, though, does point to an important factor in the rise of MRJ to literary fame. His reputation grew partly out of the way his protean gifts enabled him to weave together half a dozen increasingly successful careers. By 1918 he had been successively Assistant Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Provost of King’s, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge. In 1917 he had fought a Swiftian Battle of the Books, trouncing Jane Harrison’s argument that the story of Salome and the head of John the Baptist was the dance of ‘the New Year with the head of the Old Year, past and slain’. During the 20s, ‘as Provost of Eton, he seems to have taken on the status of a kind of national pundit. [on questions of biblical and medieval manuscripts] through speeches (often reported in The Times) and through occasional as well as scholarly writing’. In the sphere of Horror fiction, likewise, his fame as critic no less than author grew. By beginning of the 20s, he had published three collections of ghost stories. In 1923 MRJ lectured on Le Fanu at the Royal Institution, and Le Fanu’s Madam Crowle’s Ghost was reissued, edited by the Provost of Eton – who also did the Introduction to V. H. Collins (ed.), Ghosts and Marvels in 1924. A year or so later a new edition Le Fanu’s Uncle Silas, with an introduction by MRJ appeared. Meanwhile an even wider range of the public interest continued to be satisfied by his skill and industry. In 1924 Oxford University Press published MRJ’s edition of The Apocryphal New Testament. The magnitude of his success is reflected in more than just the thousands of copies sold, as impressive was the variety of periodicals (from The Spectator to History) in which reviews of this canon of the uncanonical appeared. In 1925 he published two new stories in the London Mercury, reprinted later this year in a fourth collection. A part of the peculiar interest of the title story for a reader such as WL is that ‘A Warning to the Curious’ (in drawing upon the folk tale of the three East Anglian crowns) suggests the apparently imperturbable MRJ feared another war.

WL’s attention could well have been caught also by what was the first properly appreciative review of MRJ’s ghost stories (TLS 26 Nov 1925 p.798). If by this date WL had still not heard of MRJ nor been alerted by MB’s enthusiasm, there were further reasons why he would not have neglected this TLS review. Around this time, MRJ was appointed a Trustee of the British Museum – a fact that could hardly have escaped some one like ‘the Enemy’ who during the period had gone ‘underground’ in the BM Reading Room. What probably created an even greater impression were two specific responses to the ANT. WL is unlikely have ignored the long review by Rendell Harris,20 the latter being a scholar whose interest in one particular Christian heresy he held in sufficient respect to cite both in TWM (p. 292) and Left Wings over Europe (1936 – pp. 257, 263). Crucial too was Yeats’s long-standing interest in such heterodox works, other aspects of the Irish poet’s ideas of the After-life clearly helping shape The Childermass (1928).21 Yeats’s
enthusiasm for the ghost stories of Le Fanu (on whom MRJ was such an authority) was ‘enthralling’ and so another likely factor in bringing the Provost’s own achievements in this line to WL’s attention. After all, if he was to put flesh on the Dialogue of the Dead form of ‘Joint’, elements drawn from the séance-inspired A Vision and its outliers would not suffice; WL needed to conjure up other haunting supernatural narratives. Additionally for someone as intimate with Frazer’s The Golden Bough as WL, there was a further arresting item: on this occasion, in The Times (7 Dec 1925) about the celebration of Founder’s Day at Eton: ‘Dr M R James presided . . . . The Founder’s Day Pageant and Play of St Nicholas was given by some of the boys’ (p 17). Over the past five years since returning to Eton, MRJ had revived ‘the Boy Bishop’s Play’, an ancient custom that belonged to the medieval traditions of the Feast of Fools or of the Holy Innocents – 28th December. This, of course, is a field of comparative mythology explored by Frazer; and, significantly, to such traditions of saturnalia many aspects (not least the title) of WL’s macabre supernatural anatomy allude.

With its mock-Joycean parodies of The New Testament (MRJ did not care for Ulysses either), its ‘Eton Wall Game’ of theological dispute, censored gossip about ‘the Deity’, flanking batteries of ‘canons’ – sacred and profane (pp. 172–275), WL’s spectral-world can be seen as reflecting the Provost’s interwoven pattern of achievement – as ‘through a glass darkly’.

V

The first signs in The Childermass of what appears its intertextuality with MRJ’s literary corpus emerge appropriately in the opening phantasmagoria; there is heard an unmistakable echo of a bizarre haunting narrated in a story that was one of MB’s favourites. ‘Martin’s Close’ (More Ghost Stories of an Antiquary, 1911) tells of a seventeenth century seduction begun one Christmas tide and, at the approach of the next Childermass, the arraignment of Squire Martin for the girl’s murder. The trial is conducted before the ‘Bloody’ Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys. During the trial occurs the curious examination of the woman who kept the inn as to the singing of Ann Clark when she was no longer alive. The folk song with which the dead woman haunts her killer is the very tune he would whistle as a signal in his dalliance, ‘Madam, will you walk, will you talk with me?’ (CGS, pp. 299, 305). Ann’s song is slightly mis-remembered as WL’s inter-sexual couple struggle towards the Bailiff’s Court. Satters ‘gets up like a fat arch beauty cooly rising to her feet to be taken out to dance . . . .’ ‘Will you walk, will you talk, lady will you walk and talk!’ (The Childermass, p. 80).

Once this verbal reminiscence of ‘Martin’s Close’ is spotted, other likenesses (less explicit, more correspondences of characterisation, structure and symbol) make their presence felt. It becomes apparent that there are more than a score of parallels between these versions of the After-life. In both episodes, a woman (or epicene man), who is far from a beauty and ‘one to whom Providence had not given the full use of her intellects, but was what is termed among us commonly an innocent or natural’ (CGS, p. 297), flirtatiously sings the same folk song. The person on whom she dotes is her social and intellectual superior, yet they are doomed to be companions in death. These actions precede a trial before a corrupt, judge who is, by turns, brutally inquisitorial, jocular and not at all averse to making a spectacle of himself. Both pastiches associate their grotesque magistrates with the Old Bailey (by a pun in the case of The Childermass, p. 160). Both judges experience difficulty in understanding the vernacular used by the lower class witnesses. Both trials are linked to Holy Innocents Day; the judge (though the most sinister of figures) claims the divine mandate. ‘Remember, child’, Jeffreys threatens one
witness, ‘thou art in the presence of the great God of heaven and earth, that hath the keys of hell, and of us that are the king’s officers, and have the keys of Newgate’ (pp. 310–I). As Ann’s description serves admirably for Satters, so in MRJ’s monstrous Chief Justice there is a formidable precedent for the Bailiff.

At the end of ‘The Haunted Doll’s House’ MRJ confessed this tale was ‘a variation on a former story of [his] called ‘The Mezzotint’ (p. 489).24 True, such a reworking of a plot is exceptional in MRJ’s oeuvre, even so what helps to make his work memorable is partly the way he has of playing variations on certain motifs. So to the score or so of parallels between the afterlives of Ann Clark and Satters should be added the clutch of affinities linking incidents that occur on the Time Flats and in the proceedings of the Bailiff’s Court with what happens in other MRJ stories. One of these tales that apparently suggested details in the malignly comic interrogation and judicial murder of Macrob also appeared in More Ghost Stories of an Antiquary. ‘The Rose Garden’ concerns yet another troubled sexual relationship into which intrudes a bullying judge (on this occasion it is Jeffrey’s predecessor, Sir William Scroggs).25 In what is a somewhat purgatorial modern marriage, a middleclass garden-scheme is delayed by recalcitrant country folk – and with good reason. Understandably the locals are loath to disturb the bones of the Chief Justice who, in the Popish Plot trials, displayed brutal zeal convicting the innocent Archbishop Plunkett. Their new mistress, however, disregards a string of warnings, the latest from her own husband who has been tormented by a nightmare of a rigged trial and barbarous execution.

The comic-horrific glimpse of the revenant in ‘A Rose Garden’ as ‘what at first she took to be a Fifth of November mask’ (p. 206) links this tale with the third of MRJ’s ghost stories that seems to have influenced the conception of the Bailiff’s Court. A national bogeyman, an amusing yet malevolent puppet or doll, notoriously subversive of the status quo is central to both ‘A Rose Garden’ and ‘The Story of a Disappearance and an Appearance’. In the former tale it is memories of Guy Fawkes and the anti-Papist scaremongers that are conjured up, whereas in the latter, as in The Childermass, the ever-present threat comes from an avatar of Mr Punch. Significantly, though, both MRJ and WL depart from the puppet play in a markedly similar fashion.

While ‘The Story of a Disappearance and an Appearance (A Thin Ghost and Others, 1919) begins in the waking world with reports of the crime and the puppet show, in the course of the search for the missing clergyman there is a growing sense of phantasmagoria. These apprehensions even shade into cosmic unease with references to the end of the world. Subsequently the nephew of the missing rector has a nightmare, in which he finds himself along with a few other spectators in a strange auditorium, facing a box, ‘rather larger than the ordinary ones’ (CGS, p.449), strangely decorated and unlocated. There he witnesses a Punch and Judy with a difference.

Traditionally about Punch there is a touch of the hanging judge, as the episode of Ketch in the English puppet play suggests.26 However as one reads the nephew’s account of this peculiar show, the more it sounds like a blueprint for some of the most memorable episodes in the Bailiff’s Court:

I believe someone once tried to re-write Punch as a serious tragedy; but whoever he may have been, this performance would have suited him exactly. There was something Satanic about the hero. He varied his methods of attack: for some of his victims he lay in wait . . . To
others he was polite... But with all of them I came to dread the moment of death. The crack of the stick on their skulls, which in the ordinary way delights me, had here a crushing sound as if the bone was giving way, and the victims quivered and kicked as they lay. The baby—it sounds more ridiculous as I go on—the baby, I am sure, was alive. Punch wrung its neck, and if the choke or squeak which it gave were not real, I know nothing of reality. (CGS, pp. 449–50).

In this Grand Guignol where both the sniggering puppet and those he batters seem alive, one of his victims (bizarrely accoutred by his persecutor) turns on Punch. It is the ghost of this elderly clergyman, (and not the baby—as in the puppet play), an old-fashioned irascible defender of orthodoxy who attacks the satanic Punch in the face, and upsets the booth. Such a train of events, close to Childermass, clearly prefigures the tragic confrontation between the Bailiff and Macrob.

Judging by the way that these specific features reappear in The Childermass, apparently WL detected in MRJ’s fiction characteristic patterns. The recurrent motifs include grotesque interrogation by a hanging judge, the latter being a national bogeyman (twice manifesting himself as a trickster doll); into an uneasy sexual relationship there intrudes a supernatural threat against which (though a child’s innocence may prevail) adult learning usually proves ineffectual; these nightmarish incidents tend to occur at the approach of Childermass. As well as exploiting these narrative patterns, WL’s characterisation in the opening volume of The Human Age follows the flickering distinction that MRJ makes. On the one hand there are the pathetic Ann or the pugnacious rector (in whom are discernible specific ascendants of Satters and Macrob), and on the other the more typical MRJ horror. ‘James’s ghosts are often not ghosts at all’, comments Cavaliéro, they are ‘mysterious, motiveless agencies, revealing themselves through the medium of tumbled bedclothes, an ancient maze, tangles of hair, lumps of heavy damp sacking:’ a description which could almost serve for WL’s ‘peons’ in their hallucinatory labyrinth.

In utilising this template WL makes two important changes to MRJ’s art. First, inspired by other ingredients in the Provost’s achievements, WL mixes a weird brew of genres. In the opening description of the Bailiff’s Court, for instance, medieval drama, the antique theatre and puppet-booth are juxtaposed (pp. 128–31, 170–3). The result is typical of those non-Aristotelian literary and artistic kinds favoured in an increasingly global or as WL will later christen it ‘Cosmic’ culture. The second change that WL makes is to hint (more pointedly than MRJ does in his stories) at the theological significance of his own land of ghosts. As Cox has observed, MRJ’s tales dramatise ‘with great skill—and with touches of characteristic humour—the unlooked for revelation of an alien order of things, of a wholly malevolent Beyond, linked to our world by a perplexing and dangerous logic’.28 Similar apprehensions (albeit naively expressed) fill Satters with unease: ‘It’s a pretty dud Heaven if it’s Heaven. If!’ (p. 71). Little reassurance is to be found in the more articulate explanations offered—least of all when Pullman puts his knowing gloss upon them. Nevertheless, the answers which this un-heroic pair of souls receive as they progress through The Childermass and its sequels centre on a theological problem that has agonised many generations but especially our own. Whether this and the Other World are in the control of Christian or Gnostic powers—or something infinitely worse?

It is from MRJ’s Apocryphal New Testament that WL seems to draw some of his most expressive artistic and theological methods of tackling the twentieth century instances of this age-old problem. Accordingly WL’s weighing of Christian canonicity against Gnostic fable will be the subject of Part Two of this essay.
VI

In The Childermass hints are dropped about 'the Angels of Mons' (pp. 59, 109–10). After the Great War widespread longing for a belief in the Afterlife further increased interest in Spiritualism. Such yearning was reflected in the Ghost Story which became an established genre. The literary canonization was partly due to the critical success of The Ghost Book (1926) – an anthology of mainly literary stories exploring the more psychological aspects of the form – which was edited by Cynthia Asquith, the daughter-in-law of WL’s wartime patron. From one angle, indeed, The Childermass may perhaps be partly understood as belonging to the second Golden Age of the Ghost Story. Nevertheless what is revealed when the fantasies of MRJ and WL are compared seems to go beyond those analogies characteristic of literary 'immanence'. Rather than their two oeuvres merely exhibiting some parallel more or less contemporaneous but independently originating literary phenomena, the degree of specific correspondence between the supernatural fiction of MRJ and WL amounts to a powerful case of intertextuality. Paradoxically, though, it is in the area where the correspondences cease that such comparisons become most telling. Even admirers of MRJ thought the Vice-Chancellor's apparent indifference to the War heartless; whereas the traumas still haunting WL were acknowledged in MB's appreciation of 'an intelligence at once powerful, searching, original, discontented, wounded, thwarted, maimed, unconquerable'.

Notes
1 I gratefully acknowledge the kind help of the RNIB, C. J. Fox, and, especially, Paul Edwards.
6 'Fish-Tush', too, is set 'in the Christmas season' (p. 133); see note 23 below.
7 Citations of The Human Age trilogy are to the Calder edition.
8 Does the characterisation of Pullman and Satters derive from a recognition that MRJ's stories are 'full of symbols of repressed homosexuality'? – see Julia Briggs, Night Visitors: the Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story (Faber, 1977), p. 178.
9 In Shudders (1929), ed. Lady Cynthia Asquith; for WL the latter's was a surname with which to conjure.
10 Briggs, p. 204.
11 See Jeffrey Myers, The Enemy (Routledge, 1980), pp. 306–7; broadcasting of ghost stories began in the late 20s, see Briggs, pp. 177.
13 Black Sparrow editions – hereafter ARB and TWM.
14 See Nathalie Blondel, Mary Butts: Scenes from the Life (Kingston, New York, McPherson, 1998), passim; Joan Winterkorn kindly confirms the relevance of the material in MB's papers at Yale.
16 New Criterion (January 1926), p. 209 carried a dismissive yet intriguing review of her work.
21 Deirdre Toomey kindly informs me that 'A Stick of Incense' in Last Poems (1940) indicates Yeats had read ANT. and, though a late poem, it was almost certainly based on much earlier knowledge of MRJ's scholarship. On Yeats's role in shaping The Childermass, see Peter Caracciolo, 'Byzantium and Cosmic Man', Wyndham Lewis Annual (1995), pp. 23–9.
HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME

Philip Head

Old houses were scaffolding once
and workmen whistling.

T. E. Hulme

Philosophical and less philosophical minds alike have grappled publicly with the identities of time and space since the Ionian era, and doubtless earlier. The long debate gained recent momentum from the publication of Julian Barbour's *The End of Time* (1999). His proposition that Being (Moment) is real but Becoming (Time) is illusory reanimates, from a physicist's perspective, some of the philosophical arguments put about in the 1920s by, among others, the American Critical Realists. One of their number, Roy Wood Sellars, was bluntly to assert the gist of Barbour's current argument: 'There is no such thing as Space and no such thing as Time'.

Wyndham Lewis contributed to the 1920s debates in perhaps his most important single book *Time and Western Man* (TWM – 1927) but the lively controversies of that period did not lead to any generally accepted resolution. Two decades later philosophical hesitancies were still more evident than firm convictions. In *The Idea of Nature* (1945) R. G. Collingwood, at Oxford, questioned whether the ideas of space and time were 'nothing but abstractions from the idea of movement', or were they, on the contrary, 'logical presuppositions of that idea'? His Cambridge contemporary, K. J. W. Craik, suggested that 'it is probably impossible to expound the nature of space and time to any great extent', and that 'the very nature of the physical world and of human perception' might make exact definition impossible. Human perception of space and time is not easily reconciled with the physical world. For Jürgen Habermas, for example, the words space and time have different meanings 'according to whether they are applied to objects in the world or the linguistically constituted world of the speaking subjects themselves'. We deal in one case


21 A case could be made that these two stories 'The Mezzotint' and 'The Haunted Doll's House' helped shape the panorama sequence on the 'Time Flats'.


21 Cox, *Casting the Runes*, pp. xxi–ii.

Blondel, p. 401