

# **The Shape of Sacrifice in David Jones' Landscape of War**

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## Abstract

This thesis investigates the entanglement of David Jones' portrayal of the sacrifice of Christ with his experience of the First World War, particularly through his depiction of landscape. In the face of the jingoistic, sentimental and ironic uses of the image of Christ's sacrifice in relation to the war amongst his contemporaries, the Roman Catholic convert David Jones was interested in the sacrifice of Christ understood sincerely as a theological mystery in relation to the war, and he reflected on his experience for nearly 20 years 'in tranquility' before seeking to express it in art. In the interim (c. 1919-1935), his experience of both Roman Catholic liturgy as well as his extensive reading and conversation in the heated early 20th-century theological and anthropological debates about the sacrifice of Christ in relation to pre-Christian sacrificial figures provided him with a radically different model for thinking about the relationship between the sacrifice of Christ and the suffering of soldiers in the landscape than the politicised rhetoric of the war. Jones' unusual and strongly modernist sense of visual and verbal artistic 'shape' enabled him to portray the sacrifice of Christ as related to the war by means of immanent presence instead of according to typological 'comparison'. He therefore relinquishes neither the horror of the war's violence nor the hope that it can be 'redeemed' by the dynamic action of Christ at the source of creation permeating history. Jones presents the ravaged landscape of the war, therefore, as radiating a glimmer of Christ's sacrifice from the hidden dimension of eternity; he presents the crucifixion of Christ, conversely, as a flourishing landscape that shows the scars of the WWI battlefield transformed by incorporation into it. His strongly sacramental sense of the function of artwork therefore seeks a real participation in the work of 'redemption' seen in the understanding of Christ's sacrifice as a theological mystery.



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## Textual Notes

All citations to the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* will be made parenthetically in the text with square brackets [] and the abbreviation ‘OED’.

Bible translations: In certain instances, it has been important to specify a particular translation when quoting a passage from the Bible, especially when the language has an important significance for Jones’ own wording. The two most important Bible translations for him were the King James (or Authorized) Version, which he knew as a child, and the Douay-Rheims, which is a more literal rendering of the Latin Vulgate and hence of particular importance to the scriptural quotations of the Latin Catholic Mass and theology that Jones knew as an adult. He relies significantly on both translations, however, in his writing and art. Both in parenthetical citation and footnotes, where necessary, I will use the abbreviation ‘AV’ to indicate the King James (Authorized) Version and ‘DR’ for the Douay-Rheims. When referring to the general content of a passage, I use a general reference without necessarily indicating a translation.

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## **Author's Declaration**

I, Anna Svendsen, declare that this is my own work and has not been submitted for examination at this or any other institution. All sources are acknowledged as References. The licence for this thesis does not apply to third-party works produced therein.

*All images of the works of David Jones and quotations from his unpublished archival material have been re-produced with the kind permission of the Trustees of the David Jones Estate.*



## Introduction.

### Jones' 'Contactual' Method

In 1974, the year of David Jones' death, Seamus Heaney's review of Jones' last poetry collection, *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments*, included a prophetic statement about the fundamental intersection of religious ideas and the use of language in Jones' poetry:

As a convert, as a philologist, as a priest of the word, as a maker and breaker of metre and vocabulary, he is the direct heir of Hopkins. And as a poet of Christ's passion and incarnation, of sacramental nature, his lineage runs suddenly past Hopkins to the Anglo-Saxon *Dream of the Rood*. His world is certainly charged with the grandeur of God but God bleeds as a maimed god at the centre of the world, on the 'tump' of Calvary, on a tree.<sup>1</sup>

Heaney directly associates Jones' manipulation of language in his late poetry with a priestly activity; that is, one that mediates between his thinking about spiritual things and his most concrete and sensible experience by means of the historically-saturated matter of words. By the end of his life, Jones' work had come to situate itself in a 'lineage' of poetry that (like the Old English *Dream of the Rood*) attempted to present the central mystery of the Christian faith — the unique sacrifice of Christ on the 'tree' of the cross — in an artistic medium. Like the *Dream* author, Jones would draw upon his own historically-situated experience for his imagery, particularly the experience of contemporary warfare, and of the natural world, as well as the artistic forms he considered inextricable from his own contemporary 'civilizational situation'.<sup>2</sup> In his recent study of *Poetry and Theology in the Modernist Period* (2017) Anthony Domestico identifies Jones as one of a number of 'theological modernists' at work in the early 20th century, including T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden, who likewise sought 'to reclaim . . . theological ideas — as a direct object of literary representation, while refusing to scrap the formal innovations of modernism'.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Seamus Heaney, 'Now and in England', *The Spectator*, 4 May, 1974, p. 547.

<sup>2</sup> See David Jones, *Dai Greatcoat: A Self-Portrait of David Jones in His Letters*, ed. René Hague (London: Faber, 1980), 190. All further citations from this work will be from this edition and made with the abbreviation *DGC* and page number.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Domestico, *Poetry and Theology in the Modernist Period* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2017), 5. The term 'theological modernist' in this case should not be confused

Jones commended the method and literary style of the late medieval author Thomas Malory saying of his 15th-century *Morte d'Arthur*:

His data (his visual, felt data I mean), were accurate, experiential and contactual. And something of that sort is necessary in the making of a work, there can be no getting round that necessity in the long run. The imagination must work through what is known and known by a kind of touch. Like the Yggdrasil of northern myth, the roots must be in hard material though the leaves be conceptual and in the clouds.<sup>4</sup>

David Jones could be said to create art according to the method he ascribes to Malory, using the representation of the 'hard material' gained by sensible experience to speak about spiritual or 'conceptual' realities. The artistic form with which Jones presents 'theological ideas' in *The Sleeping Lord*, especially 'The Fatigue' (which narrates the crucifixion of Christ through the eyes of the Roman soldiers on duty to crucify him), demonstrates the refinement of a technique he had developed from the beginning of his career, starting with the attempt in *In Parenthesis* (1937) to represent his most concrete experience on the battlefield in light of the theology of Christ's sacrifice.

Jones admitted well into his last years of life that the images of the war still haunted him, especially the vision of the WWI waste land that ravaged trees and human bodies together indiscriminately. To David Blamires he wrote in 1966, exactly fifty years after witnessing the devastating carnage of the Somme: 'wounded trees and wounded men . . . are very much an image in my mind as a hangover from the war'.<sup>5</sup> The particular and concrete memory of 'wounded trees' blended with 'wounded men' — their physical boundaries often literally exploded — dominated the imaginations of many coming out of the Great War. As Jones reflected on his experience of the war and began to represent it in *In Parenthesis*, a curious parallel emerged in his mind between the violence suffered by landscape and the human body together and the pagan sacrificial figure of the 'dying god'

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with that term as it applies to the group of late-19th and early 20th-century theologians including Alfred Loisy and George Tyrrell.

<sup>4</sup> David Jones, *Epoch and Artist: Selected Writings by David Jones*, ed. Harman Grisewood (London: Faber, 1959), 244. All further citations from this work will be from this edition and made with the abbreviation *EA* and page number.

<sup>5</sup> Jones quoted by David Blamires in *David Jones: Artist and Writer* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), 3.

described by the sceptical anthropologist James Frazer as an analogue for the suffering Christ in the passion.

Jones' work reveals a lifelong struggle to 'redeem' this harrowing image, including its subtle association with pagan sacrifice, by placing it into dialogue with his experience of the Mass, which he witnessed for the first time on the WWI battlefield. Images found in the prayers of the Roman Catholic liturgies of Good Friday, especially the 6th-century Latin hymns *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis*, provide a specific counter to the 'wounded trees and wounded men' of the battlefield and the 'dying god'. These hymns show Christ the 'wounded man' bound to the 'wounded tree' of the cross but as transformed into a 'living tree', illustrating the theology of Christ's death on the cross as inextricable from his immortal life in the resurrection and the Eucharist.

A critic like Paul Fussell, who famously lambasted David Jones' *In Parenthesis* in his 1975 study, *The Great War and Modern Memory* as 'an honorable miscarriage' in its use of myth and religious imagery to portray of the war's suffering, would frankly be horrified by the suggestion that Jones' work enacts any 'redemption' of the war in this deeply religious sense.<sup>6</sup> But Fussell's critique cannot be held up unquestioningly as a disinterested standard by which to judge the First World War's artistic transmission. As Elizabeth Ward so aptly observed, his assessment is based on 'his passionate subscription to a personal view or "myth" of the First World War, in the light of which all war-related books are to be judged'.<sup>7</sup> Instead of trying to explain how Fussell or similar critics must have made an 'honorable misreading' of Jones, therefore, as many Jones critics have done,<sup>8</sup> I think it is more helpful to state plainly that not only did Fussell misread Jones, but also that David Jones' work simply exhibits a radically divergent 'personal view or "myth"' from that manifested in Fussell's critique, especially on the question of 'redemption' and the relationship of the First World War to the rest of history.

In this thesis, I assess Jones' verbal and visual images as a transforming, redemptive bridge between his 'contactual' witness of violence on the WWI battlefield,

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<sup>6</sup> Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 158.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Ward, *David Jones: Mythmaker* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 104.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Dilworth, *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 95. See also Jonathan Miles, *Backgrounds to David Jones: A Study in the Sources and Drafts* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1990), 81. See also Oswyn Murray, "'It was a Dark and Stormy Night . . .': David Jones and History, in *David Jones: Artist and Poet*, ed. Paul Hills (Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1995), 7. See also Kathleen Henderson Staudt, *At the Turn of a Civilization: David Jones and Modern Poetics* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 18-19.

and the ‘conceptual’ information provided by his experience of the Mass and his immediate postwar reading in the heated early 20th-century theological and anthropological debates about the sacrifice of Christ and its redemptive action in history. I analyse, on the one hand, how Jones’ portrayal of the war itself as an artistic subject shows the influence of his reading of contemporary theology. This portrayal allows a resonance of Christ’s redeeming sacrifice at the source of creation to ‘shine out’ from allusions to the ‘dying god’ that appear first of all in the artwork’s juxtaposition of landscape and the human body.

On the other hand, when Jones presents the sacrifice of Christ itself as a literary subject — particularly his images of crucifixion and the Eucharist — one can make out traces of the battlefield, but ‘redeemed’ by appearing as scars on a landscape that is otherwise flourishing and regrown, with Christ on the cross at its centre. The works of the medieval liturgical poems about the cross mentioned above (the *Vexilla Regis*, the *Crux Fidelis* and the Old English *Dream of the Rood*) were an important reference point in Jones’ own artistic portrayal of Christ’s sacrifice and the Mass especially in his later poetry. Jones nonetheless shows himself a modern ‘poet of Christ’s passion’ in their ‘lineage’ by making use of his own ‘contactual’ experience of warfare to image the sacrifice of Christ with an extraordinarily contemporary fixation on the matter of words and visual shapes themselves as vessels of spiritual presence.

### **‘Sacrifice’ in the WWI Milieu and Jones’ ‘Contactual’ Witness**

The question of ‘sacrifice’, particularly the sacrifice of Christ, hovered over Jones’ most concrete experience of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ in the battlefield. Jones found himself not only amidst this wreckage of human bodies and trees in the war landscape, but also caught up in his surrounding culture’s attempt to reinvigorate its Christian devotion on the heels of 19th- and early 20th-century scepticism. Both civil and church leaders turned to the traditional language associating the sacrifice of Christ with military victory in order to gain support for the war among the people, but in the unprecedented conditions and losses of the conflict, the association of the suffering Christ with the suffering soldier contributed as much to religious cynicism as to renewed zeal.

The ubiquitous presence of the ‘wayside calvaries’ in Belgium and northern France made the image of Christ’s crucifixion a literal fixture of the battlefield. Subsequently, one of the most infamously recurring images in WWI photography is the shattered crucifix amongst the debris of the shelled landscape (see figs. 1-3). The broken-limbed Christ cast



**Figure 1**, Destroyed Crucifix at Brie, 1917



**Figure 2**, Damaged Wayside Crucifix near Bellenglise, 9 October 1918



**Figure 3**, 'Soldiers removing the carved figure of Christ from a large crucifix in the ruined church at Metz-en-Couture' 2 January 1918

to the ground or hanging piecemeal from his wooden cross (such as in fig. 2) drew an immediate association between Christ's crucifixion and the suffering of WWI soldiers; the image of Christ was itself a casualty alongside the wounded and dead soldiers of the waste land and in some sense stood for the more grotesque injury of soldiers that did not explicitly appear in photographs.

On a more abstract level, soldiers' voluntary enlistment and acceptance of the hardship of war was seen as an analogue of the self-offering and suffering of Christ in the passion, and the Christ-like acceptance of suffering integral to the Christian life. This image appealed to the trope of Christ in the suffering of the passion as the victor in a battle, his cross the standard (or war banner) of his victory over death and his followers as likewise 'soldiers' in the pursuit of Christian perfection. Such symbolism, taken in part from a passage such as Rev. 19:11-16 which portrays Christ as a military commander on a 'white horse' who 'make[s] war', accompanied by 'the armies which were heaven on white horses' [AV] was historically appropriated by Christian armies (starting especially with Constantine in the 4th century) to justify what Jones would call 'a decidedly uncelestial soldiery, of a ruthless this-world domination'.<sup>9</sup> Studies such as Philip Jenkins' *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Changed Religion Forever* (2014) and before this Elizabeth Siberry's *The New Crusaders: Images of the Crusades in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (2000) as well as Alan Wilkinson's *The Church of England and the First World War* (1996) have discussed at length how the renewal of this association in the Great War would, on the one hand, contribute seriously to the increasing religious cynicism of the post-WWI era. On the other hand, it would contribute to a stark critique of the predominant theological liberalism of the 19th century.<sup>10</sup>

Both secular and religious authorities in Britain encouraged enlistment with language that appealed to the tradition of the 'Christian Soldier', calling the conflict with Germany a 'holy war', 'sacred cause' and 'crusade'. The word 'sacrifice', or 'self-

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<sup>9</sup> David Jones, *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments* (London: Faber, 1974), 26. All further citations from this work will be from this edition and made with the abbreviation *SL* and page number.

<sup>10</sup> See Philip Jenkins, *The Great and Holy War How World War I Changed Religion Forever* (New York: Harper Collins, 2014); Elizabeth Siberry, 'The First World War' in *The New Crusaders Images of the Crusades in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 87 ff; Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War*, 2nd ed. (Norwich: SCM Press, 1996). See also Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 5; and Soud, *Divine Cartographies*, 7-9, for their treatments of the similarly reactionary stances of Eliot and Jones.

sacrifice' in particular, recurs in newspaper headlines, public exhortations and sermons in drumming up support for the cause as well as honouring the suffering and dead. As early as September 1914, Robert Bridges wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times*, calling the conflict 'a holy war . . . a war declared between Christ and the Devil', dramatically insisting that 'those who fight against [the Germans] will be fighting in the holy cause of humanity and the law of love'.<sup>11</sup> An article in *The Times* of July 1915 titled 'The Sacred Cause: Church Council on War Ideals. Call to Self-Sacrifice' summarised the exhortation of the Anglican bishop of London: '. . . the ideal for which Germany was fighting was not the Christian ideal. In defending the Christian ideal we were engaged in a sacred cause . . . Every man who fought in it was a hero and every man who died in it was a martyr'.<sup>12</sup> Robert Graves described how many of the soldiers of his regiment (the same in which Jones fought), the Royal Welch Fusiliers, had resisted enlistment out of religiously-motivated pacifism until David Lloyd George called the conflict a 'crusade'.<sup>13</sup>

Comparison between suffering soldiers and the suffering Christ—but also Christ victorious in his sacrifice—was therefore a natural one for the grieving families of fallen soldiers at home and it figures prominently from the first collections of poetry about the war. 'The Crosses: Belgium, 1914-15', originally published in *The Observer*, takes up the image of crosses in the battlefield as a sign of the righteousness of the British cause and the martyrdom of dead soldiers:

O'er exiled dead, o'er hearts at home,  
 The Cross's Shadow fills the land  
 'Tis Thine the cause for which they die,  
 O God! their souls are in Thy Hand.  
 For Country, right, and loyal word,  
 We plead their sacrifice, O Lord!<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Robert Bridges, 'A Holy War', *Times* [London, England] 2 Sept. 1914: 9.

<sup>12</sup> 'The Sacred Cause', *Times* [London, England] 9 July 1915: 10.

<sup>13</sup> See Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*, Rev. edn. (Penguin, 1960), 71. Graves is referring to Lloyd George's May 1916 speech at Conway, 'Winning This War'. See David Lloyd George, *The Great Crusade: Extracts from Speeches Delivered During the War* (New York: Doran, 1918), 23.

<sup>14</sup> Unnamed author, 'The Crosses: Belgium, 1914-15', *A Crown of Amaranth: Being a Collection of Poems to the Memory of the Brave and Gallant Gentlemen Who Gave Their Lives for Great and Greater Britain*, ed. Erskine Macdonald and S. Gertrude Ford (London: Erskine Macdonald, 1915), 47.

The 'sacrifice' of soldiers is implied here as not only honourable but holy, an alibi in the sight of God on behalf of 'country, right and loyal word'.

Even during the war, however, many criticised the ramifications of this hagiographic vision of the combat. The image of crucifixion in the physical landscape of the war blends with a subversion of jingoistic rhetoric in a poem such as Wilfred Owen's 'At a Calvary Near the Ancre' in which Owen sees the image of Christ betrayed into execution in the figure of the needlessly slaughtered WWI Tommy:

One ever hangs where shelled roads part.  
In this war He too lost a limb,  
But his disciples hide apart;  
And now the Soldiers bear with Him.

Near Golgotha strolls many a priest,  
And in their faces there is pride  
That they were flesh-marked by the Beast  
By whom the gentle Christ's denied.

The scribes on all the people shove  
And brawl allegiance to the state,  
But they who love the greater love  
Lay down their life; they do not hate.<sup>15</sup>

The soldiers here are still saintly and Christ-like: they 'bear with' Christ, 'lay down their life' and 'love the greater love' recalling Christ's injunction, 'Greater love hath no man than this but that he lay down his life for his friends' (John 15:13 [AV]). The appeal to patriotism, however—'allegiance to the state'—is compared with the hypocritical 'scribes' and pharisees of the Gospels who hand Christ over so that they may avoid suffering violence at the hands of the Roman oppressors.<sup>16</sup> Owen does not necessarily intend a theological meditation; he uses the logic of the metaphor juxtaposing the 'self-sacrifice'

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<sup>15</sup> Wilfred Owen, *The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen*, ed. C. Day Lewis (New York: New Directions, 1965), 82.

<sup>16</sup> See John 11:50.

and suffering of soldiers with the sacrifice of Christ in order to expose and unsettle its political complacency.

### **David Jones in the Great War**

William Blissett recounts in his memoir that in 1973 Jones ‘compared Owen’s poem “Dulce et Decorum Est” with his own cheerful or complaining acceptance of the “old lie”.’ Jones also revealed that he had done ‘a heroic war drawing of that title, which had appeared during the war in the *Illustrated London News*’.<sup>17</sup> The drawing to which Jones refers is probably an image titled ‘Pro Patria’, published in *The Graphic* in December 1915 (fig. 4), in which a ‘medieval knight’ (who could easily be a ‘crusader’), crowned with a laurel that bears the ‘suggestion of a nimbus’, and carrying a cross-like sword and shield inscribed with the words ‘Pro Patria’, stands over several fallen soldiers in the WWI battlefield.<sup>18</sup> The figure is an image of Christian patriotism, and Thomas Dilworth suggests that its position intimates ‘a symbolic relationship between knight and infantryman’, appropriating the idea of Christ’s victory over death via the ideals of medieval Christian chivalry into the ‘decidedly uncelestial soldiery’ of modern warfare.<sup>19</sup> After the war, Jones quickly distanced himself from these images, and as Blissett and Dilworth indicate, they have only very recently been attributed to him.

In the years following the conflict, Jones had an opportunity not only to digest the images that remained in his mind from the battlefield, but also to query their relationship to the ‘victorious’ suffering of Christ in the passion, and by extension the theological underpinnings of the ‘Christian soldier’ and the meaning of ‘sacrifice’. His reassessment of the relationship between the war and the sacrifice of Christ centred around his experience of the Roman Catholic liturgy of the Mass, in which the sacrifice of Christ becomes sacramentally present in the actions of the priest and the bread and wine become the ‘Body and Blood’ of Christ in the Eucharist. In a letter to René Hague in 1973, Jones recounted his ‘first sight of a Mass’, which he remembered as having been ‘close to the Front Line’ in 1917 in a wrecked farm building that he had approached hoping to find some dry firewood. He writes,

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<sup>17</sup> William Blissett, *The Long Conversation: A Memoir of David Jones* (London: Faber, 1981), 122.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War* (London: Enitharmon, 2012), 54-55.

<sup>19</sup> Dilworth, *Great War*, 54.



**Figure 4**, David Jones, 'Pro Patria', *The Graphic*, 11 December 1915

. . . I found a crack against which I put my eye expecting to see either empty darkness and that I should have to go round to the other side of the little building to find an entrance. But what I saw through the small gap in the wall was not the dim emptiness I had expected but the back of a sacerdos in a gilt-hued *planeta*, two points of flickering candlelight no doubt lent an extra sense of goldness to the vestment and a golden warmth seemed, by some agency, to lend the white altar cloths and the white linen of the celebrant's alb and amice and maniple . . . You can imagine what a great marvel it was for me to see through that chink in the wall, and kneeling in the hay beneath the improvised *mensa* were a few huddled figures in khaki.

Jones could not remember which part of the Mass he happened to witness in this brief vision, but felt he ought not 'to stay long as it seemed rather like an uninitiated bloke prying on the Mysteries of a Cult'.<sup>20</sup> The detail of his memory in this account is extraordinary, although no doubt the luminosity and 'goldness' of the scene increased as it blended with his many subsequent experiences of the Mass, and his deepened understanding of the Mass's theology and significance. In this letter, Jones could be describing one of his own paintings of the Mass, or its verbal conjuration in the strongly visual language of *The Anathemata* or *The Sleeping Lord*.

The vision of the Mass — the 're-presentation' of the sacrifice of Christ — as happening in the very milieu of the war provided a much different model for the juxtaposition of the war and the passion of Christ than that seen either in the battlefield's imagery (e.g. the wayside crosses) or the metaphorical language of the 'Christian soldier'. Jones would have learned soon after this experience that the Mass differentiates itself from the 'Lord's Supper' of his childhood low-church Protestant practice in that according to Catholic theology the Mass is the 're-presentation' (*anamnesis*) of the entire Paschal Mystery—that is, the single, eternal self-offering of Christ in his divine nature for the redemption of mankind manifest equally in the discrete historical events of his 'Last Supper', passion (including crucifixion), death and resurrection—under the signs of vegetable substance ('bread' and 'wine') become the living 'Body and Blood' of Christ,

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<sup>20</sup> *DGC*, 248-49.

the Eucharist.<sup>21</sup> In the understanding of Maurice de la Taille and Christopher Dawson (two of Jones' most important sources), furthermore, this 'real presence' of the Eucharist was 'operative', actually transforming the one who received it (and through intimate human association with the natural world, the whole of creation) 'into Christ' as an extension of God's union with humanity in the Incarnation. In the terms of this theology, David Jones did witness the sacrifice of Christ on the battlefield, not just metaphorically or symbolically but mystically and 'really', in his small glimpse of the Mass. He witnessed not the suffering of Christ in his sacrifice, furthermore, but the renewal of the entire creation in Christ inextricable from this suffering, signified by the Eucharist.

In Jones' subsequent art, he therefore never abandoned the contemporary association of the passion of Christ with the actions of the WWI battlefield. As Thomas Bromwell observes, in line with the commentary of Rowan Williams and William Blissett, Jones instead 'eschews cliché and explores fundamental theological and temporal concerns', adopting neither the sentimental tropes of propaganda nor the ironising tropes of Owen and others.<sup>22</sup> The more he meditated on his experience, the more the figure of Christ in his passion appeared as radically and mystically 'present' in the battlefield in this more immediate and sacramental way than merely by means of either extreme of metaphorical association.

Jones communicates this radical 'presence' most obviously in his art in portraying WWI Tommies as witnesses instead of parallels to Christ's sacrifice. Jones' soldiers take on the role of Christ's crucifiers who both inflict and apprehend his suffering along with the fruits of redemption — much like worshippers at Mass. They are neither Christ-like victims nor crusaders in a sacred cause. The sight of kneeling WWI Tommies before the altar—and hence, theologically speaking, kneeling before the mystical 'real presence' of Christ's sacrifice on the cross— would translate into some of Jones' earliest sketches of the crucifixion (c. 1919-21), in which WWI Tommies blend with Roman soldiers at the

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<sup>21</sup> Jones' father was a lay-reader for a low-church Anglican congregation, raised in a strongly Methodist Wales, and would have been influenced by the thinking behind John Wesley's preface ('taken from Brevint') to his *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* in which he clearly describes 'Holy Communion' as a 'memorial and representation' and yet 'far more than an ordinary figure' (2, 5).

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Bromwell, 'The Apocalyptic Paratext: The Frontispiece and Tailpiece to *In Parenthesis*', in David Jones Special Issue, ed. Jasmine Hunter Evans and Anna Svendsen, *Religion and Literature* 49, no. 1 (forthcoming). See also the discussion of Rowan Williams in *In Search of David Jones: Artist, Soldier, Poet* (2008), film by Derek Shiel. See also William Blissett, 'The Scapebeast' in *David Jones: Diversity in Unity*, ed. Belinda Humphries and Anne Price-Owen, 26-38.

foot of the cross on ‘fatigue’ duty to crucify him.<sup>23</sup> The same image would reappear in the narration of the crucifixion of Christ at the centre of *In Parenthesis* in which the WWI private and symbol of universal soldiery, Dai Greatcoat, assists the Roman soldiers in his crucifixion.<sup>24</sup> To the end of his career Jones continued to present the same scenario, as when in his mid-length poem ‘The Fatigue’ (1965) he gives voice to the dialogue of Roman soldiers on fatigue duty at Christ’s crucifixion by making them speak with WWI Tommy slang and cockney accents.<sup>25</sup>

Jones ‘eschews cliché’ most profoundly by portraying the sacrifice of Christ (on the cross and in the Eucharist) in the mode of the hymns of Fortunatus and *The Dream of the Rood*; that is, as ‘living’ vegetation in precise juxtaposition to the war’s devastation of the life of the landscape and the human body. Poets and painters of the WWI period saw a strong association of the human body and the landscape (both wounded and whole) on the battlefield and this sensibility easily merged with the vision of the crucified Christ amidst the debris of war described above. Nicholas Saunders observes that the association between the devastation of nature on the battlefield and the crucifixion was part of a larger transformation of ‘human relationships with Nature, and trees especially’ in the imaginations of soldiers and civilians alike so that ‘wood, leaves, roots, bark and branches took on new symbolic meanings and sensory qualities as well as practical purposes’.<sup>26</sup> Saunders describes the ways in which bodies and trees merged in the creative innovations of ‘trench art’ such as the making of memorials and religious objects (e.g. crucifixes) that embodied the mingling of the landscape and the human body they witnessed in the war’s violence. Types of religion and mythology naturally entered in the vision of devastated trees in the war, particularly the relationship between both pagan and Christian religion and trees that furnished

an ever-present source of enduring ambiguity whose origins lay in the grafting of pagan and early Christian traditions of the Tree of Life onto the cult of the Cross. Especially potent in this respect was the Anglo-Saxon *Dream of the*

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<sup>23</sup> See figure 29 in Chp. 4 of this thesis, p. 142.

<sup>24</sup> See David Jones, *In Parenthesis: seinnyessit e gledyfym penn mameu*, 1978 impression (London: Faber, 2010), 83. All further citations will be taken from this edition, made with the abbreviation *IP* and page number.

<sup>25</sup> See *SL*, 24 ff.

<sup>26</sup> Nicholas J. Saunders, ‘Bodies in Trees: A Matter of Being in Great War Landscapes’, in *Bodies in Conflict: Corporeality, Materiality, and Transformation*, ed. Paul Cornish and Nicholas J. Saunders (New York: Routledge, 2013), 22.

*Rood*, in which ‘the forest tree describes its own physical fate — hacked, felled, and torn as if it were a surrogate for the torments of Christ’ . . . Such imagery was uncomfortably close to what soldiers saw on the battlefields.

Saunders adds in this vein, ‘For some soldiers, it seemed that, like Christ before them, they were being crucified for the greater good of humankind’.<sup>27</sup> The very material of the landscape seemed to project the image of crucifixion and compact the association of suffering soldiers with the suffering Christ.

Jones, however, describes the solidarity of human beings and the landscape (especially trees) in the suffering of the battlefield first of all by invoking sacrificial figures of pagan mythology (such as the northern European Balder and Odin) that personify the entanglement of human life with the life of landscape and whose ritual deaths bear a strong superficial resemblance to Christ’s crucifixion. In the portrayal of the composite image of violence suffered by trees and human bodies together he also appeals to the curious borderland between pagan and Christian symbolism found in the image of the ‘Waste Land’ of the medieval Grail stories.

Jones’ familiarity with the ‘Waste Land’ myth would have been in part from Jessie Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), which he read in the 1920s near the time he encountered Eliot’s well-known poetic depiction of postwar Europe, *The Waste Land* (1922).<sup>28</sup> Weston, building on the work of James Frazer (Jones’ own primary source about paganism) made an explicit connection between certain fertility rites of nature religion (such as those of Adonis and Attis who personify the life of the land and are yearly ‘slain’ and risen from the dead) with the Christianised legend of the Fisher King of the medieval Arthurian stories, whose wounded powers of fertility make the landscape into a ‘Waste Land’ deprived of all life, which is only restored by the actions of a conquering hero. The stories were appropriated in medieval times as having eucharistic significance.<sup>29</sup>

Critics see in Jones’ invocation of pagan sacrificial figures a desire to complicate the relationship between the suffering Christ and the suffering soldier that was embedded in eyewitnesses’ vision of the landscape, but do not identify any more precise elucidation

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<sup>27</sup> Saunders, ‘Bodies in Trees’, 25-26.

<sup>28</sup> Jones mentions his encounter with Weston in several places, most notably *DGC*, 46.

<sup>29</sup> See especially Jessie Weston, ‘The Task of the Hero’ and ‘Tammuz and Adonis’, in *From Ritual to Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 11-22; 32-48.

of thinking that goes into Jones' artistic choice in this regard.<sup>30</sup> Paying close attention to Jones' reading from the immediate post-WWI period, however, one can discern a clearer picture of how this unusual amalgamation of symbolism operates and how it is part of Jones' unique vision of Christ's sacrifice in relation to the war and to history in a wider sense. For Jones, pagan sacrificial fertility rites were the most immediate analogue for the 'wounded trees and wounded men' of the war; the cross of Christ and the Eucharist, is by contrast the 'tree of life' that embodies the renewal of the land that these rites (like the 'rite' of warfare) could never achieve. As in Christian theology Christ's saving action in the Eucharist absorbs and transforms the desires of pre-Christian paganism, so also his saving action is able to 'redeem' the harrowing vision of the battlefield.

### **The 'Shape' of Sacrifice: A 'many-faceted image'**

The investigation of how Jones' reading and thinking about theology in light of his concrete experience on the WWI battlefield manifest themselves on the minute level of his formal choices — that is, how the 'shape' of his art reflects the complex 'shape' of the war in light of Christ's eternal sacrifice — will occupy the major analysis of this thesis.

'Shape' is a critical word for Jones. When he describes the peculiar literary form of *In Parenthesis*, for instance, he says, 'I have only tried to make a shape in words, using as data the complex of sights, sounds, fears, hopes, apprehensions, smells, things exterior and interior, the landscape and paraphernalia of that singular time and of those particular men'.<sup>31</sup>

Jones' description here recalls his commendation of Thomas Malory, quoted in the opening of this Introduction, in which he opposes the 'hard material' of 'contactual' experience ('visual, felt data'), with the 'leaves' of the 'conceptual . . . in the clouds', what he elsewhere terms the 'universal' as well as the 'intimation of immortality . . . or otherness of some sort' that he sees as the endpoint of an artwork.<sup>32</sup> In Jones' paradigm, that which is known by 'touch' — that is, the concrete and sensible world — is the most sure gateway to that which is 'in the clouds'; that is, the real but intangible realm of the spiritual world. The particular formal choices that make up the artwork, being themselves

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<sup>30</sup> See especially Dilworth's treatment in *Shape of Meaning*, 119-146; Kathleen Henderson Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 89-115; and Paul Hills "'The Pierced Hermaphrodite": David Jones and Imagery of the Crucifixion', in *David Jones: Man and Poet*, ed. John Matthias (Oroono, ME: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), 425-442.

<sup>31</sup> *IP*, x.

<sup>32</sup> *EA*, 304, 16.

also something tactile and sensibly perceived, reveal the connection between the ‘contactual’ and the ‘conceptual’ realities strictly speaking not identical with the artwork’s self-contained form. As Jones says of the language of James Joyce, the best artwork makes the ‘universal shine out from the particular’.<sup>33</sup>

The work of art as a connecting apparatus not only between ‘contactual’ experience and the ‘conceptual’ reality of an abstract idea but also between ‘contactual’ material and supernatural reality (‘immortality’) lies at the heart of Jones’ obsession with the relationship between ‘art and sacrament’, ‘Art and Sacrament’ being the subject of his best-known essay in *Epoch and Artist* (1959), especially in the case of the Eucharist, the sacrament *par excellence*. A ‘Sacrament’ in the traditional definition reiterated by Jones’ most important theological source, Maurice de la Taille, is ‘an efficacious sign of a sanctifying reality’.<sup>34</sup> ‘Art’ is the basis of ‘Sacrament’ in that a ‘Sacrament’ imbues a ‘contactual’ artefact with a supernatural power, and in the case of the Eucharist, with the power of God’s own life. Art, however, in Jones’ mind also in some sense always aspires to the condition of ‘Sacrament’; that is, to its status as an ‘efficacious’ synthesis that transforms the matter of ‘contactual’ existence into an encounter not only with a ‘conceptual’ but also with a divine reality. For Jones, the ‘terrific shape’ of the Catholic Mass was in this sense ‘the supreme art-form’.<sup>35</sup>

Thomas Dilworth observes furthermore that for Jones, the Mass ‘as art was essentially modernist: paratactic, without linear continuity, moving by juxtaposition and accumulation. It contradicted [what Jones called] “the ludicrous division” between abstract and non-abstract art, “for nothing”, he said, “could . . . be more “abstract” than the Mass, or less “realistic” or more “real”’.<sup>36</sup> As many critics have noted, part of Jones’ fascination with the Mass’s artistic form came from a parallel he observed between its underlying theology of ‘transubstantiation’ (in which bread and wine are changed into the ‘Body and Blood’ of Christ) and the postimpressionist aesthetics articulated by Clive Bell and Roger Fry, especially Fry’s insistence that a work of art is ‘an equivalence, not a likeness, of

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<sup>33</sup> *EA*, 304.

<sup>34</sup> Maurice de la Taille, *The Mystery of Faith and Human Opinion Contrasted and Defined*, trans. J.B. Schimpf (London: Sheed & Ward, 1930), 201. All further citations from this work will be from this edition and made with the abbreviation *MF* and page number.

<sup>35</sup> *DGC*, 168. Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones: Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet* (London: Enitharmon, 2017), 69.

<sup>36</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 69.

nature'.<sup>37</sup> As Anthony Domestico and W. David Soud point out, however, Jones' observation of the analogy between postimpressionism and 'transubstantiation' in this period was not unique. May Sinclair wrote in her 1912 analysis of Imagism that in the desire to merge the 'symbol' and the 'reality' in their art: 'The Imagists are Catholic; they believe in Transubstantiation'. Jones' observations therefore show both how 'idiosyncratic' and how contemporary his aesthetic opinions were.<sup>38</sup>

As someone for whom the term 'transubstantiation' was a reality and not just a convenient metaphor, however, Jones' 'claim that the poet is like the priest' carries a particular weight.<sup>39</sup> For Jones, a work of art is not identical or in competition with the inherent dynamism of the Eucharist, but extends its work in a real way. Jones uses the word 'redeem' to speak about the artist's activity, particularly the possibility to transform the 'sordid' things one has witnessed into the representation of something good and edifying, even sanctifying. Jones commends the early medieval author of the *Vexilla Regis*, Venantius Fortunatus, because he 'gave the liturgy the enduring image of banners' as a symbol for the cross of Christ, when 'the actual *vexilla* Fortunatus saw with his physical eyes' were taken from the 'sordid violence' of 6th-century 'fratricidal' in-fighting.<sup>40</sup> In Fortunatus' hymn, the '*vexilla*' of his battlefield experience undergoes a 'transubstantiation' in that they become a 'contactual' sign that 'makes present' the Paschal Mystery in a real way. Jones writes that this transformation 'is the sort of thing poets are for; to redeem is part of their job'.<sup>41</sup>

In the case of Fortunatus, this artistic 'redemption' of 'sordid violence' was one that intersected directly with the 'supreme artwork' of the theology of Redemption, the Catholic Mass, as his works were made for liturgical use. This sense of 'redemption' is in operation in a similarly acute sense, however, in Jones' works that I discuss here because they partake not only of the generally 'sacramental' and redemptive activity of art-making he discusses, but they use the representation of 'contactual' material order to 'make present' the theology of Redemption itself as their subject matter. Jones' tendency to look to the Mass as an artistic model, especially when representing theological ideas such as the

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<sup>37</sup> Roger Fry, *Vision and Design*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1923), 240. See Jones' account of this parallel in *DGC*, 232.

<sup>38</sup> See Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 91. Soud, *Divine Cartographies*, 114. See also May Sinclair, 'Two Notes', *Egoist*, June 1915, p. 89.

<sup>39</sup> Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 92.

<sup>40</sup> *EA*, 261.

<sup>41</sup> *EA*, 261.

sacrifice of Christ and the Eucharist, makes more sense in light of his thinking about the ‘redemptive’ nature of artwork more generally. Jones’ work, however, is not meant for the liturgy *per se*, and so its engagement with liturgy and liturgical forms has more of a commenting, ‘paraliturgical’ place, to use a term sometimes applied to *The Dream of the Rood*,<sup>42</sup> which reflects his understanding of the challenges of artistic creation in general in the 20th century. Jones’ sense of ‘shape’ and engagement with the liturgy ultimately gestures towards Catherine Pickstock’s identification of language itself as ‘liturgical’, and as requiring a transcendent destination of ‘praise’ for its meaning.

The ‘shape’ of Jones’ work, its particular formal choices, is the torque of its transformative activity and enables the ‘transubstantiation’ of ‘contactual’ experience into something else altogether. At the origin of Jones’ unusual conception of ‘shape’, in line with his attraction to the multi-media, performative ‘shape’ of the Mass, is his ambivalence towards the tradition of verse-craft. He came to poetry as a practitioner of different media; namely, the various predominantly visual and tactile arts of drawing, painting, engraving and carpentry. Jones described to the critic John H. Johnston in a letter draft that in the writing of *In Parenthesis*,

. . . one of my concerns was to discover how this business of ‘form’ and ‘content’ worked in making a writing — I had a fairly good idea (or thought I had) of how it worked in the visual arts. . . . My only ‘rule’ or ‘principle’ or deliberate & overriding consideration was that the words used & their juxtaposition with other words should have as many overtones or undertones as possible a propos the context, and to, if possible, avoid words or formations of words that might have the wrong evocation, or if not ‘wrong’, less fully evocative of the many-faceted image I was seeking to re-present.<sup>43</sup>

He protested that in making the unusual form of *In Parenthesis* ‘I wasn’t attempting to make anything “new” — I mean it wasn’t a literary “experiment” or “innovation” in that sense. The “form” it took as I proceeded was dictated by the “content”.’ He insisted, furthermore, that the resemblance of his artistic form to someone like Joyce, Eliot or

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<sup>42</sup> This term is contested in medieval studies and will be addressed in relation to the *Dream of the Rood* more extensively in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

<sup>43</sup> Aberystwyth, Wales, National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LO1/4, Letter Draft Fragment —David Jones to John H. Johnston, 28 February 1963.

Pound was not direct, but that ‘What one is “influenced” by is the absolute necessity to find a “form” that somehow or other “fits” the contemporary situation’.<sup>44</sup> Jones reveals in both aspects of this protest, however, the essence of formal experimentation in late 19th- and early 20th-century art: the search for a new calibration between the internal order of an art-object (its ‘form’) and the complex reality (the ‘content’) it sought to represent in light of a gathering sense of cultural fracture and societal change, especially in the aftermath of the First World War. Jones’ word ‘shape’ is interchangeable with his word ‘form’ in this sense.

Critics of Jones’ work tend to acknowledge the interpenetration of subject matter in his poetry and visual art, but tend to analyse the two bodies of work separately. I will follow this model in general in this thesis, concentrating in the second and fourth chapters on Jones’ visual art and in the third and fifth chapters on his poetry, but I have deliberately chosen to place analyses of the visual and poetic work side by side each other. I hope this will emphasise how not only Jones’ subject matter but also more fundamentally his sense of artistic form or ‘shape’ are deeply interpenetrated. His paintings often ‘read’ like linguistic symbols without ever losing their embodied ‘thingness’; the visual juxtaposition of words likewise operates in a way reminiscent of the juxtaposition of shapes in a visual work, but without ever actually turning into representational ‘pictures’. When asked whether he thought he was ‘more of a painter or more of a poet’, he replied ‘I can’t make any distinction really’.<sup>45</sup> This answer is not flippant: Jones’ vision of poetry and painting is one of profound complementarity and overlap. Towards the end of his career, the visual shapes of words themselves were an increasingly common ingredient in his formal choices, most often words from Jones’ model artwork, the Roman Catholic Mass.

The undeniable entanglement of Jones’ distinctly modern artistic forms with theology and liturgy, as well as his obsessive return to the question of ‘art and sacrament’ in his essays, has catapulted him in the last five years to the centre of the burgeoning focus in contemporary criticism on the intersections of ‘Religion and Literature’, especially of the 19th and 20th centuries. It also speaks to wider trends in Art History addressing the interplay of ‘Religion and Visual Art’. In line with the objectives set out in primarily 19th-

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> David Jones, ‘Mabon Studios Interview, 31 August - 3 September, 1973’, ed. Jasmine Hunter Evans and Anne Price-Owen, in *David Jones on Religion, Politics and Culture: Unpublished Writings*, ed. Thomas Berenato, Kathleen Henderson Staudt and Anne Price -Owen (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), forthcoming.

century studies such as Kirstie Blair's *Form and Faith in Victorian Poetry and Religion* (2012), or more recently, Michael D. Hurley's *Faith in Poetry: Verse Style as a Mode of Religious Belief* (2017), major studies such as Erik Tønning's *Modernism and Christianity* (2014), W. David Soud's *Divine Cartographies* (2016), and Anthony Domestico's *Poetry and Theology in the Modernist Period* (2017) represent an unprecedented effort to place Jones within larger discussions about Modernism and literary form. All three place Jones next to canonical 20th-century poets such as Joyce, Eliot, Yeats, Auden and Beckett, whose engagement with theological thinking has most often been treated as incidental, or as Domestico insists, explained away as something else. These three studies, however, read the poetry of these major 20th-century authors as engaging with theological ideas not as an explanation of 'something else' but as 'concept[s] to be explored on their own theological grounds' and are uncovering dimensions of their style and thinking that have been previously overlooked.<sup>46</sup>

The thinking and artistic form of David Jones are so profoundly informed by theology and Roman Catholic liturgy that previous mainstream discussions limited largely to the secular concerns of Modernism have simply not been able to assess his work properly. Although many attempts have been made to place Jones in dialogue with the work of his contemporary moment (such as Kathleen Henderson Staudt's excellent study, *At the Turn of a Civilization: David Jones and Modern Poetics* [1994]), they have had a limited effect in the wider critical arena. Wide-ranging critical assessments of Jones' corpus such as Thomas Dilworth's overview of his poetry in *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones* (1987) or Jonathan Miles' and Derek Shiel's overview of his painting in *David Jones: The Maker Unmade* (1995) have furthermore remained largely isolated and unwieldy. The work of critics like Tønning, Soud and Domestico therefore represents an exciting opportunity to open up the art of David Jones in relation to the larger period in a way that has not been possible before.

Fewer History of Art studies have included Jones in such a central way, although Richard Harries' *The Image of Christ in Modern Art* (2013) and Charlene Spretnak's *The Spiritual Dynamic in Modern Art* (2014) have included entries on his work. Ariane Bankes' and Paul Hills' illustrated accompaniment to the exhibition *David Jones: Vision and Memory* (2015) likewise represents the more recent effort to place Jones' art in the

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<sup>46</sup> Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 5. See also Soud, *Divine Cartographies*, 3, and Tønning, *Modernism and Christianity*, 1-22, 124-26.

context of larger art historical narratives, showing for instance its resonances with Renaissance and Medieval art in their chapter, 'Rediscovering the Masters'.<sup>47</sup>

All of these studies are, however, necessarily overviews of Modernist engagements with theology and invite more detailed work. I will build on the foundation laid by these others by providing a focussed analysis of one particular way in which Jones' theological thinking affects his artistic transmission; namely, how the minute artistic choices that make up his work's unusual 'shape' negotiate between his most concrete experience of the WWI battlefield and the understanding of the sacrifice of Christ that he developed in his reading in the immediate postwar period c. 1919-1935.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I will provide a preliminary excursion into the crucial immediate postwar moment of 1919 in which Jones experienced a 'crisis of faith' in his encounter with James Frazer's Christian-sceptical anthropological studies of the 'myth of sacred kingship' and the 'dying god' in pagan religion and mythology. Jones' 'crisis' was 'resolved' by his encounter soon thereafter with the short stories of the Jesuit classicist C.C. Martindale in *The Goddess of Ghosts* (1915), in which Martindale lays out, in a literary form, a theological explanation of 'the relationship between paganism and Christianity' based on a patristic vision of the Eucharist as one with the source of creation, and hence as manifest in mysterious ways in the encounter of human beings and the natural world from the beginning of time. Martindale's presentation of the Eucharist gave Jones a vision of pagan religion not as alien to but 'validated' by Christianity.<sup>48</sup> This understanding of the dynamic activity of the Eucharist throughout history and its relationship with the natural world and pre-Christian religion deepened throughout the 1920s and early 30s as Jones absorbed the theological writings of the French Jesuit Maurice de la Taille and the historian Christopher Dawson, both of whose works confirmed and elaborated on many of Martindale's ideas.

In the second and third chapters of this thesis, I discuss how the peculiar form of Jones' art functions to present his 'contactual' experience of the battlefield introduced here as a primary subject in light of his 'conceptual' and theological thinking developed in his reading of Frazer, Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson. In the Frontispiece and Tailpiece to *In Parenthesis*, which I discuss in the second chapter, Jones suggests an 'intimation' of the spiritual significance of what he saw in allowing his figures of the battlefield to evoke

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<sup>47</sup> See Ariane Bankes and Paul Hills, *The Art of David Jones: Vision and Memory* (London: Lund Humphries, 2015), 109-121.

<sup>48</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 63.

traditional symbols of pagan sacrifice. In doing so, these images also evoke and yet resist traditional symbols associated with the sacrifice of Christ and the Mass. I begin this discussion with a close analysis of contemporary imagery of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ in battlefield photography, documentary painting and contemporary artistic transformations of the sight to provide a glimpse of what kinds of images were present in Jones’ ‘contactual’ experience that formed his imagination. I use Paul Nash’s paintings of trees in the WWI battlefield as a significant contemporary foil in the attempt to transform the witness of the war’s violent destruction and spiritual outrage by means of a distinctly modern ‘shape’. I then seek to reassess the image of Jones’ Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis* (1937) as a ‘crucifixion’ image, suggesting that ‘crucifixion’ is only a figure one can see if the image is understood first as projecting the ‘dying god’ described in Jones’ reading of Frazer. The ‘dying god’ (in the explanation of Martindale and de la Taille) radiates a glimpse of Christ’s sacrifice only in its ‘eternal’ dimension that is one with the source of creation itself and hence mysteriously ‘active’ since the beginning of time. In this way, Jones does not ‘compare’ the suffering Christ with suffering soldiers the way many have assumed, but does show an important relationship.

In the text of *In Parenthesis*, which I discuss in the third chapter of this thesis, the ‘data’ of ‘sights, sounds’, etc. that Jones describes as making up the ‘shape in words’ of his writing, intimate a myriad of spiritual, mythical and historical ideas by means of his carefully-chosen language. In the juxtaposition of words and phrases within close textual space, Jones presents the ‘contactual’ matter of the war — its ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ — but which evoke multiple ‘conceptual’ figures including the protagonists of pagan sacrificial rites by the subtle resonances and etymology of his word-choices. At the same time, resembling the technique of the Frontispiece and Tailpiece, these single clusters of words hint at the presence of God’s saving action in Christ’s sacrifice and the Eucharist. In particular, as I uncover with the help of original archival research of the drafts of *In Parenthesis*, Jones shows the foot soldiers who fight each other on the ground — both British and German — as protagonists in a bloody fertility rite resembling Frazer’s ‘King of the Woods’ from the opening chapter of the *The Golden Bough*. The ‘shape’ of language describing their fight, however, like the wounded soldier blended with the landscape in the Frontispiece, nonetheless allows for a glimmer of Christ’s sacrifice in its eternal dimension to radiate in the midst of the war’s suffering. This analysis therefore provides a new reading of the relationship between Jones’ allusions to pagan and Hebrew images of sacrifice and the sacrifice of Christ in *In Parenthesis*. Studies such as those of Thomas

Dilworth and Kathleen Henderson Staudt thus far have concluded that Jones' Christian and non-Christian references are in basic solidarity against the suffering of the war, but I argue that Jones' strange combination of pagan, Hebrew and Christian references instead exposes an unsettling irony as well as a baffling optimism about the war's violence in the dynamic interaction of these allusions.

In the fourth and fifth chapters of this thesis I address how the subject matter shifts in Jones' later visual art and poetry to the presentation of theological ideas themselves, especially the saving action of God in history as embodied in the crucifixion and the Eucharist. Continuing to pay attention to his particular use of visual and verbal juxtaposition, I show how his art and especially poetry situates itself in the 'lineage' of the paraliturgical 'Cult of the Cross' tradition hinted at by Seamus Heaney above in its 'redemption' of Jones' 'contactual' witness of warfare. In chapter 4, after a brief mapping of Jones' encounter with the *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* of Venantius Fortunatus, (as well as the Anglo-Saxon *Dream of the Rood*) in the context of Jones' experience of Roman Catholic liturgy, I consider the subtle invocation of the WWI battlefield in the juxtaposition of landscape and the human body in Jones' various depictions of the crucifixion of Christ from the 1920s. My discussion of Jones' 1948 painting *Vexilla Regis* then treats the work in light of this development as a representation of Jones' own struggle for the 'redemption' of his most harrowing memories from the war. The painting furthermore shows the beginning of Jones' growing fascination with liturgical words and objects themselves as subjects. His painted inscriptions of the 1950s and 60s show an increased engagement with texts of the liturgy and the *Dream*, paying special attention to the visual matter of the words (their shape and colour) and anticipating some of the ways he relies on the visual arrangement of words in his late poetry to express the paradox in the theology of Christ's sacrifice and the Eucharist.

In the final chapter, I isolate several succinct depictions of the sacrifice of Christ and the Eucharist in *In Parenthesis*, *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord* that draw on Jones' 'contactual' experience and 'conceptual' theological thinking in which he enacts as much as possible in his strongly visual manipulation of language a transformation of his memories of the battlefield into the presence of Christ in the Paschal Mystery. Relying on the tension between visually juxtaposed words on the page and aurally unified streams of sound, Jones artistically represents the extremes of theological paradox found in the mystery of Christ's redemptive action at work in history. In single visual-aural artistic 'shapes' therefore Jones unites the event of an individual Mass, the suffering of history

(including the suffering of 'wounded trees and wounded men' in the war), and even vestiges of pagan nature religion into the restoration of creation promised in the Eucharist (depicted as flourishing vegetable life). In their unusual combination of imagery, but also in their 'breaking' and remaking the forms of the liturgical and paraliturgical poetry for the cross, the passages demonstrate Jones' status as a 'theological modernist', but in Heaney's words, in the 'lineage' both of Hopkins and the *Dream of the Rood*.

## Chapter 1.

### Frazer and the Jesuits — Theology, History and *Poiesis* in Jones' Postwar Reading, 1919-1935

David Jones always distanced himself from the discipline of theology, usually speaking of 'the theologians' in the third person.<sup>49</sup> Formal, discursive works of theology as such do not seem to have played a part in his the religion of his youth, which consisted primarily in familiarity with the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. Nor do such works appear to have been an important factor in his conversion to Catholicism, which seems to have come from an intuition in his experience of the Mass and other liturgies that Catholicism felt "“real” as no other Church was'.<sup>50</sup> Theology was instead a framework by means of which Jones later organised his experience and what he called 'the very things of which one is oneself made'. Jones describes *The Anathemata*, like *In Parenthesis*, as the attempt to 'make a shape' out of these 'things'.<sup>51</sup> That 'shape' in both works takes form as it negotiates between Jones' theological reading and thinking and the 'things' of his experience, especially of the First World War's violence and his religious feeling.

Jones was not therefore a theologian in a professional or strict sense, but as Anthony Domestico observes, 'was interested in the specific mode of discourse called theology . . . more specifically in the kind of theology being written by [his] contemporaries'. He was especially inspired by the efforts in the early 20th century 'ressourcement' (e.g. the revival of reading the Early Church Fathers) to re-energise the habit of theology, making it move 'from a collection of old texts to be mastered to a vibrant, provisional method of knowing the world'.<sup>52</sup> In the early 1920s, Jones found himself as a new convert to Catholicism suddenly at the heart of a vibrant intellectual community in which the reading and discussion of contemporary works of theology, history, philosophy and aesthetics (as well as the interpretation of 'old texts', particularly the 13th-century *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas) were the centre of daily

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<sup>49</sup> See especially his essay 'Art and Sacrament' (1955) in *EA*, 153, 175.

<sup>50</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 68.

<sup>51</sup> David Jones, *The Anathemata: fragments of an attempted writing* (London: Faber, 1952), 10. All further citations from this work will be from this edition and made with the abbreviation *AN* and page number.

<sup>52</sup> Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 9, 14. See also David Jasper's essay on which Domestico draws: 'From Theology to Theological Thinking: The Development of Critical Thought and Its Consequences for Theology', *Literature and Theology* 9, no. 3 (1995): 293-305.

conversation. The two most important Catholic circles in which Jones moved in the 1920s and early 30s were: first of all, the artists' 'Guild of St. Joseph and St. Dominic' and experimental community at Ditchling, Sussex, headed by the sculptor Eric Gill; secondly, and a bit later, what is now often called the 'Chelsea Group', which centred around the Sheed & Ward publisher Tom Burns in west London. The groups were intertwined in significant ways, especially via Burns, and included a mixture of publishers, journalists, artists, clergy, diplomats and others interested in the role of Catholicism and western culture (which they saw as bound up with Christianity) in the modern world.<sup>53</sup>

Both groups were significantly invested in the neo-Thomist revival represented by Jacques Maritain, and indeed his *Art et Scholastique* became a standard around which the discussion of theology and aesthetics revolved. His central articulation that 'art', coming from the Latin *ars*, includes all kinds of human making, placed artworks such as painting and poetry into a practical light that had a strong resonance with post-impressionism. An artwork was simply a 'made thing' with its own order, but which was also inextricably bound up with the order of the natural world. Maritain insisted (in a variation of Roger Fry's dictum that an artwork 'is not a likeness but an equivalence, of nature') that: 'artistic creation does not copy Divine creation, it carries it on'. Maritain's vision makes the artist, therefore, not purely his own authority but 'like a partner with God in the making of beautiful works'.<sup>54</sup>

Maritain did not, for this reason, insist that artworks be figural in a mimetic sense in order to be true or beautiful extensions of creation. He was therefore not opposed to experimentation in form when it sought this ideal. Jones and his friends took this starting point very seriously and much of their discussion revolved around the particular needs and constraints placed upon art and artistic form by what Jones called the contemporary 'civilizational situation' of postwar Europe.<sup>55</sup> Jones' absorption of these ideas was therefore as much by silent perusal of texts as by intense and extended conversation —

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<sup>53</sup> For an extensive treatment of this group in context see James Lothian, *The Making and Unmaking of the English Catholic Intellectual Community, 1910-1950* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009). See also Thomas Dilworth, 'David Jones and the Chelsea Group', in *David Jones: A Christian Modernist?*, ed. Jamie Callison, Paul Fiddes, Anna Johnson and Erik Tønning (Boston: Brill, 2018), 107-22.

<sup>54</sup> Jacques Maritain, *The Philosophy of Art*, trans. Fr. John O'Connor (Ditchling, Sussex: St. Dominic's Press, 1923), 92. The standard English translation of Maritain's work was published as *Art and Scholasticism* in 1930, but Jones would have been most familiar with O'Connor's earlier translation. He owned copies of both translations.

<sup>55</sup> A common phrase used by Jones that he adopts from Spengler, for instance in *DGC*, 190.

more often the latter. Well before he converted to Catholicism, however, he was profoundly aware of the stakes of ‘theological thinking’. Significantly, his encounter with some of the most pressing theological questions and debates of the early 20th century — particularly the debate over the nature of the sacrifice of Christ — began in his engagement with theology presented in deliberately literary forms, most importantly James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* and C.C. Martindale’s *The Goddess of Ghosts*. Literary and artistic presentations of theological ideas would remain Jones’ own primary mode of ‘theological thinking’.

### **The ‘Crisis’ of Frazer’s *The Golden Bough***

Jones was an avid and omnivorous reader all his life, from his earliest years in art school, with a particularly keen interest in mythology and history.<sup>56</sup> As Dilworth attests, he not only kept up his reading as much as possible in the trenches, but also took it up with renewed intensity when he was released from active duty and returned to art school in 1919. The spiritual questioning that had begun in the war would have heightened significantly as, in part of his intense reading, Jones came into contact with an intellectual wrangle left over from the immediate pre-war period: the sceptical claims of the Cambridge anthropologist James Frazer (and others) about the relationship between the sacrifice of Christ and pre-Christian (i.e. pagan) rites of sacrifice, as well as its rebuttal by Christian (especially Catholic) apologists. Thomas Dilworth writes that,

In 1919, Jones’s reading of Jessie Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance* and especially Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* precipitated a religious crisis by revealing similarities between Christianity and paganism. Then, the same year, he read *The Goddess of Ghosts* (1915), a collection of stories by the classicist C.C. Martindale SJ, which resolved his doubts by disclosing the spiritual intimations of paganism as validated by Christianity and what Jones would call the ‘Vegetation Rites of the Redeemer’. Martindale’s book was a major influence — Jones said, ‘formative’.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> See Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War*, 24-25.

<sup>57</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 63. Note: Dilworth says Jessie Weston’s book was part of this immediate postwar moment, and Blissett similarly recounts that Jones told him he had encountered both Frazer and Weston before he read *The Waste Land* (see Blissett, *The Long Conversation*, 96), but Weston’s book was not in fact published until 1920 and evidence from

Frazer and Martindale's repartee about the relationship between paganism and Christianity, which centres on the sacrifice of Christ, would become the germ for Jones' deeper assessment of his vision of the cross (in the Eucharist) as the 'living tree' at the centre of the WWI 'Waste Land' by virtue of its being both the source of creation and the 'centre' of history.

*The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (1890) of Sir James George Frazer (and in a similar way, Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* [1920], which built on the work of Frazer) epitomised the then newly-emergent field in the late-19th and early-20th centuries of what came to be known as 'comparative religion'; that is, distinct from the study of theology that seeks to penetrate the doctrines of belief of a particular religion, the study of multiple religious beliefs (or mythologies) and their associated rituals alongside each other for the sake of anthropological analysis.<sup>58</sup> This endeavour was scientific and humanist, and not necessarily a 'religious' one presupposing belief, as it regarded religion and belief from their purely human dimensions, and in Frazer's case, regarded them with a strongly critical and sceptical eye.<sup>59</sup>

Frazer is now considered 'an embarrassment' by the academic establishment, not only because of his reliance on 'crude and ethnocentric reports of other cultures' in his description of many different religious rituals but also and especially because of the hubris of his method, in which he used 'ethnographic evidence, which he culled from here and there and everywhere, to *illustrate* propositions which he had arrived at in advance by *a priori* reasoning', hence writing 'assured tomes about primitive religion and mythology without ever leaving the library'.<sup>60</sup> He is not necessarily any more to blame in this regard than many others of his generation, and was in fact, as John Vickery points out, 'undogmatic' in an uncharacteristically Victorian way.<sup>61</sup> In his day he had such a profound

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Jones' letters indicates that he did not read Weston until the late 1920s and well after reading Frazer. See *DGC*, 46.

<sup>58</sup> See Jessie Weston, Preface to *From Ritual to Romance*, vi. Note: The association of myth and ritual in this way is in fact characteristic of a certain anthropological hermeneutic, not uniformly accepted in anthropology; Frazer and Weston are associated with what is sometimes called 'the myth and ritual school'. See Robert Ackerman, *The Myth and Ritual School: J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>59</sup> See the treatment of Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay in *The Science of Religion in Britain, 1860-1915* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

<sup>60</sup> Robert Ackerman, *J.G. Frazer: His Life and Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1.

<sup>61</sup> John Vickery, *The Literary Impact of The Golden Bough* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 22.

and wide-ranging influence that in 1965 Lionel Trilling was moved to conjecture: ‘perhaps no book has had so decisive an effect upon modern literature as Frazer’s [*Golden Bough*]’.<sup>62</sup> Vickery speaks at length of the way in which not only the ideas but also (and perhaps moreso) the style and presentation of ideas in *The Golden Bough* embody ‘the loose, variegated, and often contradictory intellectual tradition that shapes the modern spirit’.<sup>63</sup>

Frazer’s *Golden Bough* appeared in three different editions between 1890 and 1915, each an expansion of the previous one, the third edition being the largest, spanning 7 volumes (which he calls ‘parts’, some divided into two; there are 12 books total) published between 1906 and 1915 and undergoing various impressions up to 1920. An ‘abridged’ edition then appeared in 1922, as well as a ‘supplement’ in 1936. The intellectual question at the centre of *The Golden Bough* throughout its near 40-year development turns on the search for an anthropological explanation of the ‘tragic practice’ of violent rites of sacrifice—both human and animal—and their accompanying myths that manifest ‘a deeper philosophy of the relation of the life of man to the life of nature’.<sup>64</sup> In his preface to the re-printed 3rd edition of *The Golden Bough* in 1920 Frazer describes his project from hindsight as having its origins in an explanation of ‘sacred kingship’ in the rites of the ‘Priest of Nemi’, rites which supposedly inform the rite of the ‘Golden Bough’ in Virgil’s *Aeneid*, and hence provide the title of his study. It was an investigation that quickly became ‘a series of separate dissertations loosely linked together by a slender thread of connexion with [the] original subject’.<sup>65</sup> This ‘slender thread’ could be synonymous with the ‘central idea’ of his essay mentioned in his preface to the first edition—‘the conception of the slain god’—which he concluded was a central organising principle of the mythologies and religious rituals of many different cultures.<sup>66</sup> Frazer identifies many different versions of ‘incarnate gods’ (who are often also ‘kings’) who represent the life of vegetation (both wild, such as trees, and cultivated, such as crops), and who are yearly ‘slain’, mourned, and risen from the dead to represent the natural cycles of growth, life and death in the landscape and to dramatise the inextricable place of human life in this process.

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<sup>62</sup> Lionel Trilling, *Beyond Culture* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), 14.

<sup>63</sup> Vickery, *Literary Impact*, 4.

<sup>64</sup> James Frazer, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, vol. 1, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1906; reprinted 1920), 40.

<sup>65</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, vii.

<sup>66</sup> James Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion*, 1st edn., vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1890), xi. See also Vickery’s discussion in *Literary Impact*, 39.

Frazer's appeal was wider than the usual academic audience, because his style was deliberately engaging on a literary level. Having 'the pace and interest of narrative rather than the uniformity of exposition' Frazer organised his material 'thematically', juxtaposing 'conflicting evidence and scenes for dramatic purposes' and employing 'repetition and restatement' for effect.<sup>67</sup> His language, furthermore, has a deliberately visual quality that presents 'the external world in all sensuous immediacy as a visual presence' appealing 'like a Lockean metaphor' to an identification between 'visual and intellectual clarity' that the literary Modernists would share. Vickery attests that therefore, like his model, Renan, Frazer's style 'set before the general public materials, topics and problems hitherto reserved for theologians and historians of religion'.<sup>68</sup> The accessibility of Frazer's style meant that he more powerfully scandalised many fellow academics and his predominantly Christian readership. Frazer claimed that the figure of Christ, especially in his suffering and death ritually celebrated in the Christian liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, was merely another of these fertility-deities from pagan religion, sacrificed and risen from the dead to symbolise the human deification of the natural cycles of the landscape that man himself inhabited.<sup>69</sup>

It is unclear exactly which parts or edition of Frazer's work Jones would have encountered in this immediate postwar moment c. 1919, but it was probably one or several of the individual volumes from the second or third edition. Jones had several volumes of Frazer's work in his library at his death including three individual volumes from the second and third editions: *Adonis Attis Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion* (1906), dated '1951' by Jones; *The Dying God* (1912); and *The Scapegoat* (1914). He also possessed two different printings of the 1922 'abridged' version. William Blissett attests in his memoir that Jones preferred the 12-volume edition of *The Golden Bough* to the 1922 abridged version, and in any case in 1919 the third (12-volume) edition would have been the only version available.<sup>70</sup> Considering Dilworth's account that Jones was scandalised by Frazer's 'revealing similarities between Christianity and paganism', Jones may have read or been familiar with the argument of Frazer's essay on 'The Crucifixion of Christ', which

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<sup>67</sup> Vickery, *Literary Impact*, 119.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, 107.

<sup>69</sup> See the discussion of the public outrage generated by Frazer in Edmund Leach, 'Kingship and Divinity: The Unpublished Frazer Lecture, Oxford, 28 October, 1982' *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 1, no. 1 (2011): 283-84. Web.

<https://www.haujournal.org/index.php/hau/article/view/hau1.1.012/1106>

<sup>70</sup> Blissett, *Long Conversation*, 96.

was originally published in the body of the second edition (1900) and later included as an appendix in the *Scapegoat* volume—one of the individual volumes of the third edition of which Jones possessed a copy.

Frazer's thesis in this particular essay was that the story of Christ's crucifixion in the Gospels could be understood as a mis-recounted enactment of the Jewish Purim celebration involving the 'hanging' (or crucifixion) of the figure of Haman and the release of the figure of Mordecai (from the story found in the book of Esther). This story, Frazer contends, 'was played in Babylonia, and from Babylonia the returning captives brought it to Judaea, where it was acted, rather as an historical than a mythical piece'. In an example that well demonstrates the flourish of his literary style, Frazer then narrates how the 'passion play' of Haman and Mordecai, as well as the figure of the 'dying god', fused with the story of the life and death of Christ in the early dissemination of Christianity:

A chain of causes which, because we cannot follow them, might in the loose language of daily life be called an accident, determined that the part of the dying god in this annual play should be thrust upon Jesus of Nazareth, whom the enemies he had made in high places by his outspoken strictures were resolved to put out of the way. They succeeded in ridding themselves of the troublesome preacher; but the very step by which they fancied they had simultaneously stamped out his revolutionary doctrines contributed more than anything else they could have done to scatter them broadcast not only over Judaea but over Asia; for it impressed upon what had been hitherto mainly an ethical mission the character of a divine revelation culminating in the passion and death of the incarnate Son of a heavenly Father. In this form of the story, the life and death of Jesus exerted an influence which it could never have had if the great teacher had died, as is commonly supposed, the death of a vulgar malefactor. It shed round the cross on Calvary a halo of divinity which multitudes saw and worshipped afar off; the blow struck on Golgotha set a thousand expectant strings vibrating in unison wherever men had heard the old, old story of the dying and risen god.

Frazer's exposition here builds up to an outright declaration of scepticism:

In the great army of martyrs who in many ages and in many lands, not in Asia only, have died a cruel death in the character of gods, the devout Christian will doubtless discern types and forerunners of the coming Saviour—stars that heralded in the morning sky the advent of the Sun of Righteousness—earthen vessels wherein it pleased the divine wisdom to set before hungering souls the bread of heaven. The sceptic, on the other hand, with equal confidence, will reduce Jesus of Nazareth to the level of a multitude of other victims of a barbarous superstition, and will see in him no more than a moral teacher, whom the fortunate accident of his execution invested the crown, not merely of a martyr, but of a god.<sup>71</sup>

Frazer's fertile imagination and yarn-telling abilities are in full array here as he jumps from one large set of conjectures to another, but in doing so makes a compelling story. He is trying, as Ackerman writes, 'to knock the last nail in the coffin of religion in the name of objective science', doing so by employing the artillery of rhetorical flair.<sup>72</sup>

Vickery characterises Frazer's tone in *The Golden Bough* in general as taking on the structure of a 'quest' of rational thinking, and sees this passage in particular as resembling 'the second quest stage, that of the death of one of the combatants. In this case, the defeat is dealt to the representative of tradition and faith, whom Frazer calls superstition'. Vickery further insists that therefore Frazer 'joins forces' with another lyrically gifted crusader out to debunk the Christian myth; namely, Nietzsche, 'for in his account of the death of a god he is slaying his antagonist who is god'.<sup>73</sup> Like Nietzsche, Frazer characterises himself as one who stands up for truth at all costs, ending his essay with the quotation, '*Magna est veritas et praevalerebit*', itself ironically a Latinised version of a saying derived from the *Apocrypha* of the King James Bible ('Great is the truth and stronger than all things', 1 Esdras 4:41, [AV]).

The subtlety of this sceptical position undergirds the gamut of Frazer's study, although appearing elsewhere as a 'discreet and covert critique'.<sup>74</sup> Frazer deliberately chooses phrases resembling the language of the King James Bible and English religious

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<sup>71</sup> James Frazer, *The Scapegoat*, vol. 9, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1913), 422-23.

<sup>72</sup> Ackerman, *Frazer*, 1.

<sup>73</sup> Vickery, *Literary Impact*, 134-35.

<sup>74</sup> Vickery, *Literary Impact*, 8.

history to draw a subconscious link between the sacrificial rites of pagan religions (such as the religion of Mithra) and the rituals of Christianity.<sup>75</sup> The fundamental implication of Frazer's work is that the sacrifice of Christ—along with all violent sacrifices of pre-Christian religion—is a 'barbarous' one, a failure of human reason and good will to which the enlightened and progressive individuals of the modern world cannot possibly assent. A similar sentiment was beginning to grow in certain quarters in the aftermath of the First World War in relation to the 'sacrifice' of thousands of young men of the 'lost generation', many of whom had volunteered because of their leaders' insistence that the war was a 'crusade' and a 'Christian' cause. The condemnation of the war's carnage by Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfrid Owen, Paul Nash, C.W.R Nevinson and others, although not the only public voices speaking about the war, came to dominate the war's artistic conception in the subsequent generation, expressing itself poignantly in such an image as Nevinson's *The Unending Cult of Human Sacrifice* (1935), which portrays several bayoneted WWI soldiers in the foreground as the 'victims' of a rite officiated by Christian ministers (fig. 5).

One can see the profound influence of Frazer's thinking on Jones in the allusion to figures of the 'dying god' in *In Parenthesis* and its Frontispiece and Tailpiece, which will be discussed in detail in the second and third chapters of this thesis. As with other formative authors in Jones' mental lexicon—such as Oswald Spengler—Jones drew deeply on Frazer's work even while at the same time rejecting essential aspects of his arguments. He sympathised with Frazer's observation about the association of human life and the life of the landscape across many different cultures and religions—Jones himself wrote that he thought 'trees are men walking'.<sup>76</sup> He ultimately disagreed with Frazer about the uniqueness of Christ's sacrifice, although not without great consideration. Jones' further reading on 'comparative religion' in light of eucharistic theology enabled him to place the observations of Frazer into a new and much more cosmic vision of religion in relation to both history and the natural world—and ultimately, to his experience in the war.

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<sup>75</sup> See, for instance, the resonances with John 3, 1 John 1:7 and Revelation 7:14 in Frazer's discussion of the cult of Attis in *Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion*, vol. 5, *The Golden Bough: A Study of Magic and Religion*, 3rd. edn. (London: Macmillan, 1914), 274-75.

<sup>76</sup> See 'Some Notes by David Jones' in *David Jones: A Memorial Exhibition*, ed. Paul Clough, exhibition catalogue (Cambridge: Kettle's Yard, 1975), [7].



**Figure 5,** C.R.W. Nevinson, *The Unending Cult of Human Sacrifice.* (1934)

### **C.C. Martindale's Theology of 'Comparative Religion'**

Although in hindsight Frazer's arguments do not hold up well under scholarly scrutiny, his work posed a formidable stumbling block to the engaged readers of his day, especially in light of the shaken morale of the immediate postwar milieu in which David Jones found himself in 1919. As Dilworth claims above, recounting a conversation he had with Jones in the early 1970s, the 'crisis' generated by the encounter with Frazer's work in this precarious postwar moment was initially 'resolved' by his encounter with the thinking of the lesser-known but prolific Jesuit contemporary of Ronald Knox and Martin D'Arcy, Cyril Charlie (C.C.) Martindale. It was an encounter that would provide him with a different vision of 'the relationship between paganism and Christianity' than that posed by Frazer, and ultimately with the basis of an unusual hermeneutic for making sense of the relationship between the sacrifice of Christ and the violence of the war.

C.C. Martindale was not *per se* part of the Catholic intellectual circles of Jones described above, but like Jones, he was a convert from Anglicanism, had literary and artistic gifts, a strong affinity for art and nature, and had come to the Catholic faith through the witness of literature and liturgy.<sup>77</sup> He was also deeply invested in the renewal of Catholic theology and the relationship between Catholicism and the modern world. Before the war, Martindale edited a series of 'Lectures on the History of Religions' for the Catholic Truth Society (1908 to 1915), almost parallel with Frazer's publication of the third edition of *The Golden Bough*. The series was meant to survey the new field of 'comparative religion' but in tandem with Christian theology and hence coloured by belief in the truth claims of Christianity—what Martindale's 1963 obituary in *The Tablet* called 'a Christian antidote to Frazer's *Golden Bough*'.<sup>78</sup> In his conclusion to the series, Martindale lays out a 'method' for studying comparative religion 'from a Christian perspective'. He embraces the endeavour laid out by Frazer and others, but is quick to acknowledge the primary pitfall of Frazer in his *a priori* assumption that 'religion in general must evolve according to a universal and necessary law'; Martindale hence anticipates the primary objection to Frazer's work that would characterise the later consensus of secular critics. Like Frazer, however, Martindale was committed to the pursuit of 'Truth', and uses the language of conquest and victory in a similar way.

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<sup>77</sup> See Philip Caraman, *C.C. Martindale: A Biography* (London: Longmans, 1967), 18, 29-63.

<sup>78</sup> D.W., 'Fr. Cyril Martindale: A Long and Famous Apostolate', *The Tablet*, 23 March 1963, p. 308.

Martindale admonishes his Catholic audience not to be alarmed at the conglomeration of ‘facts’ (in a study such as Frazer’s), because ‘in the long run the Truth must conquer’.<sup>79</sup>

As a method of comparative religion from a ‘Christian perspective’, Martindale’s study needed to give an account of the relationship between Christianity and other religions, particularly, in light of Frazer’s work, the sacrificial rites of pre-Christian paganism. Central to Martindale’s analysis—as in Frazer’s—is the role of the sacrifice of Christ in the crucifixion. Martindale does not try to explain away the striking similarities between the figure of Christ and aspects of the ‘dying god’, the ‘scapegoat’, the ‘sacred king’ and many other figures discussed by Frazer. Martindale, however, does not either see the relationship between Christ and these other figures as simply having the resonance of ‘types’ (as Frazer describes in his anticipation of the Christian response above); that is, the coincidental, superficial resemblance between Christ and the ‘dying god’ that makes Christ present to the mind when encountering the pagan figures from hindsight. Martindale posits a much more radical and dynamic explanation of the relationship between Christ and pre-Christian figures, which relies on a unique understanding of the divine origins of time-bound nature as well as the continuous presence of the ‘eternal’ throughout the individual, passing moments of history. ‘In the consciousness of the Fathers’, Martindale writes, ‘is a profound conviction that Christianity has not been lacking from the beginning of the world’. Following the lead of the Church Father Gregory Nazianos, he continues,

God at the outset of history gave the race that revelation of Himself, which, from the beginning, had been in it a germ of life and growth, but most of all (when *grace* became better and better understood) because God, having made man for supernatural union with Himself, presented to him that vocation and destiny even when man had fallen and forfeited it and needed to have it restored to him. And his restoration was, anticipatedly, immediate. No space intervened between fall and promise of Redemption. The exquisite legend tells that from the very hour in which the fruit of the fatal tree was eaten, that tree which should be the ancestress of the tree of Calvary was indicated. The Lamb was slain from the beginning of the world. Christ’s magnetism radiates backwards as well as forwards, through the ages; Calvary is the centre point of

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<sup>79</sup> C.C. Martindale, ‘The Cults and Christianity; Conclusion’, *Lectures on the History of Religions*, vol. 5 (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1911), 7, 9.

time, as once it was believed the centre of the earth; in all that has been and shall be *Christus cogitatur*. The key to universal history is Christ.<sup>80</sup>

To give an account of the relationship between pre-Christian religion and Christianity, Martindale presents a theology of creation, explaining that the origin of nature, as well as its redemption, is in ‘*grace*’—the transmission of God’s life, ‘the germ of life and growth’—and that ‘*grace*’ is one with the eternal sacrifice of Christ (synonymous with the life-giving action of God), ‘the Lamb . . . slain from the beginning of the world’, a line which paraphrases Revelation 13:8. Martindale appeals here to the theological understanding of the sacrifice of Christ (‘the Lamb . . . slain’) as not only a temporal event that happened in c. 33AD in Jerusalem, but an action that is also ‘eternal’ by force of Christ’s dual nature in the Incarnation. For, according to this mystery, he is fully human and yet fully God as ‘in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporeally’ (Col. 2:9, DR). The sacrifice of Christ is therefore an action performed by God himself, not subject to change and hence able to be ‘present’ to and active in every individual moment of history at once in the way other actions in different points of time in history can only be present to each other via human recollection and imagination.

If the sacrifice of Christ lies at the origins of creation and hence nature itself, then the worship of nature in pre-Christian religion cannot be completely alien to it, even if not synonymous with Christian worship. Martindale’s presentation of the relationship between nature and grace points to a deeper relationship than the coincidence of superficial resemblance afforded to ‘type’, but one of more immediate mystical ‘presence’: the sacrifice of Christ is somehow ‘present’ from eternity and therefore ‘present’ in the sensibility of pre-Christian religion even if Christ’s identity is not fully revealed as such. When Martindale calls the cross the ‘centre point of time’, he is appealing to its ‘centrality’ in its eternal aspect, ‘central’ because able to touch all points of chronological time at once, the way the physical centre of a wheel touches all its spokes at once. The image of the ‘axile tree’ is indeed an analogy Jones uses elsewhere (along with T.S. Eliot) for understanding the cross in its eternal aspect.<sup>81</sup>

This understanding of the relationship between time and eternity (and the ability of the merits of the passion to be active even at a different moment than their action in linear

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<sup>80</sup> Martindale, ‘Cults and Christianity’, 48.

<sup>81</sup> See the discussion in David Jones, ‘Wales and the Crown’, in *EA*, 39-40.

time) also informs the Catholic sacramental theology of ‘re-presentation’ (*anamnesis*) in the Mass. ‘*Anamnesis*’ was a significant word for Jones, which he understood especially according to the definition given by Dom Gregory Dix and summarised in a note in his preface to *The Anathemata* that he revised for *Epoch and Artist*: ‘*Anamnesis*. . . . “recalling” or “re-presenting” before God an event in the past so that it becomes *here and now operative by its effects*’ [emphasis in original].<sup>82</sup> The sacrifice of Christ in its eternal aspect is understood to be ‘re-presented’ not just alongside the elements of the Eucharist, or just to the memory or imagination by means of visual and aural resemblance with the actions of the Last Supper, but in an immediate, mystical, ‘real presence’ unattainable by ordinary sign-making. Martindale would not suggest that the same sacramental ‘real presence’ of Christ (as in the Mass) existed in any other religion or before the onset of the Incarnation in linear time, and yet his words do indicate a stronger sense of the ‘presence’ of Christ’s sacrifice as the source of grace’s operation in all periods of history than is usually emphasised.

This vision of the cross of Christ as present in the very fabric of nature and time, as Martindale’s allusion to Gregory Nazianos indicates, is a distinctly Patristic one. Irenæus of Lyon, whom Jones called a ‘special father’ in his own theological thinking, has a passage in his *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching* on the place of the cross as appearing in the most elemental aspects of nature, and hence suggesting Christ’s redemption as miraculously in effect even in the creation of the world. Such adoption of Patristic thinking was characteristic of some of the most important developments of the 20th-century *ressourcement* in theology. Martindale develops his discussion of the dynamic operation of Christ’s sacrifice in history in his consideration of the Eucharist, which he takes up in *The Goddess of Ghosts*.<sup>83</sup>

### ***The Goddess of Ghosts* (1915)**

As Frazer’s sceptical essay on the crucifixion of Christ undergirds the tone of his entire study, the theology of creation that Martindale lays out in discursive form in ‘The Cults and Christianity’ undergirds his fictional works that dramatise ‘the relationship between

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<sup>82</sup> *EA*, 126, note 3. See Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster, UK: Dacre Press), 161.

<sup>83</sup> See a broader discussion of this Patristic understanding of the cross and its 20<sup>th</sup>-century reception in Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 177-184. See also Irenæus, *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*, trans. J. Armitage Robinson (New York: Macmillan, 1920), 101.

paganism and Christianity’, especially his 1915 collection, *The Goddess of Ghosts*. This collection would be Jones’ first encounter with Martindale’s work, and given its subject matter and the timing of its being read by Jones in 1919, its influence was likely an important one in Jones’ deliberation about becoming a Catholic, which he did become in September, 1921.<sup>84</sup> It is uncertain whether Jones expressly read Martindale’s essay on ‘The Cults and Christianity’, but he must have been familiar with its content and conclusions because he had the opportunity to speak at length with Martindale in person on an early visit to Campion Hall, Oxford in 1922. Jones had been invited there by Fr. Martin D’Arcy, but Dilworth recounts that ‘at meals . . . Jones discussed the relationship of paganism to Christianity with Cyril Martindale’, whom Jones found to be ‘the most sensitive, intelligent, well-rounded person he had met, “an amazing chap”’. He would meet with Martindale one more time in 1939.<sup>85</sup>

The stories of *The Goddess of Ghosts* feature the intersection of paganism and Christianity in a number of unusual ways, paying particular attention to the question of ‘life’ and the common reverence in paganism and Christianity for the entanglement of human life with the life of nature. Martindale sets his stories either in classical antiquity in which pagan characters, weary of their philosophy and failing religious enthusiasm, encounter the new Christian religion, or in modern times (i.e. the early 20th century) in which jaded English characters see Christianity afresh through some kind of encounter with the pagan past. Two stories in particular, the title story, ‘The Goddess of Ghosts’, and ‘The Faun’, most clearly engage with the ideas of Frazer and the 19th-century scepticism he represents. Without more specific information about Jones’ reading, these two therefore seem the most likely candidates to have ‘resolved’ a religious crisis generated by Jones’ reading of Frazer.

‘The Goddess of Ghosts’ stars a young British woman named Elinor Pontefract who has arrived for a governess’s position with a wealthy American family inexplicably residing in the north of France in the contemporary moment of c. 1910. The complex temperament and personal history of this central character are revealed over the course of

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<sup>84</sup> We know that Jones must have read *The Goddess of Ghosts* between 1919 and 1921 because he dates his copy ‘1919 and Jan 12th 1960’ and notes: ‘returned to me at Harrow by Ernest Hawkins after a lapse of about forty years. He borrowed it in circa 1921-2’. See David Jones 598, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

<sup>85</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 77, 206. See also Jones’ mention of Martindale in his letter to Tony Stoneburner, 20 December 1964 (Granville, Ohio, U.S.A, Denison University Archives, The Papers of Tony J. Stoneburner 1966-1992, Box 2): ‘He was an amazing chap and in my view, the full power of his mind was never used’.

the story, but one quickly learns that she is a convert to Catholicism. The father of the household is an Americanised caricature of an early 20th-century Frazerian: he is a hobby scholar of ‘comparative religion’, a devotee of Swinburne, and is convinced he has discovered the universal key that explains the similarities of all earth-mother goddess figures in many different world religions, pagan, Christian and otherwise. His ‘goddess’ transcends them all and points to what he calls an impersonal ‘Ultimate’: ‘Sexless, ageless, in reality nameless. Death, Immortality, Eternity!’.<sup>86</sup> He is determined to scandalise the Catholic Elinor and convince her of the foolishness of Christianity — especially Catholicism.

Elinor, however, is an unexpectedly formidable soul and baffles the would-be professor with her easy rebuff of his ideas: she knows Swinburne and the sceptical thesis well, and finds him ‘a little too Victorian’. She describes her conversion to Catholicism as having come after witnessing a man die, after which experience she concluded: ‘I felt life was the only thing that mattered. And it was *life* which I thought I saw in Catholicism. It was alive’.<sup>87</sup> She finds support from the oldest son of the family, who likewise considers himself ‘the modern product’ and is disillusioned with the post-Protestant ‘wares’ of his father’s generation. He himself is an agnostic, but the story ends with the unresolved possibility that he and Elinor marry.<sup>88</sup>

The ‘pagan’ element that gives the story its name is in the narration of the first half of the story of an early Roman community’s worship of a woodland mother-goddess representing the spirit of nature (assumedly the ‘goddess of ghosts’ but not explicitly named as such). Her role is taken on in the present-day narration in part by the figure of the Virgin Mary who hovers in the background in the statues and prayers of the French peasants; the ‘goddess’ is also in some sense Elinor herself, who feels she must ‘be a mother’ in providing spiritual nourishment to her impoverished generation.<sup>89</sup> There are some strong similarities between the ‘goddess’ and the figure of the Queen of the Woods in Jones’ *In Parenthesis*, who likewise presides over the natural world destroyed in the waste land of the First World War. Given Jones’ interest in the ‘civilizational situation’ of the early twentieth century, the appeals in the story to Catholicism as the only legitimate

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<sup>86</sup> C.C. Martindale, *The Goddess of Ghosts* (London: Burns & Oates, 1915), 175. Cited hereafter in this chapter by the abbreviation *GG* and page number.

<sup>87</sup> *GG*, 183.

<sup>88</sup> *GG*, 191.

<sup>89</sup> *GG*, 195.

religious response to the conditions of modernity (even more, uttered from the mouth of an attractive and formidable young female aristocrat that resembles many of Jones' love-interests) likely spoke persuasively to his war-weary heart. Jones had himself also witnessed firsthand the harrowing finality of death, and, no longer finding great solace in the Victorian low-church practices of his childhood, had been mysteriously moved by the unexpected witness of the Catholic Mass as a sign of contradiction to the effects of the waste land, both physical and spiritual.

The final story of Martindale's collection, titled 'The Faun', illustrates a bit more explicitly the thesis he puts forward in 'The Cults and Christianity' about the mysterious presence of Christ in the pagan reverence for the divine origin of human life and nature. It furthermore illustrates the role of the Eucharist as the embodiment of a dynamic force unifying the whole of creation—human beings and through them, the natural world—with God by the power of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. It stars a young English widower named Basil Croft who finds himself, after the death of his wife, with his young daughter Ursula living in an Italian villa, surrounded by countryside. Both Basil and Ursula have visions in their garden of a 'faun' as from classical mythology, an anthropomorphic emanation of the landscape who seems to mirror their own ages and temperaments. Basil, because he 'loved to philosophize', concludes that, 'The Faun was, as it were, the expression, or the formal manifestation of the life that was ultimate in all that countryside' and that he 'united in himself humanity and the wild life of plant and herd and wind and sun'. Basil is troubled because, as a Catholic, he thinks he should not be able to see figures of the religion of 'pagandom', which he assumed was entirely 'divorced' from the Church.<sup>90</sup>

On the day Ursula makes her First Communion, however, in the local church of 'Santa Maria all'Acqua cadente, built above the yet older grotto of the Nymphs', a Friar comes to their villa and walks with them in their garden. As they tell him about seeing the Faun, the Friar tells Ursula (with a side glance at Genesis) that before she had received Communion (the 'Body and Blood of Christ' under the accidents of a vegetable wafer), 'you didn't know as well as you do now who it is that walks in gardens when the sun sets'.<sup>91</sup> The implication is that it is Christ (known to her in the 'real presence' of the

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<sup>90</sup> *GG*, 211-12.

<sup>91</sup> *GG*, 215. See Genesis 3:8, 'they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day' (AV).

Eucharist) who ‘walks in gardens’ and hence mysteriously animates the the divine spirit of creation represented by the Faun, who ‘unit[es] in himself humanity and the wild life of plant and herd’, etc. The Friar then addresses the elements of nature directly as he sings the ‘Canticle of Creatures’ of St. Francis, as well as the ‘Canticle of the Three Children’ from Daniel 3, the latter a prayer traditionally said after the reception of Communion, which invokes the various elements of the natural world to ‘bless the Lord’. This reference is possibly the first place Jones would have seen the prayer of St. Francis, which he references in *In Parenthesis*.<sup>92</sup>

Martindale’s story reuses some important word-choices from his essay on ‘The Cults and Christianity’, using literary and symbolic language to build on the claims he makes in discursive prose about the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as the ‘centre point of time’, the origin and renewal of all creation. As quoted above, he describes ‘the exquisite legend . . . that from the very hour in which the fruit of the fatal tree was eaten, that tree that should be the ancestress of the tree of Calvary was indicated’.<sup>93</sup> The ‘tree’ contains the image of the entanglement of human life with the natural world, in that it shows both human death brought by the fall (which came from eating a vegetable ‘fruit’) and the ‘new life’ brought by Christ’s suffering and redemption (in Christ’s body nailed to a vegetable wooden plank, and consumed under the form of a vegetable wafer). As Basil listens to his daughter’s and the Friar’s invocation of nature to rejoice with them in their communion with Christ, he remembers his own childhood fondness for the ‘Tree of Life’ in Revelation 22, a symbolic ‘living tree’ that in itself typologically encompasses both the ‘fatal tree’ of Genesis and the ‘tree of Calvary’, as it bears ‘twelve fruits, yielding its fruits every month’, and its leaves are ‘the healing of the nations’ [DR]. It illustrates the sacrifice of Christ on the cross in its eternal dimension as that which provides the life of both fallen and restored creation at once.

Martindale also points in his essay to ‘Calvary’ as ‘the centre point of time, as once it was believed to be the centre of the earth’.<sup>94</sup> When Basil muses on the joy of Ursula and the Friar in nature that comes from their reception of the Eucharist, he describes them as ‘at that Centre . . . which is everywhere’.<sup>95</sup> The repetition of both the words ‘tree’ and

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<sup>92</sup> See for instance the section titled ‘Thanksgiving After Mass’ in Jones’ missal, Fernand Cabrol (ed.) *The Roman Missal in Latin and English* (1931), 62a. See also *IP*, 162.

<sup>93</sup> Martindale, ‘Cults and Christianity’, 48.

<sup>94</sup> Martindale, ‘Cults and Christianity’, 48.

<sup>95</sup> *GG*, 218.

‘centre’ serves to strengthen Martindale’s association between the cross and the Eucharist as expressions of the entire renewal of creation (human beings and through them the rest of life) brought about by Christ, in whom creation originates and whose life animates the restoration of both ‘humanity and the wild life of plant and herd, etc.’. Such a sentiment is indeed reflected in the words of Colossians 1:16-17, ‘all things were created by him and in him. And he is before all, and by him all things consist’ [DR], and Romans 8:21-23, ‘the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God’ [DR].

Martindale explains in his preface to *The Goddess of Ghosts* that the central theme he wants to explore is ‘the mystery of *life*’, which for him ‘remains a mystery even without the capital L’.<sup>96</sup> It is a sincere human question that for him finds an answer in Christianity. Elinor gives voice to this idea outright in her declaration that it was the sight of death that had inspired faith in her because she saw Catholicism to be ‘alive’ in contrast. The semi-pagan figures of the ‘Goddess of Ghosts’ and ‘the Faun’ are likewise gestures towards this mystery, the entangled life of human beings and the natural world revered in paganism that is also mysteriously embodied in the theology of the cross as the ‘Tree of Life’ and the Eucharist as the ‘Bread of Life’.

Martindale situates this concern with ‘life’ in direct relation to the bloodshed of the First World War, which was in its beginning stages as he wrote his collection. He addresses the final paragraph of his Preface to ‘O Theophylakt’ (‘Guarded by God’); that is, the WWI soldier engaged in battle,

Meanwhile, O Theophylakt, you are out there in your trenches: one life is flooding round about you; me at my donnish desk quite passes by. But the Other springs for both of us from my daily Altar, from which it isn’t a long, long way to anywhere. . . . And since, as I write, I hear that the bursting shell has not been so unkind as to refuse us altogether your return, I trust the more that the two lives are yet intended, for a while, to increase and interfuse, and to perfect each other.<sup>97</sup>

He appeals to the mysterious ability of the sacrifice of Christ to be ‘present’ in all places and all times, even in the horror of battle in which ‘one life’ (the life of human beings and

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<sup>96</sup> *GG*, vi.

<sup>97</sup> *GG*, ix

nature) is being mercilessly destroyed. He does not make a sentimental appeal that tries to show that loss of life as a superficial ‘type’ of Christ’s suffering, but juxtaposes the ‘life-giving’ sacrifice of Christ with it in a radical way to show the ability of Christ’s sacrifice to ‘interfuse’ the life of nature despite the presence of evil and death, and subsequently to restore and redeem it. Such a statement must have spoken profoundly to David Jones, who had indeed survived as a ‘Theophylakt’ whom ‘the bursting shell has not been so unkind as to refuse . . . altogether’ his return in 1919, after also having witnessed this ‘Other’ life ‘re-presented’ in the Mass literally in the midst of that destruction.

### **‘An Incarnation continued’: de la Taille and Dawson on the Eucharist**

Martindale’s vision of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as the ‘centre point of time’ and one with the source of all life provided the basis for a unique understanding of both history and creation. Throughout the 1920s, Jones began to develop his own ‘theology of history’<sup>98</sup> as well as a theology of creation with the help of two of the most significant figures in his intellectual landscape: the French Jesuit theologian Maurice de la Taille, and the English Catholic historian Christopher Dawson. Both de la Taille and Dawson would provide Jones with a more precise articulation of certain intuitions from Martindale’s story about the dynamic operation of the Eucharist, itself a ‘re-presentation’ of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. Both thinkers understood the Eucharist to be an extension of the infinite God’s union with finite human nature in the person of Christ in the Incarnation.

Thomas Dilworth attests that Jones read and was ‘immediately impressed’ by a summary of de la Taille’s controversial argument in 1922, which stated ‘that the Last Supper, the crucifixion, and the Mass were one sacrifice in differing modalities: unbloody oblation, bloody immolation, and un-bloody re-enactment’. This view ‘appeared to open new windows’ for him, and would certainly have built upon the Patristic-inspired conception of the sacrifice of Christ in relation to historical time that he had encountered in the thinking of Martindale.<sup>99</sup> Jones would read de la Taille more thoroughly in the early 1930s when he acquired a copy of *The Mystery of Faith and Human Opinion Contrasted*

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<sup>98</sup> See the use of this term in relation to Jones in Adam Schwartz, *The Third Spring: Chesterton, Greene, Dawson and Jones* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 331-47.

<sup>99</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 74. See especially Maurice de la Taille’s summary of his position in light of his critics, ‘The Last Supper and Calvary: A Reply to Critics’, *MF*, 229-237.

*and Defined* (1930), a revised and expanded edition and translation of several papers originally published in Latin and French in 1921-22.

De la Taille was particularly interested in the meaning of an undifferentiated ‘real presence’ in these different modalities of ‘Supper, crucifixion and the Mass’, as well as the dynamic ‘function’ of the ‘real presence’ in relation to the created world. Jones calls de la Taille ‘my favourite theologian’<sup>100</sup> especially for a single line in *The Mystery of Faith*, which he highlighted in his copy— ‘he placed himself in the order of signs’—and which Jones made the epigraph for his essay collection *Epoch and Artist* (1959). The line is taken from a chapter on ‘The Real Presence and Its Sacramental Function’ in which de la Taille investigates an old conundrum in eucharistic theology: ‘How could [the Eucharist] be at the same time the substance of the Body of Christ and the symbol of that substance?’<sup>101</sup> De la Taille’s language is, as Jones wrote, ‘technical & tough. Grand & almost fierce in places’<sup>102</sup>; he is not a poet, and the English word-choice is a fairly literal rendering of the original French. Navigating the precise terms of his argument is therefore difficult, but his conclusion gestures towards a profoundly dynamic vision of the ‘function’ of the ‘real presence’ of the Eucharist and its ability not only to transcend but also to re-fashion the human categories of time and space in order to unite God and humanity. ‘There is no clash between the conditions of the eucharistic presence and the laws of mathematics or of physics’ de la Taille writes, because the presence of Christ in heaven is not bound by those laws. Yet paradoxically ‘the Body of Christ’ is bound by the spatial ‘extension’ of the accidents of bread and wine, i.e. the sacramental ‘signs’ of God’s presence, even though they themselves are not strictly speaking identical with God’s presence or with the Body of Christ in heaven.

De la Taille bases this claim on his understanding of the nature of the Incarnation, in which ‘Christ in his own person wished to become a sacrament’, the infinite Godhead taking on the ‘veils’ of human flesh, which themselves are a true ‘sign’ of the ‘real presence’ of God without themselves being identical with God’s infinite being. In the same way, the ‘signs’ of the vegetable host in the Eucharist indicate the ‘real presence’ of Christ in his substance; the ‘signs’ of the vegetable bread and wine and the ‘sign’ of Christ’s human body stand here in strong juxtaposition. It was already in the Incarnation, therefore, that God ‘placed himself in the order of signs’, as Jones so often quoted, and indeed

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<sup>100</sup> Blissett, *Long Conversation*, 93.

<sup>101</sup> *MF*, 212, 207. See also National Library of Wales item ‘David Jones 1144’ from Jones’ library.

<sup>102</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 170.

changed the nature of sign-making and the ‘presence’ a sign has the power to give. The vegetable accidents of the host are a ‘sign’, therefore, but a different kind of sign than that which would only ‘give a sensible expression to an ideal truth, for the purpose of arousing or helping the mind to reflect upon’ something abstract. They fall instead under the definition of ‘sacrament’, which de la Taille (following the traditional definition quoted in the Introduction to this thesis) calls an ‘efficacious sign of a sanctifying reality’.<sup>103</sup> De la Taille presses on this assertion to insist that the ‘real presence’ does not exist for its own sake, but as an ‘efficacious sign’: it is ‘the appropriate symbol of an Incarnation continued, as it were, and extended as far as ourselves’. The ‘function’ of the ‘real presence’, de la Taille insists, ‘is to transform every one of us into Christ’.<sup>104</sup>

The Eucharist for de la Taille is therefore not simply a static object or discrete presence but ‘a symbol of the sanctifying action of God’ that is one with the same source of creation itself: the ‘Word’, which is ‘made flesh’ in Christ.<sup>105</sup> De la Taille writes that ‘when God willed to create the world, he created it by his Word . . . and when God willed to raise up the world from its ruins, he did so once more by his Word, but by his Word made flesh’. The ‘eucharistic flesh’ of Christ, therefore, de la Taille continues, ‘is a living and efficacious intimation of that plan of unity with which the divine intelligence is at work, in order to sum up all things in Christ, and through Christ in God’.<sup>106</sup> De la Taille does not just say ‘man’ or ‘human beings’ in speaking about the work of redemption, but uses the word ‘world’ to imply a wider sense of how the whole created order will be redeemed by God’s ‘sanctifying action’ manifest in the Eucharist.

Christopher Dawson has a similar vision of the Incarnation as that explained by de la Taille, which he also explains as extended to the renewal of the entire created world. Jones wrote to William Noon, SJ, in 1967 that of all the books he read in the ‘post-Frazer period’, the most influential for him was Christopher Dawson’s *The Age of the Gods* (1928), which he would have read close to the time of its publication.<sup>107</sup> Dawson’s vision of the Incarnation, which he assumes in *The Age of the Gods* (1928) is based on the thinking he fleshes out more explicitly in *Progress and Religion* (1929), the content of

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<sup>103</sup> *MF*, 201.

<sup>104</sup> *MF*, 215, 213.

<sup>105</sup> *MF*, 216.

<sup>106</sup> *MF*, 213.

<sup>107</sup> Syracuse, New York Le Moyne College, William T. Noon Papers, David Jones to William Noon, 7 October 1963. See Adam Schwartz’s discussion of the influence of Dawson on Jones in *The Third Spring*, 286-87. See also Dilworth *Engraver, Soldier, Painter Poet*, 122-23.

which Jones would have been familiar with via his close friendship and extensive intellectual conversations with Dawson and the ‘Chelsea group’ from the late 1920s.<sup>108</sup> In this latter work he explains that the dynamic activity of redemption that happens by means of the Incarnation not only applies to human beings as such, but through human beings, intimately and spiritually connected to their environment, to all of creation. Dawson describes Christianity as based on the conception of a ‘new world order’ radically different from the pagan ideas that came before it:

. . . the source of this new order was found, not in a mythological figure, like the Saviour Gods of the Mystery Religions, nor in an abstract cosmic principle, but in the historical personality of Jesus, the crucified Nazarene. For Christianity taught that in Jesus a new principle of divine life had entered the human race and the natural world by which mankind is raised to a higher order. Christ is the head of this restored humanity, the firstborn of the new creation, and the life of the Church consists in the progressive extension of the Incarnation by the gradual incorporation of mankind into this higher unity.<sup>109</sup>

This new understanding of the relationship between God, human beings and nature found particularly strong expression in the medieval European sensibility, upon which Jones drew greatly in his art and thinking and with which he had much sympathy. The figures both of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Thomas Aquinas articulated important ramifications of the Incarnation as it related to human beings in tandem with the rest of creation. Dawson insists that Francis’ ‘Canticle of the Creatures’ (used by Martindale in his story) brought nature back ‘into the world of religion’ and ‘marks a turning point in the religious history of the West’. Aquinas’ use of Aristotelian realism and its emphasis on the material world as the starting point of human knowledge meant that man ‘is the point at which the world of spirit touches the world of sense, and it is through him and in him that the material creation attains to intelligibility and becomes enlightened and spiritualized’.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> See Dilworth’s account of this book as the basis for discussion in the Chelsea Group in which Jones was regularly involved in *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 122.

<sup>109</sup> Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion: An Historical Enquiry* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1929), 155.

<sup>110</sup> Dawson, *Progress and Religion*, 171, 174.

Even though they precede the Cantic of Creatures by several hundred years and emerge from different cultures, the medieval hymns for the cross of Christ eventually included in the Good Friday liturgy such as the *Vexilla Regis* and the *Crux Fidelis*, as well as their transmission in the *Dream of the Rood* anticipate this sensibility in a striking way. They portray the sacrifice of Christ as one renewing not human life alone but also human life in its inextricable connection to the natural world. Susan Power Bratton observes that ‘unlike early Christian art, the Gothic [i.e. late Medievalism] argues not that the work of the cross can be proven by observing God’s power in Creation, but that God’s work in Creation can be proven by observing the power of the cross’.<sup>111</sup> Ultimately this confidence bases itself upon a Patristic assertion such as that summarised by Martindale’s appeal to Revelation 13:8: ‘the Lamb was slain from the beginning of the world’, and it is through this same power that the entirety of creation has its origin.

With the combined observations of de la Taille and Dawson, building upon the Patristic-inspired vision of history articulated in the works of Martindale, Jones could begin to construct a eucharistic theology connected to the renewal of creation itself, not only in the ‘age of the Church’ that came after the historical Incarnation of Christ, but also in the time before it so as to include the mysterious ‘presence’ of Christ’s sacrifice in creation from the beginning of the world. The answer to Jones’ ‘crisis of faith’ provoked by Frazer’s sceptical claims about the crucifixion of Christ came about by an understanding of the Eucharist as the ‘re-presentation’ of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross that persists as a mysteriously veiled but dynamically operative ‘presence’ even before its revelation in linear time. This vision would most profoundly inform the thinking behind *The Anathemata*, which includes even the geological formation of the earth as part of the history of the world encompassed by the Mass (and hence, the sacrifice of Christ).

If the ‘continuation’ of the Incarnation in the sacrifice of Christ—re-presented in the Eucharist—could be active to so great an extent in the gamut of history and creation, it follows that it must be active even in the morass of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ in the devastated landscape of the First World War waste land. If the eternal sacrifice of Christ could be present amidst what de la Taille called ‘the nefarious sacrifices of the pagans’,<sup>112</sup> which included the destruction of human life alongside elements of the natural world, could not the similarly misbegotten ‘sacrifice’ proclaimed by the leaders of the war

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<sup>111</sup> Susan Power Bratton, *Environmental Values in Christian Art* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2008), 124.

<sup>112</sup> *MF*, 369.

be subject to the same dynamic redemption signified by the appearance of the Eucharist in the midst of the lifeless battlefield? In his art about the war, Jones sidesteps a direct analogy between the suffering of soldiers with the suffering of Christ by shifting the emphasis of the parallel: the suffering of the war is most like the suffering of a violent rite of pre-Christian nature religion, but, as in such a rite, Christ's sacrifice nonetheless operates from its eternal dimension with a radical 'real presence' that embodies the renewal of the waste land ostensibly missing from both ritual sacrifice and war.

### **Theological Thinking and '*Poiesis*'**

It is important to emphasise that Jones' 1919 'crisis' and 'resolution' of faith happened in response to theological arguments expressed in literary and symbolic styles: Frazer's pseudo-scientific narrative epic of world religion, and Martindale's short stories. Although the comprehension of these ideas continued to develop with his reading of the 1920s and 30s (and indeed throughout his life), this 'crisis' and 'resolution' is a testament to the seriousness with which Jones understood '*poiesis*', or artistic 'making', as able to convey theological thinking with unique force.<sup>113</sup> Jones' primary engagement with theology would be in his art, especially his strongly visual poetry and the symbolically-charged visual language of his painting that emerged after he began his written corpus.

The following chapters will assess Jones' artistic presentation of Christ's sacrifice as entangled with his experience of the WWI battlefield and through the lens of his internal dialogue with Frazer and Martindale, Dawson and de la Taille. The unique form of Jones' art presents the intersection and synthesis of his lived experience with the theological thinking inspired by these voices. In this form he makes use of single 'shapes', both visual and verbal (individual words, phrases and juxtapositions of words and phrases), to project the complex 'presence' of multiple and even contradictory ideas and figures in dialogue with each other. Over the course of his career, one can observe a shift in the emphasis of his work's subject matter but not in the essential association of the sacrifice of Christ and the violence of the First World War. Jones' form attempts to showcase Christ's sacrifice as something distinct from the war and yet continually 'present' in light of this deeper vision of the all-encompassing and dynamic power of God's 'saving action' in the Eucharist working throughout history to unite human beings and the created world with himself.

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<sup>113</sup> See his discussion of this term especially in *EA* 16, 172 and 194.

## Chapter 2.

### Reading Jones' Theological Thinking in the Frontispiece and Tailpiece to *In Parenthesis* (1937)

David Jones made a written account of his experience of the war in *In Parenthesis* before he made its highly symbolic Frontispiece and Tailpiece, but these two images provide the reader with a helpful visual introduction to the artistic project he presents in language. Jones' art about the war — both verbal and visual — translates what he 'saw and felt and was part of' in the concrete circumstances of his experience into a 'shape'<sup>114</sup> that also encompasses what he understood as its place in a much larger spiritual framework; that is, in relation to the mysterious presence of the sacrifice of Christ at work throughout history in the renewal of creation. The 'theological thinking' — that is, the 'provisional method for knowing the world'<sup>115</sup> — that informs Jones' presentation of the war in light of Christ's sacrifice takes on the dialogic structure inherent in Jones' reading first Frazer on pagan sacrifice, and then Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson on the Eucharist. Christ's sacrifice appears in *In Parenthesis* and its Frontispiece and Tailpiece especially as shining through comparisons between the violence of the war and pre-Christian rites of sacrifice. As the sacrifice of Christ is one with the origin of creation, its 'shape' therefore seeps through the otherwise horrifying shape of what Jones called 'wounded trees and wounded men' common to both pagan fertility rites and the WWI battlefield's chaos as it remained in Jones' memory.<sup>116</sup>

As discussed briefly in the Introduction in relation to the work of Nicholas Saunders, the image of the landscape's destruction was a prominent one in documentary and artistic accounts of the WWI battlefield (especially the battle of Mametz Wood in which Jones was wounded). It speaks to an interest in the entanglement of the life of nature and the life of human beings that likewise manifested itself in the poetry and art coming out of the First World War. This chapter will place Jones' Frontispiece and Tailpiece to *In Parenthesis* in the context of this collective memory of the war's violence and its artistic transmission—especially its intersection with 'crucifixion' imagery in the battlefield—in

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<sup>114</sup> *IP*, ix.

<sup>115</sup> Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 14.

<sup>116</sup> Jones quoted in Blamires, *Artist and Writer*, 3.

order to highlight the uniqueness of Jones' representation of the same sight in light of his deeply theological vision.

### **Mametz Wood in Documentary and Art**

The composite image of 'wounded trees and wounded men' dominates both documentary accounts and artistic retellings of the Battle of Mametz Wood, which formed part of the Somme Offensive in the summer of 1916 and in which David Jones fought and was wounded in the leg.<sup>117</sup> Photographs of what remained of the wood after the battle reveal not only the extent of the destruction, but also comment pointedly on the juxtaposition of human and vegetable injury. Consider the two examples from the Imperial War Museum archive (figs. 6 and 7). The former shows the bare devastation of a once-lush woodland turned to splinters and mud; the latter, in the ragged coat of a soldier hung on a skeletal tree, suggests the grim reality that the remains of human bodies along with trees were mingled in that morass. J.B. Morrall's documentary sketch, 'Mametz Wood : after the autumn advance, 1916. "The abomination of desolation"' (fig. 8), shows the threadbare forest of the photographs, but makes a slightly stronger suggestion of the presence of human gore, with the disembodied legs of a dead soldier submerged in a puddle at the bottom of the image. The fragmentary shards of wood speak directly to the fragment of a man, also crooked and piecemeal. The title emphasises the attempt of the artist to conjure the wretched feeling of the scene — 'abomination' — its allusion to the line from Matthew 24:15 (AV) carrying the suggestion of sacrilege.

Written accounts by both eyewitnesses of the Somme's action and its aftermath evoke the imagery of the sight even more graphically than their visual counterparts. John Masefield frankly described the horrifying sight of the post-Somme wreckage in a letter of October, 1916: 'We went into a wood, which we will call Chunk-of-Corpse-Wood, for its main features were chunks of corpse, partly human, partly trees'.<sup>118</sup> His irony can only barely distract the reader from the nausea and shock of the message's content, which reveals the visual horror not always explicitly captured in photographs, film and war art.

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<sup>117</sup> For an extensive account of Jones' time in the war as part of the Royal Welch Fusiliers see Thomas Dilworth, *David Jones in the Great War* (2012) and Colin Hughes, 'David Jones: "The Man Who Was on the Field": *In Parenthesis* as Straight Reporting', in *David Jones: Man and Poet*, ed. John Matthias, 163-92.

<sup>118</sup> John Masefield to Constance Masefield, 22 October 1916, in *Letters from the Front, 1915-1917*, ed. Peter Vansittart (London: Constable, 1984), 194.



**Figure 6**, 'View in Mametz Wood, 10th August 1916'.

**Figure 7**, 'German soldier's overcoat, hanging from a tree in Mametz Wood, August 1916'.



**Figure 8**, J.B. Morrall, 'Mametz Wood : after the autumn advance, 1916. 'The abomination of desolation''

Jones' regiment, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, which was one of those to take Mametz Wood, happened to produce a number of writers including the poets Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves, as well as the memoirist Wyn Griffith. All of them wrote of this particular composite image in Mametz with brief but unsparing detail. Sassoon summarises the carnage, calling it 'that pandemonium which converted the green thickets of Mametz Wood to a desolation of skeleton trees and blackening bodies'.<sup>119</sup> Graves recalls the battle's literal mingling of human bodies and trees in a poem he bluntly titled 'A Dead Boche' (1918), ('boche' being an impolite slang word for 'German'), which captures a scene recounted also in his memoir,

To-day I found in Mametz Wood  
A certain cure for lust of blood:

Where, propped against a shattered trunk,  
In a great mess of things unclean,  
Sat a dead Boche; he scowled and stunk  
With clothes and face a sodden green.<sup>120</sup>

The deliberately ambiguous phrase 'great mess' conjures an amalgam of undistinguished and sundry matter, but which is able at once to refer to both the wounded body of the soldier and the debris of the 'shattered tree' now all heaped without differentiation. His body has itself likewise become 'green' like the tree, which ironically alludes to a visual complementarity not actually natural in the environment.

Wyn Griffith's memoir, *Up to Mametz* (1931), although less known than the accounts of Graves or Sassoon, provides the most important foil to Jones' *In Parenthesis* because it catalogues the same trajectory of action in a much plainer use of language. Colin Hughes suggests, furthermore, that Jones made 'some use of it to fill gaps in his knowledge of the battalion's movements in 1916', and so one can assume that Jones had many of the same scenes in mind.<sup>121</sup> The following is taken from the penultimate chapter

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<sup>119</sup> Siegfried Sassoon, *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (London: Faber, 1930), 70.

<sup>120</sup> Robert Graves, 'A Dead Boche', in *The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry*, ed. George Walter (Penguin Classics, 2006), 150; see also Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*, 175.

<sup>121</sup> Hughes, 'On the Field', 164.

of Griffith's work, which recounts the Battle of Mametz, having been built up, as in *In Parenthesis*, with the narration of 8 or 9 months of training and experience of the trenches. He begins with a typical description of the 'neglect'<sup>122</sup> of the undergrowth but then moves to the sudden horror of the sight:

There were more corpses than men, but there were worse sights than corpses. Limbs and mutilated trunks, here and there a detached head, forming splashes of red against the green leaves, and, as in advertisement of the horror of our way of life and death, and of our crucifixion of youth, one tree held in its branches a leg, with its torn flesh hanging down over a spray of leaf.<sup>123</sup>

In Griffith's account we encounter a more graphic and traumatic vision of 'wounded trees and wounded men' than any of the other accounts of Mametz combined. Being of a piece with other memoirs he does not linger over the details, but neither does he vaguely summarise them: here the reader has a sense of the surreal quality of the atrocity that made up veterans' mental 'hangover' from the war. These are the 'wounded trees and wounded men' that Jones himself retained in his mind.

Griffith describes the permanent transformation of his imagination in enduring that sight:

After passing through that charnel house at the southern end, with its sickly air of corruption, the smell of fresh earth and of crushed bark grew into complete domination, as clean to the senses as the other was foul. So tenacious in these matters is memory that I can never encounter the smell of cut green timber without resurrecting the vision of the tree that flaunted a human limb.<sup>124</sup>

The 'tenacious' nature of memory that continued to make the horror of 'wounded trees and wounded men' visible to Griffith's mind (and arguably to the mind of David Jones) reaches quickly for the language of spiritual mystery with the words 'our crucifixion of youth', strongly recalling the photograph of the one-armed Christ hanging from his

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<sup>122</sup> See military historian, Michael Renshaw's account in *Welsh on the Somme: Mametz Wood* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Leo Cooper, 1999), 91.

<sup>123</sup> Wyn Griffith, *Up to Mametz* (London: Severn House, 1931), 209-10.

<sup>124</sup> Griffith, *Up to Mametz*, 210.

crucifix (fig. 2, p. 21). The phrase carries a burden of guilt and responsibility (taking the collective possessive ‘our’) but also appeals to a pervasive sense of the war’s suffering as touching a dimension beyond the immediate and material order, or at least beyond the order of representation. The sight did literally explode the boundaries of ordinary experience, and for David Jones and others, its verbal and visual transmission required a ‘shape’ that would at least strain to reach into this unrepresentable borderland.

### **‘Trees as People’ in Paul Nash and David Jones’ WWI Paintings**

Although Jones did not complete as many images of the First World War as he originally intended,<sup>125</sup> the few he did accomplish, especially his Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis*, prominently feature the composite picture of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’, which he shares in a particular way with the official war artist Paul Nash. For both Nash and Jones the relationship between the human body and the landscape, especially trees, became a powerful mode to express the war’s effects, which they saw as not only a cultural but also spiritual and religious. Drawing on an ancient association of the interdependence of human and vegetable life evident in the earliest forms of human religion, as well as on a postimpressionist experimentation with line, colour and plane, both artists to emphasised the horror of the war’s destruction of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ together as part of a more mystical and yet universally applicable narrative.

Nash’s religiosity consisted of a fairly literal nature-worship and his pre-war art is filled with reference to tree-myths and pagan rituals that treat human beings and trees as complimentary life-forms. In 1912, just a few years before Nash began his career as an official war artist, he wrote to Gordon Bottomley, ‘I have tried . . . to paint trees as tho’ they were human beings . . . because I sincerely love & worship trees & know they *are* people & wonderfully beautiful people’.<sup>126</sup> The ‘vast mythical figures . . . emerging from the boughs and branches’ of Nash’s collection of ‘tree-nocturnes’ of the immediate pre-war period (1911-1914) indicate what was a visionary tendency in Nash’s depictions of nature. W.B. Yeats was so struck by Nash’s ‘symbolist drawings’ (of trees and mythical figures) that he asked him, ‘Did you really see these things?’<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> See *IP*, xiii, and Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 109.

<sup>126</sup> Nash to Gordon Bottomley, c. 1 August, 1912 in C.C. Abbot, and Anthony Bertram (eds.), *Poet and Painter: Being the Correspondence between Gordon Bottomley and Paul Nash, 1910-1946* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), 42.

<sup>127</sup> See David Alan Mellor, ‘A Spectral Modernity,’ in *Paul Nash*, ed. Emma Chambers (London: Tate, 2016), 25.

Nash's tender and mystical feeling for the life of nature translated into an unusually harrowing vision of the WWI battlefield's violence and havoc. Like David Jones, he saw the destruction of trees as specifically juxtaposed with the suffering of human beings. Paul Gough recounts that, 'In the Ypres Salient [Nash] was aghast at the sight of splintered corpses and dismembered trees, seeing in their shattered limbs an equivalent for the human carnage that lay all around or even hung in shreds from the eviscerated treetops'.<sup>128</sup> Nash's horror moved him to create some of the most evocative and poignant visual depictions of the WWI battlefield to come out of the war-artist scheme, particularly his *We Are Making a New World* (fig. 9), which appeared on the cover of the magazine *British Artists at the Front* and was featured in Nash's exhibition *Void of War* in 1918.

The work moves towards surrealism in the uncanny shapes, the unnatural blocks of colour, and the stark, upright, once-trees that form the ominous line of figures at the centre. Nash's manipulation of traditional techniques of line, colour and perspective convey not only the breakage he witnessed, but also the feeling of shock and disgust in the witness of a new threshold of destruction. Again, trees *are* people, but here blighted and enraged, their gangly, ragged limbs recalling the withered and blown-away arms and legs of wounded soldiers. Where Nash's pre-war images of trees appeared 'visionary' by means of the anthropomorphic figures emerging from them, here the same quality operates precisely in the grotesque merging of human and tree forms into the 'new creation' of modern battlefield violence.

The strangeness of Nash's form therefore emphasises not only the physical but also the emotional and spiritual rupture that the war's violence has caused. His title ironically recalls the 'new heaven and new earth' of Revelation 21 in which the current world has passed away and is replaced by a renewed Paradise with the 'Tree of Life' at the centre. Nash's 'new world' alludes not only to 'the death of the world and its values [he] held so dear', such as this sense of the special life of trees, but its replacement with an unrecognisable anti-nature, created by man-made machines and random violence. In this 'making', Nash saw a privation of an insidiously spiritual kind. He wrote to his wife after

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<sup>128</sup> Paul Gough, *A Terrible Beauty: British Artists in the First World War* (Bristol: Sansom, 2010), 129.



**Figure 9**, Paul Nash, *We are Making a New World* (1918).

his first sight of the Front, 'I have seen the most frightful nightmare of a country more conceived by Dante or Poe than by nature, unspeakable, utterly undecipherable . . . It is unspeakable, godless, hopeless'. At the sight of 'godlessness', Nash could only express his despair, deciding to become a 'messenger who will bring back word from the men who are fighting to those who want the war to go on forever. Feeble, inarticulate, will be my message, but it will have a bitter truth, and may it burn their lousy souls'.<sup>129</sup>

The battered trees of the WWI waste land provided a similar vehicle for David Jones to express the particularly spiritual horror of the war. Like Nash, trees bore a unique resonance for Jones with human bodies. In an account of his artistic philosophy for his friend and patron Jim Ede, Jones described his affection for 'the creaturely' in art with the statement: 'Trees are men walking'.<sup>130</sup> Jones, however, illustrates this sensibility by means of an unusual marriage of Christianity and his fellow-feeling for nature, seen in his subtle transformation in this phrase of the words of the blind man healed by Christ in Mark's Gospel: 'I see men as trees, walking', (Mk 8:24 [AV]). Even if not an outright worship of trees, Jones' sense of them as 'people'—that is, as having a complex life resonant with human beings—nonetheless emerges.

Not many of Jones' pre-war paintings survive except a few animal drawings and landscapes, as he destroyed most of them c. 1921, and so it is not possible to know if trees figured in any comparable way to the painting of Nash's pre-war work.<sup>131</sup> Jones' 'visionary' depiction of vegetation and landscape does not seem to emerge in any case until long after the war, and particularly after his exposure to the theology and liturgy of Roman Catholicism. Jones' first images of the battlefield are simply an eye-witness record. Although enlisting straight from art school, Jones did not do any work for the official 'war-artist' scheme, serving instead as a private in the trenches for the entirety of the war. He made simple sketches of his surroundings in the trenches in a small notebook (c. 1915-18) — his fellow soldiers, some ruined buildings, and some of the ravaged landscape — leading up to and following upon the experience at Mametz. He later refused to let his

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<sup>129</sup> Paul Nash, *Outline, an Autobiography: And Other Writings* (London: Faber, 1949), 211.

<sup>130</sup> Jones, 'Some Notes', [7]

<sup>131</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 92.



**CLOSE QUARTERS: A FEATURE OF OLD-TIME WARFARE THAT SURVIVES**  
It may be said that the nearer the belligerents the more closely do they approach the conditions of Napoleon's day, until, in hand-to-hand conflict, the difference ceases to exist. This sketch, showing the clearing of Mametz Wood by the Welsh Division—helmeted like their ancestors at Agincourt—is by a private in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, who was wounded during the engagement.

Figure 10, David Jones, *Close Quarters: Assault on Mametz Wood* (1916).

drawings be displayed except for ‘documentary’ reasons because he claimed they were ‘bloody art-school nonsense’ and had ‘no sense of form’.<sup>132</sup>

Only one visual image explicitly titled ‘Mametz Wood’ exists in his extant *oeuvre*, published in *The Graphic*, in September, 1916 (fig. 10). It was completed immediately following the experience at Mametz at the suggestion of his teacher, A.S. Hartrick, to whom he had described the experience ‘as a sort of comedy’. It presents a scene of the charge on Mametz with technical skill but without any inkling of the mythical or spiritual framework that characterised his later visual and written representations of the battle. Dilworth insists that although Jones treated his experience lightly at the time, ‘it was plain that he had suffered a great deal’ and hence his deeper assessment emerged later and indeed continued to develop until the end of his life.<sup>133</sup>

Jones’ other visual depictions of the war itself are few. Two or three sketches for engravings survive from the late 1920s for which he intended to provide ‘word pictures’, or captions, and out of which eventually emerged the writing of *In Parenthesis*.<sup>134</sup> After completing the first draft of *In Parenthesis* in the early 1930s, he made a few watercolour and pencil drawings of soldiers in the trenches not explicitly connected with his writing: the Frontispiece for *March, Kind Comrade* (1931), a WWI war memoir by a Jesuit chaplain; and a similar image of soldiers in dugouts called *Llys Ceimiad: La Bassée Front, 1916* (1937), now in the National Library of Wales. Both bear stylistic similarity to Jones’ seminal drawing of the WWI battlefield, the Frontispiece for his own long writing about the war, *In Parenthesis* (1937). In all three he places tin-hatted soldiers in uniform amidst geometric, Nevison-esque duckboards and encroaching, briar-like barbed wire. Present also are the ubiquitous blasted trees, although small above the trench or in the background.

The Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis* (fig. 11) juxtaposes the injury of trees and men in a way previously unseen in Jones’ visual depictions of the war. The wounded and half-naked soldier at the centre stands with his feet planted close together like the trunk of a

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<sup>132</sup> Jones quoted in Dilworth *David Jones in the Great War*, 84; also in ‘In Illo Tempore’ in *DGC*, 21. See a comprehensive collection of the images taken from his battlefield sketchbook in *David Jones: A Fusilier at the Front. His record of the Great War in word and image*, ed. Anthony Hyne (Bridgend, Wales: Seren, 1995).

<sup>133</sup> See Dilworth’s discussion in *David Jones in the Great War*, 125-26.

<sup>134</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 109-10.



**Figure 11**, David Jones, Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis* (1937)

tree. His limbs are bent at sharp angles, as if ‘staving something off’,<sup>135</sup> and they especially invoke the crooked limbs of the blasted trees behind him. Shelling has sharply ‘lopped’ their branch-ends to resemble the soldier’s angular fingers, also recalling the more sinister bodily suffering of soldiers who lost arms and legs or parts of them. The horizontal line made by the soldier’s raised shoulders parallels a high branch of the larger tree behind him, which juts horizontally just below a star in the top centre of the page. Just below that branch, another juts at an awkward angle visually paralleling the soldier’s contorted left arm, which sits at a diagonal to the larger plane of the drawing. Thomas Dilworth observes that ‘the soldier’s body is tonally at one with the landscape’,<sup>136</sup> and he bears spots of similar black hatch-marks on his trunk and limbs. The dark hatching particularly on the left side (viewer’s right) of the soldier’s white, cylindrical neck parallels the hatching on the white tree trunk directly to his right (viewer’s left).<sup>137</sup> Soldiers and trees suffer the same effect of the war’s violence in this picture: their shapes, texture and colours literally mirror each other. Dilworth writes that in this picture the soldier is ‘the wasteland personified’.<sup>138</sup>

Jones’ tree-like wounded soldier reflects the merging of human and vegetable forms in Nash’s wounded soldier-like trees. Jones and Nash both use techniques that break conventional forms of perspective, colour and plane to present a vision of the war that, on the one hand, captured the horror of direct witness, but on the other modified the physical exactitude of documentary realism to express an abstract and emotional effect in the sight of the ‘Waste Land’. The spiritual dimension of Nash’s association of men and trees in the war’s violence remains personal and unspecified in order to capture the sight’s immediate emotional impression, relying on his own latent sense of nature worship to make an image of sheer outrage and devastation. Jones’ image shows the same sight but further transfigured by years of recollection and assessment. His manipulation of form, therefore, not only projects the harrowing feeling of the fate of organic life in the waste land, but also, as I will discuss below, comments on the war from the perspective of his postwar reading of mythology and theology and their expression in the tropes of Western plastic art.

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<sup>135</sup> Neil Corcoran, ‘Spilled Bitterness: *In Parenthesis* in History’, in *David Jones: Man and Poet*, ed. John Matthias (Oroono, ME: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), 216.

<sup>136</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 63.

<sup>137</sup> Many thanks to Prof. Hugh Haughton for this observation.

<sup>138</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 183.

### The 'Dying God' in the Frontispiece

Jones' Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis* was titled 'the Victim' in a show in 1944, a title that has made critics conclude that it represents some form of 'crucifixion'.<sup>139</sup> Given the foremost juxtaposition of 'wounded trees and wounded men' in the image, however, the first inspiration of the central figure is more likely an allusion to the mythical type of the 'dying god' and the 'victims' of pagan fertility rites and tree worship discussed in James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*, as discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis. The northern European mythical figures of Odin, Balder, and Jack o' the Green appear in *In Parenthesis* by name or direct invocation of their stories in descriptions of the war's violence, especially violence suffered by men and trees together. A line such as 'fair Balder falleth everywhere' of Part 7, for instance, serves not only to personify the shell-felled trees of Mametz Wood, but also to invoke (in Jones' flirtation with black humour) a common German masculine given name that makes the reference uncomfortably concrete — German soldiers named 'Baldur' were literally falling and being crushed with blasted trees.<sup>140</sup>

Few ancient visual images exist of these northern gods — particularly Balder — but in the Frontispiece, Jones nonetheless suggests them with hints of their ancient Greek and Roman counterparts treated by Frazer and Weston — Adonis and Attis — as depicted in classical and neo-classical statuary. Classical statues (such as the *Venus de Milo* and *The Dying Gaul*) were among the first artistic models for Jones in his art school training, and appear in ekphrastic transformation in both his painting and poetry throughout his career. Jones, for instance, called the central figure of *Aphrodite in Aulis* (1941) (fig. 36, p. 148) 'Phryne', the legendary model who posed for Praxiteles' *Aphrodite of Cnidos*, but critics have also seen in the figure Pygmalion's statue come to life.<sup>141</sup> Although Jones made few trips abroad, he visited the Louvre in 1928, the year he began *In Parenthesis*, and is

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<sup>139</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 184. Note: there is some controversy over the naming of this piece, as Dilworth insists the frontispiece to *In Parenthesis* is listed as 'The Victim', and others (such as Miles & Shiel) indicate that this title refers to the Tailpiece. The record of the original exhibition is unclear, and it is possible to conclude that the title could be applied equally to either image or to both as a set.

<sup>140</sup> *IP*, 177. See also references on 67, 168.

<sup>141</sup> See *DGC*, 111. See also Paul Hills, 'The Pierced Hermaphrodite: David Jones' Imagery of the Crucifixion', in *David Jones: Man and Poet*, ed. John Matthias (Oroono, ME: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), 436. See also Jonathan Miles and Derek Shiel, *David Jones: The Maker Unmade* (Bridgend, Wales: Seren, 1995), 18, and Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 23.



**Figure 12, Adonis**  
(Ancient Greek or Roman, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD)



**Figure 13, Apollo of Belvedere**  
(Ancient Greek or Roman, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD)



**Figure 14, Dionysos** (Ancient Greek or Roman, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD).



**Figure 15, Praxiteles, Apollo Sauroctonos**, (4<sup>th</sup> c., BC)



**Figure 16, Michelangelo, Dying Slave**, (16<sup>th</sup> c. AD)

recorded as having been particularly impressed with the statuary he saw, including Michelangelo's 'Slaves'.<sup>142</sup> Jones was moved by 'dying' figures, the ancient Roman 'Dying Gaul' statue being what he recounts as one of the most important in the formation of his imagination.<sup>143</sup>

Statues of young male gods such as the ancient Greek Adonis of the Denon wing in the Louvre (fig. 12) but also figures of Apollo and Dionysus (figs. 13 and 14 —also mentioned in *In Parenthesis*<sup>144</sup>) show a neutral facial expression and stand nude in a *contrapposto* position, arms usually down in semi-repose, or, if extended, the elbows pointing down. They also often lean upon or stand next to a tree stump with lopped branches. Praxiteles' *Apollo Sauroctonus* of the Louvre's Sully wing (fig. 15) is an interesting variation in which the figure leans with a lifted arm on a tall branchless tree. Adonis and Attis are unique amongst these depictions of young gods in that they are shown not only as standing upright as images of male beauty, but also as reclining in allusion to the centrality of death (or mutilation) in their myths. Frazer explicitly mentions a classical statue of a reclining Attis which was in Frazer's time at the Lateran Museum (now in the Vatican Museums), (fig. 17).<sup>145</sup> Adonis is likewise often placed on funerary monuments in ancient Roman statuary, such as another reclining figure now also in the Vatican Museums (fig. 18).

The 'empty eyes' of the central figure of the Frontispiece are therefore not likely those of an 'automaton' as Austin Riede suggests,<sup>146</sup> but much more probably denote the blank eyes of classical statuary, an idea reinforced by the figure's sepulchral colour and *contrapposto* stance. The position of his arms is not typical of the figures described above, because they are neither extended nor in repose, nor held over the head, but lifted half-way, tense and contorted with the elbows pointed outwards, as Dilworth has more than once suggested, because they recoil from 'burned flesh or in self-protection'.<sup>147</sup> With these

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<sup>142</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 110-11.

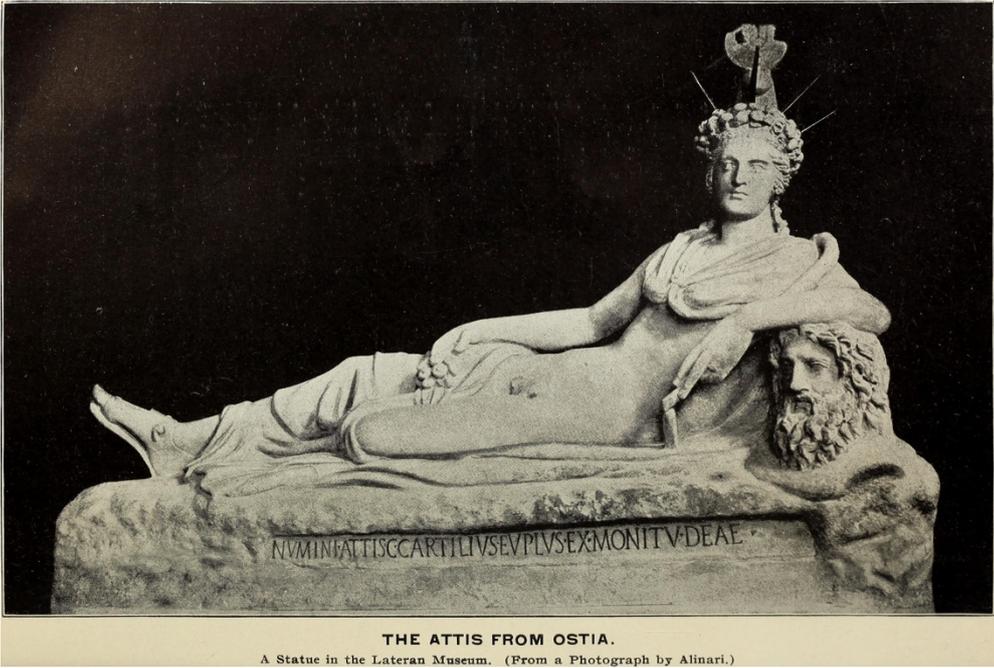
<sup>143</sup> See Jones' essay 'The Dying Gaul' in *The Dying Gaul and Other Writings*, ed. Harman Grisewood (London: Faber, 1978), 50-8. All further citations from this work will be from this edition and made with the abbreviation *DG* and page number.

<sup>144</sup> See Jones, *In Parenthesis*, 62 (sun as 'the bright healer', alluding to Apollo), 93 ('their bright *talaria*', i.e. winged sandals, alluding to Hermes, to describe boots of French soldiers).

<sup>145</sup> See James Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion*, vol. 5, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 279.

<sup>146</sup> Austin Riede, "'Artificial Guts': Labor and the Body in David Jones's *In Parenthesis*", *Modernism/Modernity* 22, no. 4 (2015): 702.

<sup>147</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 183.



**Figure 17, Attis** (Roman, 1st-c. AD)



**Figure 18, Funerary Monument with Dying Adonis**  
(Roman, 3rd-c. BC)

uplifted arms, his right arm especially, the figure ‘leans’ on the trees of the background like Adonis or Apollo.

The struggle, accompanied by the typical classical neutrality of its facial expression, furthermore recalls the upright ‘dying slave’ of Michelangelo (fig. 16), whose contorted position may be accounted for in its supposed inspiration by a reclining ancient Greek ‘niobid’ in its death throes.<sup>148</sup> In this sense, the figure of the Frontispiece retains both the leaning, ‘upright’, as well as ‘reclining’ postures of Adonis and Attis. The figure of the Frontispiece therefore serves as an upright, living funerary monument, in keeping with the block-capital epigraph on the page it is meant to precede in the book, which itself resembles the lettering of a stone memorial. In the first edition of *In Parenthesis* this epigraph was placed on a page facing the Frontispiece like a diptych.

Critics have been puzzled by the strange half-nudeness of the Frontispiece’s central figure, which, in contrast with the (usually) complete nudity of classical statuary, has been compared with the partial nudity of Christ on the cross. In depictions of the crucifixion, however, as Riede is quick to point out, Christ’s torso is usually unclothed and he wears a loincloth around his mid-section.<sup>149</sup> The central figure of the Frontispiece is precisely the opposite of a crucifixion in that he is partly clothed instead on top and bottom: his jacket hangs precariously on his shoulders and his legs are partially clothed with a trouser on one leg and torn puttees on the other. In a kind of anti-crucifixion, his vulnerable midsection is exposed, particularly his ‘almost prepubescently tiny’ genitalia ‘encroached upon by a tangle of barbed wire’ (other critics similarly observe the wire as ‘perilously close’ and ‘menacingly close’<sup>150</sup>), which Neil Corcoran sees as ‘the point around which the contingent clutter of warfare revolves’.<sup>151</sup>

This observation is striking when comparing the posture and clothing of the figure to the ancient upright statues of Attis, such as Figure 19 from the Louvre (1st-century Etruscan) and Figures 20 and 21 in which a boyish figure stands partly clothed on top and bottom but with his mid-section and especially his ‘tiny’ genitalia exposed. The symbolism of this pose is thought to invoke the story of Attis and Cybele, recounted by Ovid in his

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<sup>148</sup> See Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (Princeton University Press, 1972), 235.

<sup>149</sup> See Riede, ‘Artificial Guts’, 701.

<sup>150</sup> Miles and Shiel, *The Maker Unmade*, 213; Santanu Das, Preface to *Cambridge Companion to Poetry of the First World War*, ed. Santanu Das (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), xix.

<sup>151</sup> Corcoran, ‘Spilled Bitterness’, 216-17.



Figure 19, *Attis* (Etruscan, 1st-2nd c. BC)



Figure 20, *Attis* ('Roman Period', Anatolia)



Figure 21, *Attis* (Roman, 2nd-c.AD)

*Fasti* and other sources in which the young and handsome Attis, consecrated as a ‘boy’ (i.e. a virgin) to the wood-dwelling, earth-mother goddess, Cybele, castrates himself when he betrays her by sleeping with a tree-nymph, whom Cybele then destroys by cutting down the tree she inhabits. This story was used as a justification for why the priests dedicated to the goddess Cybele practiced self-castration.<sup>152</sup>

The central figure of Jones’ Frontispiece, therefore, recalls not only the statuary of Adonis but also that of a boyish priest of Cybele just before the moment of castration, his tree-spirit-lover perhaps hovering in the background. His violation, however, threatens to happen not by his own hand as in the myth but by the violence of the war itself, symbolised by the barbed wire in the foreground. The war’s violence is personified as a sexual predator in *In Parenthesis* — ‘sweet sister death’ — who makes the young soldiers ‘howl for their virginity’,<sup>153</sup> like Attis, as they defend their stronghold in the traditional habitation of the goddess—the wood. Their dedication to defending the wood makes of them ‘eunuch’ priests in a strange and violent rite that often literally includes castration and the ultimate sexual frustration—death.

Thomas Dilworth recounts quite vividly how Jones’ psychologist thought his nervous breakdowns had been triggered by ‘an unresolved Oedipus complex aggravated by war’; that is, Freud’s theory that a boy may fear ‘paternal retaliation’ (for love of his mother) ‘in the form of castration’.<sup>154</sup> Jones’ psychologist thought his childhood fear was exacerbated by ‘fear repressed in the trenches’ where Jones had literally witnessed ‘sexual mutilation and castration-like severing of limbs and heads’.<sup>155</sup> The fear of castration appears in the apprehension of the worst violence in *In Parenthesis*, typified in such descriptions as the wounding of Wastebottom in the Mametz assault, who had ‘married a wife on his Draft-leave but the whin-/nying splinter razored diagonal and mess-tin fragments drove / inward and toxined underwear’.<sup>156</sup> The loss of fertility via injury is, furthermore, the essence of the ‘Waste Land’ myth discussed by Jessie Weston and used

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<sup>152</sup> See Ovid, *Fasti*, Book 4, lines 211-62. See also poem 63 of Catullus’s *Carmina*, ‘Attis’. Also see the commentary on the statue on the Louvre website by Marie-Bénédictte Astier: ‘Attis’, n.d., accessed 22 March 2018, <<http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/attis>>

<sup>153</sup> *IP*, 162.

<sup>154</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 241. Incidentally, Freud’s theory is influenced by Frazer’s accounts of ‘Taboo’ in *The Golden Bough* and *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*. See Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, trans. A.A. Brill (New York: Moffatt, Yard, 1918), especially chapter 2, ‘Taboo and the Ambivalence of Emotions’.

<sup>155</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 241, 243.

<sup>156</sup> *IP*, 157-58.

by Eliot in his poem. In his resonance with the statuary of Attis, the central figure of the Frontispiece indeed shows himself to be, as Bankes and Hills, as well as Dilworth describe, ‘the Fisher King of the Grail Legend’ and ‘the waste land personified’.<sup>157</sup> Dilworth explicitly connects the mentions of the ‘Maimed King’ with the ‘dying god’ in the text of *In Parenthesis* in light of Jones’ fears and discoveries via psychotherapy.<sup>158</sup>

The added force of Jones’ personal psychological struggles implies a powerful commentary on the violence of the war itself as he experienced it. In making the soldier of the Frontispiece primarily an image of the ‘dying god’ and the ‘Fisher King’, Jones implicitly compares the suffering and actions of the soldier with the violence of a fertility cult such as that of Adonis or Attis, the average soldier being (as the title Jones gave the piece in his 1944 show suggests) the ‘Victim’ of the sacrificial ‘rite’ of warfare.

### **Conflicting Traditions in Jones’ ‘Rite’ of Warfare**

Other critics have noted a parallel between the war and sacrificial rites in *In Parenthesis*. Thomas Dilworth suggests that Jones’ vision of a religious or ritual quality in his experience of the military was an observation of hindsight when he was immersed in experiences of the Catholic Mass and monastic life in the 1920s. Dilworth writes that the ‘monastic imagery [of *In Parenthesis*] originates in the postwar meditation of the poet’ and hence ‘may imply that military monasticism is especially “contemptible” in comparison with the real thing’. ‘Nevertheless’, he continues, ‘it does retain a positive symbolic value.’<sup>159</sup>

Dilworth’s insistence on the ‘positive’ quality of the reference indicates a change from the position he took in one of his earliest articles, in which he identified Jones’ presentation of the war as a kind of blasphemous ‘rite’ with a force he has not wielded since. In an article from 1973, he describes the military action in *In Parenthesis* as an anti-liturgy performed by the ‘military victim-priest’ of ‘the mystical body of “Mars armipotente,” a less than omnipotent god who presides over the trenches “where his ministrants go”’.<sup>160</sup> Jones was always fascinated by the religious character of the Roman military, especially the pledge of allegiance of the soldier (the *sacramentum*) which in its

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<sup>157</sup> Bankes and Hills, *Vision and Memory*, 127. Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 183.

<sup>158</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 243.

<sup>159</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 123.

<sup>160</sup> Thomas Dilworth, ‘The Parenthetical Liturgy of David Jones’, *University of Toronto Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (1973): 255, 243.

time was considered an equally civil and sacred duty, and which Jones discusses in his late poetry as informing the etymology of the word ‘sacrament’ used in the Roman rite of the Catholic Church.<sup>161</sup>

The military ‘rite’ of Mars, however, blends in *In Parenthesis* with rites of the ‘dying god’. Dilworth has commented at length on the liturgical character with which Jones portrays British military life of the First World War in *In Parenthesis*, which he explains as having parallels with the pagan rites of Eleusis, described by Frazer as a variation on the rites of the ‘corn gods’, Adonis and Attis.<sup>162</sup> Dilworth explains, for instance, that the Eleusinian rite included wandering in an underground labyrinth followed by a sudden entrance into the light, which he sees as paralleled in the soldiers’ wandering in the trenches and suddenly released in the Battle of Mametz. The conclusion of the Eleusinian rite was the reaping of an ear of corn, and in battle John Ball enacts this ‘reaping’ when he is wounded in the leg and the narration reads ‘the gentleman must be mowed’. Jones misremembered this line as coming from the English folk song ‘John Barleycorn’, which narrates the story of the anthropomorphic spirit of the harvest who is ‘murdered’ but rises again as a stalk of grain.<sup>163</sup>

Complicating the analogy of the war with the pagan rites of Eleusis is, as Dilworth observes, the undeniable allusion to Christian and Jewish religion alongside it, particularly the presence of scripture, monasticism and the Catholic liturgies of the passion of Christ. The third part of *In Parenthesis*, for instance, opens with words taken from the Catholic Good Friday liturgy to describe the marching of soldiers: ‘Proceed . . . without lights . . .’; soldiers are also, for instance, called ‘azazel’ (the Hebrew word for ‘scapegoat’) as they sit in the trenches.<sup>164</sup> In Dilworth’s 1973 article he gives an extended account of the way in which the ‘blasphemous’ liturgy of Mars is also a direct inversion of the Mass, and yet

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<sup>161</sup> *SL*, 43.

<sup>162</sup> James Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, vol. 7, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1912), 35.

<sup>163</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 126, 135-36. See *IP*, 182 and 224, note 39. The line Jones quotes actually comes from a German folk song discussed by Frazer in the context of its manifesting vestiges of the pre-Christian sacrifice of a human victim meant to embody the spirit of the corn. The song is essentially a German version of ‘John Barleycorn’, which (as Jones would have understood it) supposedly took its inspiration from the ritual reaping of corn in equivalent British rites. See James Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, vol. 7 of *The Golden Bough: A Study of Magic and Religion*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1912), 229. See also René Hague’s discussion of Jones’ use of ‘John Barleycorn’ in *A Commentary on The Anathemata of David Jones* (Wellingborough, UK: Skelton’s Press, 1977), 244.

<sup>164</sup> *IP*, 27, 70.

strangely one with it, so that ‘the actions of the soldiers are juxtaposed with the redemptive actions celebrated in the liturgy’.<sup>165</sup> When David Jones read Dilworth’s article very shortly after it was published in 1973, it induced him to write to his friend René Hague that ‘In writing *In Paren*. I had no intention whatever in presuming to compare’ the sufferings of soldiers and the sufferings of Christ.<sup>166</sup> Jones did not, however, seem to catch the subtlety of Dilworth’s argument, which does not insist that Jones is ‘comparing’ the blasphemous ‘rite’ of warfare with the sacrifice of Christ (which would resemble the jingoistic rhetoric of the time period reflected in the language of Owen), but that his placement of the liturgy alongside the war in the narrative serves to ‘juxtapose’ them.

Dilworth’s treatment of the subject following this essay takes a much different direction. His most major study, *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones* (1988), devotes large sections to the analysis of this puzzling intersection of pagan, Jewish and Christian rites, claiming that the presence of ritual is universally ‘positive’ and part of a single attempt at general meaning-making, which is itself entirely opposed to the violence of the war:

The violent recalling of Good Friday in battle is complemented by a variety of liturgical allusions to various religious traditions. Most of the rites alluded to are in some sense sacrificial. All of them ascribe meaning to life and dramatize hope in life’s increase or renewal; all are invoked here to be inverted in the conglomerate sacrilege of battle. While combat recalls sacrificial forms, it does so only to establish a contrast with sacrificial intentions.<sup>167</sup>

Dilworth’s opposition, however, between the violence of battle and the ‘sacrificial intentions’ of the various rites to which Jones alludes — pagan, Jewish and Christian — seems arbitrary, and sounds like he is explaining away a strange and deliberate mingling of religion and war on Jones’ part. He continues from the quotation above, saying:

The poet does not imply, as Johnston and others contend, that war is in any real sense sacrificial or that it incorporates values of ‘Christian sacrifice and expiation.’ Not that battle merely parodies sacrifice; battle’s ritual evocations are

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<sup>165</sup> Dilworth, ‘Parenthetical Liturgy’, 250-53.

<sup>166</sup> *DGC*, 246.

<sup>167</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 133.

positive in that combat involves extreme conditions which most urgently require restoration of meaning. One of these restorative rites is the Eucharist, which has metaphorical affinity with the battle in that it too recalls Christ's Passion.<sup>168</sup>

Dilworth tries to sidestep the conclusion made by others and as he also once suggested, that Jones characterises the violence of the war itself as a sacrilegious rite that parodies the Mass, by trying to insist that Jones' allusion to the rites of multiple religions has a purely 'metaphorical' function based on the uniform meaning-making goodness of religion that can serve the purpose of restoring 'required' significance to an otherwise unbearable situation. He attributes the simultaneous presence of paganism, Judaism and Christianity, therefore, to David Jones' innately inclusive spirit, as Jones did interest himself in all aspects of religion, Christian and non-Christian.

The suggestion that Jones viewed all forms of ritual to which he alludes in *In Parenthesis* as serving essentially the same purpose, however, does not account for Jones' own complicated attitude to the relationship between Christianity and paganism presented by Frazer, from whom he derives much of his information about pagan religion. Nor does it account for his fraught relationship with certain stories of the Hebrew scriptures that he struggled to see as compatible with Christianity.<sup>169</sup> As discussed in the first chapter, Frazer's thesis in *The Golden Bough*, which suggested that the rites of Christianity (particularly Roman Catholicism) simply represent a more advanced stage in the evolution of humanity from 'magic' through 'religion' to the modern reverence for 'science',<sup>170</sup> precipitated a 'crisis of faith' for Jones in the immediate post-war moment before his conversion to Catholicism. It is extraordinarily unlikely, therefore, that Jones would have simply incorporated allusions to different religious rituals — especially the Mass and pagan rituals that strongly resembled it, which Frazer used as evidence for the un-specialness of Christianity— as having a general and undifferentiated 'positive' quality.

Dilworth's commentary furthermore does not acknowledge the innate violence and horror of pagan rituals themselves as described by Frazer, or for that matter the violence of the Hebrew stories of sacrifice, neither of which Jones would have overlooked. As the

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<sup>168</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 133.

<sup>169</sup> See *DGC*, 167-8, and Blissett, *Long Conversation*, 106.

<sup>170</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 63; see also Frazer's chapter, 'Magic and Religion', *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, vol. 1, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd. edn. (London: Macmillan, 1906), 220-43.

strong presence of the ‘dying god’ in the Frontispiece attests, Jones much more likely uses pagan and Jewish sacrificial rituals in *In Parenthesis* as powerful devices for representing the violence of the war itself, enacted by the ‘ritual’ character of military organisation and life. Jones’ imagery of pagan and Jewish sacrifice therefore have a strongly negative connotation. The question nonetheless remains how exactly to situate the undeniable imagery of the passion of Christ and Catholic ritual (which have an assumedly positive connotation given Jones’ love of the Mass) in his images and writing about the war.

### **Jones’ Frontispiece and ‘Crucifixion’ Imagery in the WWI Context**

Although Thomas Dilworth and Kathleen Henderson Staudt’s well-known studies have written much on the presence of Frazer’s ‘dying god’ in *In Parenthesis*, neither have noted its presence in the Frontispiece.<sup>171</sup> Critics have almost universally seen the traditional imagery of the crucifixion of Christ as the primary iconography informing the strange posture, colour and dress of the Frontispiece’s central figure. Neil Corcoran wrote in 1989 that Jones’ ‘figure draws on the iconology of the Crucifixion’ and more recently Austin Riede and Michael Alexander see an unambiguous portrayal of the soldier as a ‘representation of Christ’ and ‘a soldier in the guise of the Crucified’.<sup>172</sup> Others are more hesitant, but clearly indicate a relationship between Jones’ figure and Christ. Jean Ward admits a ‘visual hint’ of the association of the ‘common soldier . . . with the Crucified’, and others see a ‘quasi-cruciform’ or ‘roughly cruciform pose’.<sup>173</sup> William Blissett warns that we should not be too quick to call the soldier of the Frontispiece a ‘Christ figure’, as the soldier’s arms only ‘[suggest] the crucifixion they awkwardly attempt to ward off’.<sup>174</sup> Thomas Dilworth similarly indicates that the pose ‘may evoke crucifixion’ but is also quick to add that the figure ‘resists that evocation. However like Jesus a soldier may be, his suffering and death is not redemptive’.<sup>175</sup> Bankes and Hills write that ‘though the drawing

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<sup>171</sup> See Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 121-49, and Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 89-116.

<sup>172</sup> Corcoran, ‘Spilled Bitterness’, 216. Riede, ‘Artificial Guts’, 701. Michael Alexander, *Medievalism: The Middle Ages in Modern England* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 238.

<sup>173</sup> See Jean Ward, ‘Incarnation and the Feminine in David Jones’ *In Parenthesis*’, in *Poetic Revelations: The Power of the Word III*, ed. Mark S. Burrows, Jean Ward and Małgorzata Grzegorzewska (New York: Routledge, 2016), 223; Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 139; Dilworth, *Reading David Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), 21; Miles and Shiel, *The Maker Unmade*, 213.

<sup>174</sup> Blissett, ‘Scape-beast’, 35.

<sup>175</sup> Dilworth, *Reading David Jones*, 21-22.

is indebted . . . to El Greco's depictions of Christ, parallels with the Crucifixion are understated and ambiguous'.<sup>176</sup>

Critics have noticed other indirect references to Christ. Bankes and Hills as well as Dilworth have seen in the long, straight legs and near-monochrome of the figure an allusion to the 'marvellous stone knight' on a medieval funerary monument in the church of Ottery St. Mary (fig. 22) that Jones originally wanted to have photographed and placed on the cover of *In Parenthesis*.<sup>177</sup> In a letter to René Hague in 1935 Jones called the supine figure 'Our Lord and King Arthur dead & Lancelot & Rolant & Jonathan & all Xtian men dead', which corresponds to many figures mentioned in the book.<sup>178</sup> The reference to 'Our Lord . . . dead' would seem to imply a posture of crucifixion or deposition, as well as a correspondence of the deaths of other figures and Christ. The 'stone knight' furthermore appeals to Jessie Weston's study of the Grail legend and the 'Fisher King', whom she identifies as sometimes a 'dead knight' in the 'Waste Land' myths, and in whom the stories of pagan fertility deities (i.e. Adonis and Attis) and Christ in the passion specifically overlap.<sup>179</sup> Jones' vision of multiple identifiable figures as inhering in the same shape — including the presence of reclining or dead figures in an otherwise upright one — confirms the suggestion that he wanted to 'create new associations'<sup>180</sup> between a number of figures in his manipulation of the single figure's form.



**Figure 22,** *Funerary Monument of Otho de Grandisson* (c. 1358)

<sup>176</sup> Bankes and Hills, *Vision and Memory*, 127.

<sup>177</sup> *DGC*, 65.

<sup>178</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers CD1/15, Letter to René and Joan Hague, 'Shrove Tuesday' 1935.

<sup>179</sup> See Weston, *Ritual to Romance*, 45. For her discussion of the relationship between paganism and Christianity with regard to the Grail legends see especially her chapter, 'The Secret of the Grail (2)' in *Ritual to Romance*, 141-154.

<sup>180</sup> Paul Hills, 'The Romantic Tradition in David Jones', *The Malahat Review* 27 (1973): 58.

Critics may further be motivated to see an image of Christ in a depiction of Jones' wounded WWI soldier because it was so common an association in the iconography emerging from the conflict. In addition to the examples from poetry discussed in the Introduction, images such as Charles Sims' 'Study for *Sacrifice*' (1918), (fig. 23) or more provocatively the depiction of the legend of the 'Crucified Soldier' in *Canada's Golgotha* (1918) by Francis Derwent Wood (fig. 24) were typical of those that drew on metaphorical associations between the suffering of soldiers and the suffering of Christ present during the war itself.

The Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis*, which Jones considered 'integral' to the text<sup>181</sup>, as well as its Tailpiece, which one assumes is equally 'integral', situates itself squarely in the centre of these artistic responses to the association of the violence of the war with the suffering of Christ. Jones, however, is neither sentimental nor ironic, instead evoking Christ primarily through the figures' resonance with symbolism of pre-Christian images of sacrifice; these figures in turn 'intimate' an otherwise unseen presence of Christ in their overall 'shape'. As I have been at pains to show, the central figure of the Frontispiece first of all manifests the symbolism of the 'dying god' found in the classical statuary of Adonis and Attis—the clothing and stance of the figure being strikingly reflective of traditional postures alluding to stories of ritual castration and death. The symbolism evoked by the 'contactual' detail of the picture—that is, in terms of colour, plane and other realistic details of the figure—shows the soldier (along with the landscape) to be the 'victim' of the blasphemous 'rite' of warfare.

Jones, however—in the spirit of Martindale's patristic vision—capitalises on the similarity of superficial 'shape' between the 'dying god' and Christ on the cross, emphasising certain details of the figure's position in relation to the rest of the picture, in order to intimate a deeper intuition about the radical presence of Christ's eternal sacrifice throughout history, especially in pre-Christian attempts to commune with source of the life of nature. Jones allows the strangely tense position of the central figure's arms and legs to invoke the traditional iconography of the cross, especially in his inclusion of the strong vertical line made by the figure's legs and the strong horizontal line of his shoulders. The

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<sup>181</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 183.



**Figure 23**, Charles Sims, *Study for Sacrifice* (1918)



**Figure 24**, Francis Derwent Wood, *Canada's Golgotha* (1918).

cross-bar of the soldier's shoulders is off set especially by his strangely contorted forearms, which provide the most salient and distinguishing contrast to the figure's otherwise clear resemblance to the 'shapes' (positions of arms, etc.) of classical statuary. The image of the cross therefore only emerges as if from a more abstract, 'unseen' dimension of the picture — the 'Lamb slain from the beginning of the world' and hence present from eternity to all points of time.

The outline of crucifixion is in this sense technically 'seen' because the work of art is confined to the manipulation of physically-perceived shapes; however, the image of the cross appears only by a vague resonance of its position. A subtle logic associating the war, pagan ritual and Christ's sacrifice presents itself. The war is first of all like a blasphemous pagan rite. But as the eternal sacrifice of Christ nonetheless acts in the face of human slaughter in the name of religion (as according to the Fathers it mysteriously does in the religious impulses of the pagans), so also does it act and show its power in the midst of the war, a similarly violent atrocity enacted in the name of religiously-burdened 'sacrifice'.

The Tailpiece (fig. 25), in a similar way, primarily presents another victim of the war's violence. The central figure of Jones' image is in this sense plainly a 'ram'—it is not a lamb—as the 'contactual' details of horns, shaggy hair and 'heartiness of the genitalia' attest.<sup>182</sup> Jones may not have witnessed the slaughter of literal rams in the battlefield, but he did witness the suffering of domestic animals such as mules and horses, which he describes with extreme pathos in *In Parenthesis*, such as the 'winnying / so pitiful' of scared horses, or the narrator's near childlike outburst: 'And mules died: their tough clipt hides that have a homely / texture flayed horribly to make you weep, sunk in their ser- / vility of chain and leather'.<sup>183</sup> The visceral feeling of animal suffering in Jones' text is captured simply in the picture by the barbed wire in which the animal is stuck—a detail that mirrors the 'encroaching' barbed wire of the Frontispiece on the vulnerable body of the half-nude soldier. The detail of the ram's entangled horns, however, explicitly evokes another figure of pre-Christian ritual sacrifice; namely, the 'ram caught in the thicket' that was used by Abraham as a substitute sacrifice for his son, Isaac, in Genesis 22. Like the Frontispiece, it implies a direct comparison between the war's violence and pre-Christian ritual sacrifice.

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<sup>182</sup> Riede, 'Artificial Guts', 703.

<sup>183</sup> *IP*, 111, 154.



**Figure 25**, David Jones, Tailpiece to *In Parenthesis* (1937).



**Figure 26**, 'Lamb of God', Waldburg Gebetbuch (1476).

Jones told William Blissett that he struggled to accept the stories of the Hebrew scriptures, so much that he was tempted to call himself a ‘Marcionite’ heretic; that is, a Christian who denied the importance of the Hebrew scripture and Jewish religion altogether because of the supposed harshness in the portrayal of God (in the demand for sacrifice and other violence, etc.). Although Jones cites Irenæus of Lyon as his ‘special father’ in saving him from Marcionism,<sup>184</sup> he may early on have reached a modification of this position through Martindale, who, taking from Justin Martyr, understood certain practices in the Hebrew scriptures (such as animal sacrifice) as ‘having their origin in gross heathendom’ (i.e. the sacrifices of nature cults, etc.), and hence having been tolerated by God only until the people of Israel could be ‘weaned’ from their habits and led into the ‘sublime philosophy’ of Christian revelation.<sup>185</sup> Jones’ antipathy to the practices described in the Hebrew scriptures nonetheless bolsters the suggestion that he places the image of the sacrificial ram here as a counterpart to the image of pagan sacrifice in the accompanying Frontispiece, showing both pagan and Hebrew figures as images of ancient sacrifice that in themselves he thought barbaric and only ‘validated’ by the sacrifice of Christ in its eternal dimension.

As in the Frontispiece, it is only once this first symbolic parallel has been established—that of the sacrificial ‘ram’ of Genesis—that the ‘shape’ made by the relationship of details to each other undeniably mirrors the conventional outline of the Christian ‘*Agnus Dei*’ (‘Lamb of God’, fig. 26). Taken primarily from Revelation 5:6, ‘I saw a lamb standing as though slain’ (DR), and seen as an image of Christ’s victory over death by his suffering, de la Taille insists via the Fathers (in a passage Jones underlined in his copy) that the ram of Genesis typologically represents the humanity as opposed to the divinity of Christ in the passion.<sup>186</sup> Like the traditional image of the ‘paschal lamb’, the central sheep-like figure curls its foot slightly over the top of a pole that goes over its shoulder, and a spurt of blood trickles from the wound in its heart. Jones deliberately sharpens the association with Christ in his decision to make the pole (usually the cross as a military ‘standard’ as in the medieval example) into a Roman lance that pierces the ram in its side, an explicit visual reference to the account of Christ’s crucifixion in John 19:34, in which ‘one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water’ (DR). This historical detail makes the association of Christ more concrete

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<sup>184</sup> See Blissett, *Long Conversation*, 106.

<sup>185</sup> Martindale, ‘Cults and Christianity’, 47.

<sup>186</sup> *MF*, 357. See also Jones’ copy in the National Library of Wales, David Jones 1144.

and explicit than in the Frontispiece. Still, the figure is not Christ *per se*, but shows even more keenly that Christ's sacrifice is radically present in the suffering of the figure according to the logic of what Martindale, paraphrasing Revelation 13:8, calls the 'Lamb . . . slain from the beginning of the world'.

### **Jones' Eucharistic 'Sense of Form'**

The visual dramatisation of theological thinking in the Frontispiece and Tailpiece represents the concrete, composite image of 'wounded trees and wounded men' recounted by many survivors of the Mametz Wood conflict, but as 'recollected in tranquility', and hence in light of Jones' immersion in Catholic liturgy, theological discussion, and wide range of reading about myth and religion between 1919 and 1935. More than war artists such as Charles Sims and even Paul Nash the images conjure both the visceral memory of the WWI wasteland and deliberately shape the remembered sight into a cultural, mythical and religious narrative that may be 'read' in a deeply symbolic language.

Being made after Jones' composition of the text of *In Parenthesis*, the images make a visual summary of Jones' intervening expression of his memories in poetic language. Of *In Parenthesis* Jones wrote that 'I have only tried to make a shape in words'.<sup>187</sup> In the following chapter, I will explore the way Jones' verbal presentation of 'wounded trees and wounded men' in the text of *In Parenthesis* itself embodies the same artistic and mythical-theological principles introduced in the Frontispiece and Tailpiece. Jones' soldiers, as treated briefly above, participate in a military 'rite' that blends with the fertility rites as discussed in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. As Jones used the subtle manipulation of visual 'shape' in his pictures, so he uses another kind of 'shape' created by language to reveal the mystery of Christ's sacrifice as standing in distinctive relation to the 'wounded trees and wounded men' who are the casualties of the 'rite' of warfare.

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<sup>187</sup> IP, x

### Chapter 3.

#### The ‘Dying God’ and Christ in the Landscape of *In Parenthesis*

Jones’ writing of *In Parenthesis* marks his first attempt — as a painter and draftsman — ‘to make a shape in words’.<sup>188</sup> As in the Frontispiece, Jones uses the most concrete and clinging image of his memory — the ‘hangover’ of the composite image of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’<sup>189</sup> — as the ‘contactual’ basis for a significant portion of this elusive verbal ‘shape’. The ‘shape’ of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ in *In Parenthesis* takes on an explicitly spiritual significance when Jones charges his descriptions with names and other intertextual references to Frazer’s ‘dying god’. As in the Frontispiece and the Tailpiece, these descriptions also exhibit a mysterious resonance with the figure of Christ in the passion. Critics have disagreed on the implications of the book’s Christian resonances: some read them as implying a direct ‘comparison’ between the suffering of WWI soldiers and the suffering of Christ (an interpretation Jones rejected outright); others resist this comparison by reading the allusions as uniformly ‘ironic’ and in contrast with the intentions of warfare.<sup>190</sup> As in my analysis of the Frontispiece and the Tailpiece in the previous chapter, I take into consideration Jones’ particular presentation of the natural world as a continuous figure with the human body in the war in the narration of violence. I also consider his immediate postwar reading of Frazer, Weston, Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson, in order to offer a new analysis of the relationship between the pagan, Jewish and Christian references in *In Parenthesis*.

As in the Frontispiece, which manipulates the visual ‘shape’ of the central soldier in the guise of the ‘dying god’ to allow for an understated resonance with the crucifixion of Christ and the cosmic theology of his sacrifice, so also does ambiguity, names of mythical figures, and intertextual references of Jones’ word-choices describing ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ in *In Parenthesis* allow for an understated presence of Christ’s sacrifice imaged in his human suffering. As in the Tailpiece, the references in the narration of suffering soldiers to Hebrew biblical figures of sacrifice as well as the words of the Roman Catholic liturgy evoke an indirect presence of the suffering Christ in the passion. As the focus of this thesis is primarily on the theological ideas informing Jones’ portrayal of

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<sup>188</sup> *IP*, x.

<sup>189</sup> Jones quoted in Blamires, *Artist and Writer*, 3.

<sup>190</sup> See René Hague, ‘Myth and Mystery in the Poetry of David Jones’, *Agenda* 15 (1977): 61.

landscape, I will focus this analysis on the references to the ‘dying god’ and therefore will not have space to explain in detail the operation of the full range of references as they relate the sacrifice of Christ and the war.

Nonetheless, it is important to mention that in all the descriptions of suffering on the battlefield one can detect the presence of Christ’s sacrifice imaged in his suffering on the cross under various veils of mythological and religious figures. If read according to the logic of Martindale and de la Taille’s theology, these ‘veils’ invoke Christ’s sacrifice as able to have a mysterious presence even before and after its appearance in historical time by virtue of its eternal dimension at the ‘centre point of time’ and as a dynamic, ‘sanctifying action’ one with the source of creation.<sup>191</sup> Jones shows the war itself as a travesty. He shows Christ’s sacrifice, by contrast, working from eternity to redeem it and make it into something new; namely, Christ’s presence in a restored creation at the end of time.

Only at one particular moment is Christ’s sacrifice shown as unveiled and distinct in *In Parenthesis*: that is, at the very centre of the book in which the ‘universal soldier’, Dai Greacoat, narrates the crucifixion and his assistance at it. When Jones presents this ‘unveiled’ image of Christ in his sacrifice, he does so with a very different literary ‘shape’ than the various veiled presences that mingle with the suffering of soldiers throughout the book. Jones’ depiction of the crucifixion in this passage appears not only by means of its own self-contained formal structure but also with the image of Christ’s sacrifice as a ‘living’ landscape, one with the life of the human body, and specifically opposed to the destroyed or dying wreckage of life in the WWI waste land.

### **Reassessing the Critical Reception of the ‘Dying God’ and Christ in *In Parenthesis***

In his 1975 *Exploratory Writing*, Jeremy Hooker claims that the soldiers of *In Parenthesis* are ‘sacrificial victims, and yet . . . restorers of order whose role is analogous to the victim’s’ and hence made ‘victims, like Christ’.<sup>192</sup> Roland Bouyssou’s 2013 reading of *In Parenthesis* as a ‘War Liturgy’ takes these conclusions to their logical extreme, insisting that in the course of the narrative, ‘soldiers become sacrificial victims’ who undergo ‘immolation’ in the pattern of sacrificial myths and a combination of ‘fertility rites and religions of vegetation . . . Old Testament sacrifices and the immolation of Christ’.

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<sup>191</sup> *MF*, 216. Martindale, ‘Cults and Christianity’, 48.

<sup>192</sup> Jeremy Hooker, *David Jones: An Exploratory Study of the Writings* (London: Enitharmon, 1975), 20.

Bouyssou reads these various traditions as ‘harmonize[d]’ for David Jones because ‘they hold in common the offering of a victim to satisfy some deity’.<sup>193</sup> By insisting on a uniform understanding of ‘sacrifice’ and ‘victim’, such a reading cannot help but assert that Jones intended a direct ‘comparison’ between the suffering of soldiers and the human suffering of Christ in the vein of Wilfred Owen, and by extension, in the metaphorical language of war propaganda. Jones intends some comparison between the suffering soldiers and the victims of sacrifice, but if Christ and pagan figures are simply multiple visions of the same notion of ‘sacrifice’, then logically one can claim that soldiers are indeed suffering in the metaphorical pattern of Christ. Equally one can say that they suffer in the pattern of pagan figures.

Jones, however, vehemently resists the former interpretation. He wrote in the draft of a letter to an unspecified editor (likely from the 1930s or 40s) that he feared his references such as ‘The Five Unmistakeable Marks’ in the title of Part 7 of *In Parenthesis*, (with its resonance of the ‘five wounds’ of Christ in the passion and those same ‘five wounds’ depicted on the banner of the 1536 Catholic revolt against Henry VIII called the ‘Pilgrimage of Grace’), would make readers think he intended a “‘crusading” significance’ in the narrative. He stressed, however, that a ‘crusading significance . . . is almost precisely what I do *not* think’.<sup>194</sup> He reiterated this anxiety in his condemnation of Dilworth’s 1973 essay on ‘The Parenthetical Liturgy of David Jones’ discussed in the last chapter, saying:

in writing *In Paren*. I had no intention whatever in presuming to compare the varied maims, death-strokes, miseries, acts of courage etc. of the two contending forces, ours or those ‘against whom we found ourselves by misadventure’, with the Passion, self-Oblation and subsequent Immolation and death of the Cult-hero of our Xtian tradition. For that is a unique and profound Mystery of Faith.<sup>195</sup>

One must often be sceptical of poets when they ‘protest too much’; Adam Schwartz insists that, despite Jones’ protests, his text ‘tells another story’ in its association of the war and the passion of Christ. René Hague insists, as quoted above, that his allusions are simply

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<sup>193</sup> Roland Bouyssou, ‘*In Parenthesis*: a War Liturgy’, *Arts of War and Peace Review* 1, no. 1 (2013): 45, <[http://www.awpreview.univ-paris-diderot.fr/IMG/pdf/1.1\\_5\\_bouyssouinparenthesismarch2013.pdf](http://www.awpreview.univ-paris-diderot.fr/IMG/pdf/1.1_5_bouyssouinparenthesismarch2013.pdf)>

<sup>194</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers, CD1/13.

<sup>195</sup> *DGC*, 245-46.

‘ironic’.<sup>196</sup> In this particular case, however, Jones’ insistence about his invocation of the passion in *In Parenthesis* alerts the critic not to conclude that he dissociates the war and the passion entirely, but to notice a much deeper dynamic at work in his allusions, especially in the way that he invokes the passion, the ‘dying god’ and other figures of pre-Christian sacrifice.

Jones’ language in this quotation bears the distinct imprint of de la Taille, first of all in the phrase ‘Mystery of Faith’ that echoes the title of de la Taille’s major work. The language and thinking of de la Taille surface also in Jones’ opposition of ‘Oblation’ and ‘Immolation’, which is the subject of one of his most important essays in *The Mystery of Faith* (namely, ‘Distinction Between Oblation and Immolation in Traditional Theology’), which explains how the sacrifice of Christ is distinct both from the animal sacrifices of Jewish religion and from the human sacrifices of the pagans.<sup>197</sup> What Jones emphasises in this protest is the uniqueness of Christ’s human suffering in its redemptive aspect — something he also does in *In Parenthesis*. He does not, however, elaborate on de la Taille and Martindale’s cosmic explanation of the relationship between Christ’s saving action and history.

The seeming absoluteness of Jones’ phrase ‘no comparison whatsoever’ has caused critics such as Thomas Dilworth and Kathleen Staudt to avoid reading a direct ‘comparison’ of the suffering of soldiers and Christ by dissociating the violence of the war and the violence of ritual sacrifice altogether. They nonetheless retain Bouyssou’s and others’ insistence that Jones uses allusions to the sacrificial myths and rituals of multiple traditions with a uniform purpose in his description of the war’s violence. Staudt therefore reads the ‘bleeding tree’ in a scene of John Ball fighting an unknown German soldier in Part 7 as ‘associated with the sacrifices of Adonis’ but equally as evoking ‘the Crucifixion as described in the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Dream of the Rood*’, without any particular distinction or relationship between them as images of sacrifice. She similarly gives a brief explanation of Frazer’s thesis at the beginning of her chapter, ‘The Wasted Land and the Queen of the Woods’, with a general acceptance of Frazer’s flattening of the figures of multiple mythologies into a single essential type, listing ‘Mary, the mater dolorosa mourning for the crucified Christ’ as simply one of a larger umbrella that also includes ‘Isis, who mourns for Osiris in the Egyptian myth’.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Schwartz, *The Third Spring*, 341. Hague, ‘Myth and Mystery’, 61.

<sup>197</sup> See *MF*, 349-79.

<sup>198</sup> See Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 89, 91-92.

Including Christ in a general paradigm, Staudt reads the inferences of the ‘dying god’ in the context of WWI violence as meant to show the war as a ‘perverse’ mockery of ‘rituals . . . meant to welcome the spring and to celebrate harmony between human and natural orders’.<sup>199</sup> Staudt writes,

Although much of the poem turns on the identification between the deaths of the men and the deaths of cult heroes from Frazer’s fertility myths, Jones presents the men not as sacrificial lambs or redeemer figures but as victims of a perverted fertility ritual, in which human sacrifice takes place without a consequent renewal of the land, and where the experience of war, far from being integrated into the cycles of nature, takes place in a realm apart from and in conflict with the natural cycles of birth and renewal.<sup>200</sup>

In Staudt’s estimation, following Dilworth, the allusions to Frazer’s ‘dying god’ in the description of the war’s violence are simply ironic, because the ‘sacrificial intentions’ behind pagan fertility rituals had the desire to make societies ‘integrated into the cycles of nature . . . of birth and renewal’ and the war does not. All that appears is a ‘series of nonredemptive and purposeless human deaths’,<sup>201</sup> brought about by the war’s violence. Therefore, Staudt concludes, Jones intends to show the war as a ‘perverted fertility ritual’, because it does not indicate any hoped-for signs of redemption, re-growth and communion with divine reality that were part of the desire of the ancient pagans. Dilworth summarises the same idea when he writes: ‘While combat recalls sacrificial forms, it does so only to establish contrast with sacrificial intentions’.<sup>202</sup> The forms of pagan sacrifice, insist Staudt and Dilworth, in themselves simply ‘ascribe meaning to life and dramatize hope in life’s increase or renewal’ in a way that the violence of the war does not.<sup>203</sup>

Staudt and Dilworth, however, overlook Jones’ reliance on the perverse violence of the ‘dying god’ rituals themselves as described by Frazer for the effectiveness of his allusions. Staudt acknowledges that the rites of the ‘dying god’ frequently employed horrifying violence such as human sacrifice, but makes an arbitrary distinction between the

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<sup>199</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 92.

<sup>200</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 90.

<sup>201</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 91.

<sup>202</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 133.

<sup>203</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 133.

human sacrifice of pagan fertility rituals and the ‘human sacrifice’ of the war, which she calls a ‘travesty’ because it ‘takes place without the consequent renewal of the land’.<sup>204</sup> A statement like this begs the question: Is the practice of human sacrifice in pagan rituals less reprehensible and horrifying than war because of its ‘sacrificial intention’ and because it therefore supposedly ‘renews the land’? Where, furthermore, in a pagan rite of sacrifice, is the evidence of that renewal? The cycles of nature operate without the aid of human sacrifice or ritual, a fact Staudt discusses at length in her description of the ‘inevitably triumphant natural order’ which is embodied in ‘a series of mythic female figures’.<sup>205</sup>

Even contemporary witnesses of the violence of the ‘dying god’ rituals found them repulsive. Ovid and Catullus both lament the aftermath of self-castration in the rites of Attis and Cybele,<sup>206</sup> and their disgust shows how much the rites of Attis have in common with contemporary revulsion at the sight of ‘castration and castration-like severing of limbs and heads’ that Jones literally witnessed in the First World War.<sup>207</sup> Frazer, furthermore, connects the wicker frame used in a seemingly innocent ritual such as the ‘Jack o’ the Green’ with the giant Celtic ‘wicker man’ set on fire with human victims inside, which Julius Caesar described with disdain in his *Commentarii Belli Gallici*.<sup>208</sup> The frightfulness of this image could not have been lost on Jones, for whom the ‘Jack-in-the-Green’ conjured a memory of child-terror of the ‘Green Man’ appearing on his parents’ doorstep in turn-of-the-century Maying rituals.<sup>209</sup> Jones’ invocation of the rites of the ‘dying god’ are, rather than a generally positive class of sign-making activities that ‘ascribe meaning to life’, much more likely meant as a poignant and vivid illustration of the war’s worst horror.

Furthermore, neither Dilworth nor Staudt acknowledge the ‘sacrificial intentions’ that were the strongest engine of propaganda in the war effort. As discussed in the first chapter, the appeal to the duty of the ‘Christian Soldier’ and the branding of the war as a ‘crusade’ was one of the most effective tactics in convincing young men to enlist and their families to encourage them. If Jones’ allusions to the ‘dying god’ are understood in their proper light— that is, as first of all images of wanton violence in the name of religion— a

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<sup>204</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 90.

<sup>205</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 93.

<sup>206</sup> See Ovid, *Fasti*, book 4, lines 221-246. and Catullus, *Carmina*, no. 63.

<sup>207</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 243.

<sup>208</sup> See James Frazer, *Balder the Beautiful: The Fire-festivals of Europe and the Doctrine of the External Soul*, vol. 11, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1913), 33. See also Julius Caesar, *Commentarii Belli Gallici*, book 6, chapter 16.

<sup>209</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 7.

profound, unsettling irony emerges in his comparison of the deaths of these young men to the victims of the 'dying god' rituals. The commanders of the First World War, as well as those who fought on the ground, did in fact profess 'sacrificial intentions' in the waging of the war. Such leaders did not appeal to the tradition of the 'dying god', but to the sacrifice of Christ in the passion and the tradition of the 'Christian soldier' as the model for enlistment and self-sacrifice in the conflict with Germany.

Jones' allusions show that, contrary to the Christian 'crusade' they thought they were waging, the leaders of the war (and, following them, the willing soldiers on the ground) were performing an 'unratified' and horrifying rite of human sacrifice that in fact parodies the sacrifice of Christ. Its resemblance to the passion is only superficial, just as the pre-Christian rites of human sacrifice bear strong superficial resemblance to the sacrifice of Christ and its re-presentation in the Mass, but have, in the theology Jones would have read in the 'post-Frazer period', a radically different identity.<sup>210</sup> If the presence of Christ's sacrifice is not, as Dilworth and Staudt suggest, merely one of several meaning-making rites that generally counteract the trauma of the war, how does it function in Jones' text? Jones' reading of Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson, discussed in the first chapter, points to a more dynamic relationship between pre-Christian sacrifice and the suffering of Christ that is part of Jones' much larger understanding of the eternal sacrifice of Christ in relation both to the natural world and to history.

The startling optimism of David Jones meant that, even though he was poignantly aware of the horror of the war and retained it in his memory his whole life, he was nonetheless optimistic that the redemptive power of the sacrifice of Christ could be operative even in that brutal context. In the words of Kathleen Staudt, his work constantly manifests a 'vision that is quietly, almost perversely, affirmative'.<sup>211</sup> One of his most well-known and characteristic quips was to Harman Grisewood in 1938 (the year after publishing *In Parenthesis*), as he explained the thinking behind his *Book of Balaam's Ass*: 'It is about how everything turns into something else, and how you can never tell when a bonza is cropping up or the Holy Ghost is going to turn something inside out, and how everything is a balls-up and a kind of "Praise" at the same time'.<sup>212</sup> Such a statement, responding to his witness and memory of the First World War, is an expression of Jones'

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<sup>210</sup> Syracuse, New York, Le Moyne College, William T. Noon Papers, David Jones to William Noon, 7 October 1965.

<sup>211</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 67.

<sup>212</sup> *DGC*, 86.

supernatural hope and provides another model for understanding the presence of both Christian and pre-Christian resonances in his narration of the war's violence. He does not strictly speaking *see* any sensible transformation of the 'Waste Land' but has confidence nonetheless that the 'balls up' he sees—in a spiritual economy—is also a kind of 'Praise'.

This mysterious confidence of faith informs the subtlety of Jones' artistic form, which allows the image of the 'dying god'—and by extension, the 'balls up' that is the violence of the war—to be turned 'into something else'; namely, a 'shape' in which the sacrifice of Christ is 're-presented' in a veiled form. As in the Eucharist, in which one sees only bread and wine, but believes that it is the 'real presence' of the 'Body and Blood of Christ' in his eternal sacrifice, so in an analogous way Jones only sees the horror of the war's violence in his human sensibility and memory, but believes that the sacrifice of Christ in its eternal aspect at the origin of creation is nonetheless working in it and turning it into 'something else'. This confidence does not excuse the war's horror or justify it by 'comparing' the suffering of soldiers with the suffering of Christ, but witnesses to a hope in a more radical and immanent 'presence' than metaphor can capture.

Jones is able to communicate this subtle logic of 'presence' in *In Parenthesis* by means of his unique emphasis on the way single words or juxtapositions of words in close textual space can communicate a multiplicity of 'overtones and undertones' and in doing so create a 'many-faceted image'.<sup>213</sup> The Frontispiece and the Tailpiece manipulated line, colour and plane in their portrayal of the 'contactual' vision of 'wounded trees and wounded men' and the suffering of animals to invoke traditional symbols of pre-Christian sacrifice and in doing so to let 'shine out' a glimmer of the sacrifice of Christ. Similarly, Jones presents the same vision of the war's violence in language in the etymology, intertextual status and ambiguity of his word choices, allowing for both the 'dying god' and Christ on the cross to 'shine out' and reveal their subtle relationship. In the following section I demonstrate more precisely how Jones' sense of artistic 'shape' operates in his descriptions of the 'contactual' landscape of the battlefield, and then furthermore how he enables these descriptions to take on the aspect of the more complex spiritual 'shape' he wishes to communicate—first radiating Frazer's 'dying god', through which he allows a radiation of the sacrifice of Christ in its eternal dimension.

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<sup>213</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LO1/4, Letter Draft Fragment to John H. Johnston 28 February 1963.

### The 'Shape' of 'Wounded Trees and Wounded Men'

Although the conflict in Mametz Wood, described in Part 7 of *In Parenthesis*, is chronologically last in the order of Jones' narrative, descriptions of vegetation suffering violence in the book reflect Jones' writing in hindsight of that supremely traumatic vision of human bodies and trees mingled into undifferentiated matter. As Wyn Griffith's imagination and sensibility was permanently changed by the sight of Mametz so that 'fresh cut wood' did not fail to 'resurrect' the image of human gore mingled with tree splinters,<sup>214</sup> so the composite image of 'wounded trees and wounded men' of Mametz appear from the first pages of *In Parenthesis*. From this sight of violence, however, also emerges a striking image of an ancient resonance between human life and the life of the landscape and opens to the possibility of a greater significance of 'wounded trees and wounded men' than their being absurdly yoked together in death.

Jones projects a complex life in the trees of the battlefield by choosing words that could be or are more often applicable to human and animal life than vegetable life. Trees appear as personal and animate characters within the first 20 pages of the book, as a 'flanking guard'. As the soldiers move 'south and right' they are similarly 'well shielded by trees', who serve as protectors.<sup>215</sup> The language recalls many poems of the WWI period, such as Julian Grenfell's 'Into Battle' (1915), which also shows battlefield trees as providing a kind of guidance to and solidarity with soldiers:

The woodland trees that stand together  
They stand to him each one a friend;  
They gently speak in the windy weather;  
They guide to valley and ridge's end.<sup>216</sup>

Not yet afflicted by violence, the trees 'stand', 'speak' and 'guide' like men. Trees take on a deeper eloquence and juxtaposition with human beings when they endure suffering, as when in Edmund Blunden's 'Festubert, 1916', 'the charred stub outspeaks the living tree', and in Ivor Gurney's 'Canadians', the battle-weary soldiers themselves stand 'as the notched stumps'.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Griffith, *Up to Mametz*, 210.

<sup>215</sup> *IP*, 16, 21.

<sup>216</sup> Julian Grenfell, 'Into Battle', *First World War Poetry*, 101.

<sup>217</sup> Blunden, *First World War Poetry*, 259; Gurney, *First World War Poetry*, 78.

The first evidence of violence in *In Parenthesis* appears amidst the same passage quoted above: as soldiers march, ‘ . . . a splintered tree scattered its / winter limbs, spilled its life low on the ground. They stepped over its branches and went on’.<sup>218</sup> The active mood of the words ‘scattered’ and ‘spilled’ attributes agency to the tree, which is otherwise a passive and stationary life-form. The word ‘limbs’ furthermore recalls its resonance with anthropoid physical structure. The construction ‘spilled its life’ makes use of a now slightly archaic sense of the verb ‘spill’, which means not just ‘To allow or cause (a liquid) to fall, pour, or run out (esp. over the edge of the containing vessel), usually in an accidental or wasteful manner’ but the more serious meaning of ‘to destroy by depriving of life’ or ‘to despoil’ [OED ‘spill, v.’, 10a, 1a, 5a]. One more commonly speaks of human life as ‘spilled’ than of animal or especially vegetable life. This subtle transferral of language reinforces the unexpected alliance of the life of human beings and the life of trees that is implied in the appearance of trees as ‘protectors’. The pathos evoked for the tree’s injury with such language, operates partly by means of its resonance with human suffering, causing an understated awareness of human injury to shine out also even when the image strictly speaking represents an injured tree.

In the aftermath of the first shell appears a more explicit foreshadowing of Mametz in which the injury suffered by the landscape concretely evokes human injury.

. . . Behind ‘E’ Battery, fifty yards down the road, a great many mangolds, uprooted, pulped, congealed with chemical earth, spattered and made slippery the rigid boards leading to the emplacement. The sap of vegetables slobbered the spotless breech-block of No. 3 gun.<sup>219</sup>

Jones admitted to Thomas Dilworth that the ‘mangolds’ he describes here were indeed part of his acutely detailed memory of the first shell he experienced in the war, and that the mangold pulp was ‘bloodred’ in colour.<sup>220</sup> Dilworth therefore interprets the mangolds as ‘a sort of biological synecdoche implying the shedding of blood that occurs on a massive

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<sup>218</sup> *IP*, 21.

<sup>219</sup> *IP*, 24.

<sup>220</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 46.

scale at the end of the poem'.<sup>221</sup> Dilworth's reading stems from the observation that 'the name of the vegetable puns on humanity', 'man' being the first syllable of 'mangold'.<sup>222</sup> Jeremy Hooker likewise observes that 'For a mind which comprehends the oneness of all life, the affinity between sap and blood is more than symbolic'.<sup>223</sup>

As the narrative progresses, the language used to describe the injury of trees and vegetation takes on not only a resonance with the physical human form as it suffers, but also evokes an interior, spiritual dimension in the resonance between the life of men and life of the landscape. During their night march John Ball watches

. . . this

all depriving darkness split now by crazy flashing; marking  
hugely clear the spilled bowels of trees, splinter-spike, leper-  
ashen, sprawling the receding, unknowable, wall of night—<sup>224</sup>

Here the trees have not only spilled their 'life' but more explicitly their 'bowels', evoking both the digestive innards of a more complex animal and the sense of spiritual interiority usually attributed to a human being. 'Bowels' was a favourite word of Jones, which he uses in many instances to describe the emotion accompanying the physical witness of warfare. He writes in 'Art in Relation to War' (1942), that concerning the first-hand witness of war, 'we need not speak theoretically, but experientially, not as students of history or exponents of past cultures, but as persons who have seen with our own eyes and felt with our own bowels'.<sup>225</sup> Trees do not obviously have 'bowels' in either sense, but Jones' word-choice in the above passage from *In Parenthesis* creates a subtle pathos for the sight of wounded nature, and in doing so projects an unspoken co-presence of the suffering of wounded men.

The effect is one in which the human body and the landscape, especially 'wounded trees and wounded men', appear as a continuous figure, the human and the vegetable merging with each other to indicate an inextricable entanglement, which, ironically,

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<sup>221</sup> Thomas Dilworth, 'Antithesis of Place in the Poetry and Life of David Jones', in *Locations of Literary Modernism: Region and Nation in British and American Modernist Poetry*, ed. Alex Davis and Lee M Jenkins (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 68.

<sup>222</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 82.

<sup>223</sup> Hooker, *Exploratory Study*, 20.

<sup>224</sup> *IP*, 31.

<sup>225</sup> *DG*, 127.

manifests itself most strongly as it suffers destruction. Jones wrote that ‘it is important to be anthropomorphic, to deal through and in the things we understand as men’,<sup>226</sup> which may be informing the anthropomorphism of these descriptions. On the other hand, the technique allows him to gesture towards an ancient association of the life of human beings and the life of the landscape that underlies much of the myth and religious ritual of Western Europe, and which resonated with Jones’ own most personal feeling for nature, typified in his Nash-like statement of 1935, ‘that trees are men walking’.<sup>227</sup>

### **Myth in the Foreshadowing of Mametz**

Jones’ statement that ‘trees are men walking’ appears as part of his attempt to circumscribe what characterises the sensibility informing his own general artistic method and subject matter. He saw this sensibility as related to a ‘particular quality of the Celtic tales’ such as the Welsh myths of Arthur and the *Mabinogion*, and writes that this ‘quality . . . has to do with a certain affection for the intimate creatureliness of things—a care for, and appreciation of the particular genius of places, men, trees, animals, and yet withal a pervading sense of Metamorphosis and mutability’.<sup>228</sup> In this light, Jones’ subtle characterisations of trees share a basic sensibility with the myths underlying the rituals of tree worship as described in Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*, which Frazer identifies as exhibiting ‘a deeper philosophy of the relation of the life of man to the life of nature’.<sup>229</sup> As in the Frontispiece, Frazer’s figures therefore become a key organising principle in Jones’ descriptions of the battlefield, particularly Mametz and the narrations that foreshadow it. Jones shows how the fighting of soldiers makes them resemble the central figure of Frazer’s study, the ‘priest of Nemi’ (also called ‘King of the Woods’), as well as the Norse gods Odin and Balder and the British ‘Jack o’ the Green’—all protagonists of a bloody fertility ‘rite’ that ends in sterility and death.

As Frazer explains it, the intellectual project at the centre of *The Golden Bough* originated in his desire to discover a ‘probable explanation of the priesthood of Nemi’, a ritual ‘unparalleled in Classical antiquity’, which consisted in a ‘runaway slave’ breaking a bough from a special tree in the wood of Nemi in central Italy (sacred to the virgin hunter goddess and patroness of fertility, Diana) and then killing the reigning ‘king’ (who guarded

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<sup>226</sup> David Jones quoted in Jim Ede, ‘David Jones’, *Horizon* (August 1943):135.

<sup>227</sup> Jones, ‘Some Notes’, [7].

<sup>228</sup> Jones, ‘Some Notes’, [7].

<sup>229</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, vol. 1, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 40.

the tree) in combat. The conquering ‘slave’ became the new ‘King of the Wood’—the new priest of Nemi and consort of Diana. Any challenger to the ‘king’ who could not succeed in killing him would be killed himself, and the reigning ‘king’ would retain his title. Frazer investigates the origin of this strange ritual indirectly via mythology and the witness of other rituals that embody, as quoted above, a ‘deeper philosophy of the relation of the life of man to the life of nature’. In this endeavour, Frazer tries to pin down an elusive association between human beings and the natural world that manifests itself in the shape-shifting ritual and mythic depictions of men standing for trees and trees standing for men across a range of cultures and religions.

Frazer writes, for instance, of the way in which in many rituals involving trees, performed in most cases in order to secure the fertility of the land and its inhabitants, the ‘tree-spirit’ is represented in human form, and vice versa, so as to ‘form a sort of bilingual inscription, the one being, so to speak, a translation of the other’.<sup>230</sup> He places a mythical figure such as the Norse god Balder into this pattern, describing how he is associated with the mistletoe plant (a parasite on the oak tree) because, in his myth, he was killed by it. Because of the northern European rituals surrounding the cultivation of the mistletoe from oak trees and the supposed burning of human victims in bonfires dedicated to oak tree-spirits, Frazer identifies the anthropomorphic Balder with multiple manifestations at once: the oak tree itself, the mistletoe, and the human victims (‘human Balders’), who ‘represented the tree-spirit’.<sup>231</sup> Man and tree make a continuous figure in both myth and ritual and it becomes difficult to determine the boundaries between the two, especially in the context of sacrifice and death. The human victim ‘is’ the life of the tree and vice versa.

In *In Parenthesis*, Frazer’s account of violence suffered in Classical, northern European and British myths of trees and woodlands provides an entryway into a meditation on the spiritual significance of the WWI waste land, which for David Jones was embodied in the literal deforestation and depopulation of the battlefield. With sunrise in the beginning of Part 4, the soldiers standing guard on their parapets in the night look onto ‘Biez Wood’, which in the morning mist and early light seems ‘a wood moving, / a moving grove advised’, with a nod to the ‘moving grove’ of Birnam copse that announces the

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<sup>230</sup> James Frazer, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, vol. 2, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1911), 73.

<sup>231</sup> Frazer, *Balder the Beautiful*, vol. 11, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 88, as well as discussion 88-94.

downfall of Macbeth.<sup>232</sup> The passage's meditative rhythm naturally opens a space in the text for a revelation of the contradictory significances of woods in human life, especially the excitement of love and the heartache of death, and beckons the soldiers to the consummation of violence in Mametz that awaits them in a few months time. I include below the passage in its entirety.

To groves always men come both to their joys and their un-  
doing. Come lightfoot in heart's ease and school-free; walk  
on a leafy holiday with kindred and kind; come perplexedly  
with first loves—to tread the tangle frustrated, striking—  
bruising the green.

Come on night's fall for ambushade.  
Find harbour with a remnant  
Share with the proscribed their unleavened cake.

Come for sweet princes by malignant interests deprived.  
Wait, wait long for—  
with the broken men, nest with badger and the marten-cat  
till such time as he come again, crying the waste for his  
chosen.

Or come in gathering nuts and may;  
or run want-wit in a shirt for the queen's unreason.  
Beat boys-bush for Robin and Bobin.

Come with Merlin in his madness, for the pity of it; for  
the young men reaped like green barley,  
for the folly of it.

Seek a way more separate and more strait.

Keep date with the genius of the place—come with a wea-  
pon or effectual branch—and here this winter copse might  
well be special to Diana's Jack, for none might attempt it,  
but by perilous bough-plucking.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> *IP*, 60. See Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, Act 5, Scene 5.

<sup>233</sup> *IP*, 66.

The punctuated repetition of ‘come’ is an invitation to enter the wood in the pattern of various historical and mythical ‘kings’ and frustrated ‘lovers’ important to British cultural memory. Many ‘lovers’ and ‘kings’ are evoked in the passage: Lancelot running ‘want-wit’ through the wood after Guinevere’s rejection; Merlin taking refuge in the wood after witnessing the slaughter of his men; Frazer’s ‘wren’ called the ‘King of all birds’ hunted by ‘Robin and Bobin’ in an Irish tradition; the last king of Wales (Llywelyn the Great) a ‘prince . . . deprived’ of his crown and murdered, in Jones’ words, ‘in the bloody wood at Buellt’; as well as Arthur (who promised to ‘come again’) on his ride through the wood after the boar Twrch Trywyth.<sup>234</sup>

The various allusions to ‘kings’ suffering in woods build up to the most obvious ‘king’ and frustrated ‘lover’ in the passage: the ‘King of the Woods’, also known as the ‘Priest of Nemi’, which Jones notes refers explicitly to Frazer’s description in *The Golden Bough*.<sup>235</sup> Frazer supposes that the ‘King of the Wood’ ritual is associated with the mythical figure of Virbius, whom Jones names explicitly in place of ‘Diana’s Jack’ in an early draft of the above-quoted passage.<sup>236</sup> ‘Virbius’ is the name given to the hunter Hippolytus, who was beloved of Diana (Artemis) because he had rejected Venus (Aphrodite) in order to consecrate himself to Diana as a chaste hunter. Venus wanted to kill him for his rejection and so Diana changed his name to protect him.<sup>237</sup>

At the same time, however, Diana’s (Artemis’s) identity as a goddess of the ‘fertility of the ground’ —that is, the fertility and growth of the wood itself—meant that ‘she must necessarily have a male consort’ and Virbius also filled this role. Frazer further suggests that the ‘King of the Wood’ understood the sacred tree he guarded as a specific embodiment of the spirit of the wood and the spirit of Diana, and he regarded it therefore as his ‘wife’ to whom he offered ‘embraces’.<sup>238</sup> A strange tension exists therefore in Frazer’s narration of the relationship between the embattled human King of the Wood and

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<sup>234</sup> See Jones’ note on the passage, *IP*, 203-4, note 12. See Malory, *Morte d’Arthur*, Book XI, chp. VIII; See Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The Vita Merlini*, trans. John Jay Parry, *University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* 10 (1925): 274-77. See James Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, vol. 8, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1912), 319. See *EA*, 39. Arthur in this myth appears extensively in Jones’ late collection, *The Sleeping Lord* (1974), which he takes from ‘the early medieval prose tale, Culhwch ac Olwen’ found in the *Mabinogion* (see *SL*, 69).

<sup>235</sup> *IP*, 204, note 12.

<sup>236</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LP1/5, ‘Early Manuscript Draft’ of Part 4.

<sup>237</sup> For Frazer’s extensive account of this myth see: *Magic Art*, vol. 1, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 1-41.

<sup>238</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, vol. 1, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 39.

his ‘queen’, the mythical Diana who represented the non-human life of the wood itself, in that it is both chaste and sexual; it also requires violence to achieve and maintain. The castrated devotion of Attis to the woodland mother-goddess, Cybele, seen in the figure of the Frontispiece, resonates well here with the celibate, death-threatened status that defines Diana’s ‘male consort’, and Frazer explicitly identifies the Attis-Cybele story in this context as a related myth.<sup>239</sup> It also recalls the sexual frustration of the soldiers in the narration of *In Parenthesis* as they guard or take Mametz Wood. ‘The Queen of the Woods’ is a name for Diana that Jones lifts directly from this section of Frazer’s 3<sup>rd</sup> edition,<sup>240</sup> and the soldiers’ ‘castration’ by the war’s violence both literal and figurative is a manifestation of their frustrated devotion to the ‘Queen of the Woods’ as her consorts in the mode of the priest of Nemi—a frustration that is definitively enforced in death.

Like Jones’ Frontispiece and Tailpiece to *In Parenthesis*, however, the ‘shape’ of his textual allusions to the ‘dying god’ to describe the violence of the war landscape in some instances takes on a peculiar and deliberate resonance with language traditionally associated with the sacrifice of Christ in the passion. Quickly following John Ball’s meditation on the priest of Nemi and the woods, appears another allusion to Frazer’s ‘dying god’ as shining out from the wounded landscape in the figure of the Norse god of war, Odin:

His eyes turned again to where the wood thinned to separate  
broken trees; to where great strippings-off hanged from ten-  
uous fibres swaying, whitened to decay—as swung  
immolations  
for the northern Cybele.  
The hanged, the offerant:  
    himself to himself  
    on the tree.<sup>241</sup>

Jones has a note on the above-quoted passage directing the reader both to the original Norse sources and to Frazer’s discussion of ‘Odin and the Upsala Groves’ in *The Golden*

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<sup>239</sup> Frazer, *Magic Art*, vol. 1, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 41.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 40, note 3.

<sup>241</sup> *IP*, 67.

*Bough*.<sup>242</sup> In Jones' note, he reprints the translated stanza from the *Hávamál*, which Frazer also quotes in a small paragraph of his chapter, 'The Hanged God', as follows:

I know that I hung on the windy tree  
For nine whole nights  
Wounded with the spear, dedicated to Odin,  
Myself to myself<sup>243</sup>

Frazer explains that, like the 'Phrygian' rites of Attis in which 'the priest who bore the name and played the part of Attis at the spring festival of Cybele was regularly hanged or otherwise slain upon the sacred tree', so also 'the human victims dedicated to Odin were regularly put to death by hanging or a combination of hanging and stabbing, the man being strung up to a tree or gallows and then wounded with a spear'. Frazer then explains this practice as having its mythical origin in the story of Odin and the Yggdrasil, recounted in the *Hávamál*, in which to '[acquire] his divine power by learning the magic runes', Odin hung upon the 'world tree', the Yggdrasil (that held heaven and earth together), as a sacrifice 'to himself'.<sup>244</sup>

With the sacrifice of the 'hanged' Odin in mind, which Frazer connects to the Scandinavian rites of human sacrifice, Jones describes the broken bark and branches hanging loosely as 'strippings-off' and 'fibres swaying, whitened to decay— as swung / immolations'. The phrase (although describing the injury suffered by the trees of the landscape) has a clear resonance with the flesh of the rite's human victims, and by extension, with soldiers suffering similar dismemberment in the the war, whose 'strippings off' are likely also part of the contemporary battlefield woodland scene (cf. the soldier's coat hanging from a blasted tree of Mametz in fig. 7 of this thesis, p. 68). 'Himself to himself,' as Jones' note indicates, is an allusion to the original Norse text, but not a direct quote, as Jones modifies the original first person 'Myself to myself' to the third person. The original words of the *Hávamál* furthermore read 'on the windy tree,' which Jones changes simply to 'on the tree'.

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<sup>242</sup> *IP*, 204, note 15. N.B., Jones writes that the passage about Odin comes from the *Völuspá*, but it in fact comes from the *Hávamál*.

<sup>243</sup> Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, vol. 5, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 290.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 289-90.

This passage demonstrates what Jones called his one ‘rule’ of composition in *In Parenthesis* (discussed in the Introduction to this thesis), which was that ‘the words used & their juxtaposition with other words should have as many overtones or undertones as possible a propos the context’ and in the creation of ‘the many-faceted image [Jones] was seeking to re-present’.<sup>245</sup> Jones’ subtle manipulation of language in his evocation of Odin on the Yggdrasil in this passage allows for a distinctive resonance with the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Jones’ construction ‘on the tree’, which he makes stand out by placing it on its own line justified with ‘himself to himself’, has a direct link with such phrases as 1 Peter 2:24 which speaks of Christ as the one ‘Who his own self bare our sins in his own body *on the tree*’ (emphasis mine [AV]); that is, on the ‘tree’ of the cross on which he was crucified. Changing the pronoun from ‘myself’ to ‘himself’, as well as consciously setting the words ‘on the tree’ from the rest of the text by placing them on their own line, allows the predominantly pagan figure of Odin—despite itself—to ‘make present’ the sacrifice of Christ via its intertextual resonance with the letter of Peter. The thrust of the passage is therefore first of all a comparison of the devastated landscape with Odin on the Yggdrasil; the sacrifice of Christ, however, nonetheless ‘shines through’ as from a hidden or more abstract dimension.

We know that a distinct image of Christ’s sacrifice informs the subtle language of this passage because Jones used stronger language to associate the pre-Christian myth of Odin and the sacrifice of Christ in earlier drafts, but which he later edited out. He wrote what eventually became the phrase, quoted above, ‘The hanged, the offerant: / himself to himself’ in multiple ways, including:

As swinging sacrifices in Upsala grove  
to the Northern Cybele  
where God himself died on a tree

The capitalisation of ‘God’ and the phrase ‘God himself’ in this draft overlaps the figure of Odin with Christ (the God-Man) in a strikingly literal way. In another draft, the explicitly priestly dimension of this offering is even clearer:

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<sup>245</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LO1/4, Letter Draft Fragment, David Jones to John H. Johnston, 28 February 1963.

. . . to the Northern Cybele  
where god himself [<sup>^</sup>Rune-chanting] died on a tree  
immolate, the offered, the Offerant + the appeased  
[<sup>^</sup>at once the God the victim + the priest.]<sup>246</sup>

The crossed-out phrase, ‘the God the victim + the priest’, especially the capitalisation of ‘God’ as in the first passage, is an even more deliberate invocation of the sacrifice of Christ, which de la Taille explains is unique in comparison with pre-Christian sacrifices because of Christ’s status as equally God and man, and because of the uniqueness of Christ as both ‘victim and priest’ at once.<sup>247</sup> Strictly speaking, therefore, Jones describes the myth of Odin in this passage, but using deliberately Christian-sounding language.

One might think that Jones’ application of Christian language to pagan myth in this case implies that he sees the religion of pre-Christian paganism and the sacrifice of Christ as two different but equal manifestations of the same overarching psychological idea or transcendent mystery. This kind of univocation, however, is what characterises the scepticism of Frazer and Weston — a scepticism that David Jones manifestly did not share. Flattening Odin and Christ into two manifestations of a single less-specific entity in the context of this particular passage would, furthermore, make entirely logical a direct ‘comparison’ between the suffering of the war (as described in the landscape) and the suffering of Christ. If Jones compares the destruction of the war with the grisly Uppsala rites inspired by Odin on the Yggdrasil, and these rites are simply another manifestation of the same universal and inaccessible mystery expressed by Christ in the crucifixion, then the war is indeed effectively comparable to Christ’s suffering in a simplistic way and therefore translates easily into the ‘crusading significance’ that Jones emphasised ‘is almost precisely what I do *not* think’.

What is more likely the case in Jones’ composition of this passage is that he is trying to use the interaction of multiple ‘overtones and undertones’ in language to express a more complex relationship between the war, Odin and Christ, than a univocal use of language is able to convey. Read in light of Martindale and de la Taille’s thinking about the relationship between paganism and Christianity, especially what de la Taille called the distinction between the ‘nefarious sacrifices of the pagans’ and the unique sacrifice of

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<sup>246</sup> All three of these quotations are found in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LP1/5, ‘Early Manuscript Drafts’ Part 4 of *In Parenthesis*.

<sup>247</sup> *MF*, 14-15.

Christ, but which have a similar superficial appearance,<sup>248</sup> Jones' use of theologically-charged language here shows the influence of the Patristic vision of Christ's sacrifice as one with the origin of creation and at the 'centre point of time'. The sacrifice of Christ in this sense appears only secondarily or obliquely through the indirect resonance of language. It is not at all meant to imply that the myth of Odin and the human sacrifices of northern European religion are somehow identical (either in kind or in effect) with the sacrifice of Christ, or by extension that the suffering of war is comparable with the suffering of Christ, and hence that they are invoked in the passage with identical purpose. Jones' understanding of 'shape' here as a single figure able to capture multiple 'facets' or presences at once in a dynamic relationship allows for the creation of a complex linguistic presence that witnesses to the 'sanctifying action' of Christ as abiding in nature and history but yet radically unique and distinct from it.

By the end of his composition and experimentation with word-choices, Jones had found what he called the right 'juxtaposition' of words to express the complex texture of his thinking about theological ideas in the context of the battlefield's violence. His more explicit references to the theology of Christ's sacrifice in the experimentations of his earlier drafts witness to the 'theological thinking' that went into the eventual, much more subtle word-choices. The fact that he eventually decided upon more subtle word-choices, however — ones that would not give the 'wrong evocation' — reinforces the suggestion that his 'theological thinking' in this passage is informed not by the vision of Odin and Christ as equally images of the 'dying god' but by the suggestion of Martindale and de la Taille that the 'dying god' witnesses in a partial way to the all-encompassing mystery of Christ's redemption.

### **The 'Dying God' and Christ in Mametz Wood**

The seventh and final part of *In Parenthesis*, titled 'The Five Unmistakeable Marks', witnesses not only the effects of violence on the battlefield but the vision of battle's destruction-in-action that has been foreshadowed throughout the book. Jones therefore implements the figures of myth and religion first invoked in the sight of the war's effects on the landscape with even more concrete urgency. When the soldiers first enter the wood, trees and men literally merge in the perception of the narrative and take on the aspect of the 'representative of the vernal spirit of vegetation', the 'Jack-in-the-Green' of English

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<sup>248</sup> MF, 369.

Maying rituals discussed by Frazer: ‘And now all the wood-ways live with familiar faces and your / mate moves like Jack o’ the Green’.<sup>249</sup> In the midst of the worst violence, Jones illustrates the chaos of fallen soldiers and trees with the mythical death of the Norse god Balder, who represents both ‘man’ and ‘tree’ at once:

in the tangled avenues  
fair Balder falleth everywhere  
and thunder-besom breakings  
bright the wood  
and a Golden Bough for  
Johnny and Jack  
and blasted oaks for Jerry  
and shrapnel the swift Jupiter for each expectant tree . . .<sup>250</sup>

The language of Frazer strongly marks the language of the passage in words like ‘thunder-besom’ and ‘golden bough’, which Frazer identifies as both names for ‘mistletoe’ in relation to the myths and rituals surrounding Balder (mentioned above).<sup>251</sup>

The climactic episode of Part 7 demonstrates most poignantly the way Jones transforms the vision of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ into a contest bearing strong similarities with the central ritual under investigation in Frazer’s study: the fighting between the ‘King of the Wood’ and his challenger. The narration describes an encounter between John Ball and a single German soldier in the midst of Mametz Wood, presenting a moment when—like the priest of Nemi—Ball must face another man and kill him in order to retain his position in the woods, or suffer death and cede his territory.<sup>252</sup> In this final section, Jones does not name the priest of Nemi or the ‘dying god’ as he does in the above-quoted passages, but the circumstances and the deliberate ambiguity of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ here in the narration’s language sets up a compelling parallel. The description of the combat between the two soldiers lasts nearly a page in the text:

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<sup>249</sup> *IP*, 168. See also James Frazer, *The Dying God*, vol. 4, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1911), 211.

<sup>250</sup> *IP*, 178.

<sup>251</sup> See Frazer, *Balder the Beautiful*, vol. 11, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edn.), 85, 286.

<sup>252</sup> The episode is said to closely follow a similar one from Jones’ own experience in Mametz. See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 42.

His light stick-bomb winged above your thorn-bush, and  
aged oak-timbers shiver and leaves shower like thrown blos-  
soms for a conqueror.

You tug at rusted pin—  
it gives unexpectedly and your fingers pressed to released  
flange.

You loose the thing into the underbrush.

Dark-faceted iron oval lobs heavily to fungus-cushioned  
dank, wobbles under low leaf to lie, near where the heel drew  
out just now; and tough root-fibres boomerang to top-most  
green filigree and earth clods flung disturb fresh fragile shoots  
that brush the sky.

You huddle closer to your mossy bed  
you make yourself scarce  
you scramble forward and pretend not to see,  
but ruby drops from young beech-sprigs—  
are bright your hands and face.

And the other one cries from the breaking-buckthorn.<sup>253</sup>

A confusion of men and trees, as in other passages in the chapter, subtly characterises Jones' language: the forms of the soldiers and their surrounding environment literally overlap and cannot be distinguished. When the enemy German throws his stick-bomb, for instance, the narration describes its effects in terms of the surrounding vegetation: the bomb is 'winged above your thorn-bush' and makes 'oak-timbers shiver and leaves shower', instead of directly describing any physical effect on the soldiers. When John Ball's grenade deploys, it is 'root-fibres' that explode and 'earth clods' that 'disturb fresh fragile shoots' and not human flesh that immediately suffers injury in the language. Even the blood that lands on the face and hands of John Ball—a signal of the injury suffered by the unseen German—is described as dripping 'from young beech-sprigs'; the cry of the wounded man is likewise 'from the breaking-buckthorn'. It is as if, in Kathleen Henderson Staudt's observation, 'the tree itself were bleeding' and crying out.<sup>254</sup> The scene therefore

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<sup>253</sup> *IP*, 169.

<sup>254</sup> Staudt, *Turn of a Civilization*, 92.

recalls the ritual of the priest of Nemi both in the parallels between the fighting circumstances and that of the ancient rite, and by making the injury suffered by the enemy German as one with the pathetic degradation and violence suffered by the landscape.

In Jones' earliest drafts of this passage, as in the passage from Part 4 discussed above, the action of this scene had stronger undertones of both a religious and nuptial character. The setting of the woods, first of all, 'where men come to their joys and their undoing', recalls the quasi-sexual role of the Priest of Nemi as the 'chaste consort' of Diana in a 'marriage' that is in fact consummated in the priest's death (or murder of his challenger) in combat. It is significant, therefore, that in the earliest drafts of this passage, the line 'aged oak-timbers shiver and leaves shower like thrown blos- / somes for a conqueror' read 'aged oak timbers shiver / and leaves fall like on bridal rain down'.<sup>255</sup>

With this language, the very fight of the men in the woods is a kind of 'marriage' with the Queen of the Woods, although the embrace is the bloody embrace of each other in death. The image of the 'Queen of the Woods' bestowing a single flower on the German and Welsh 'Hansel and Gronwy' lying dead 'in serious embrace' on the last pages of the book — an image Robert Graves also recounts as an actual sight from Mametz — also suggests this kind of 'nuptial' embrace.<sup>256</sup> A painting such as Jones' *Epiphany, 1941. Britannia and Germania Embracing* (fig. 27) has this feeling about it, which Miles and Shiel interpret as having a strong sexual undertone, but which ultimately depicts the murder of each by the other.<sup>257</sup> It is in fact an image of sexual frustration, bound up with the total frustration of life in the finality of death. The identity of the priests of Nemi as 'consorts' of the life of the woodland in the figure of Diana/Artemis is precisely their commitment to death at the hands of another man.

In this early draft, Jones furthermore complicates the 'priesthood' of these figures with some word-choices that deliberately invoke the sacrifice of Christ and the Mass. In the published version, quoted above, Jones includes a perplexing asyndeton to describe the blood of the enemy German Ball has injured (or killed) that falls on his hands and face: 'but ruby drops from young beech-sprigs— / are bright your hands and face'. One must fill in the preposition that falls between 'bright' and 'your', which one would assume would be 'on' because the sense of blood falling 'onto' the hands and face of John Ball is logical.

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<sup>255</sup>National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LP1/8, 'Early Manuscript Draft' of *In Parenthesis*, Part 7.

<sup>256</sup>*IP*, 185. Graves, *Goodbye*, 175.

<sup>257</sup>Miles and Shiel, *Maker Unmade*, 258.



**Figure 27, Epiphany 1941. Britannia and Germania Embracing (1941)**

The absence of proper conjoining grammar, however, speaks to the disorientation of the harrowing moment and the overpowering awareness of the blood of his enemy for which he is personally responsible.<sup>258</sup>

‘Bright’ is a striking adjective, often applied to the colour red (as in the sense conferred by ‘ruby’), because it not only indicates a vivid shade of a colour, but also it denotes something full of light, clarity, or even beauty. Although ‘holy’ is not a literal meaning of ‘bright’, light and holiness are often related in liturgical and biblical language, as in the Christian Eastern rite title for the first week of Easter as ‘Bright Week’, or the words of Isaiah 60:3 that ‘kings [shall come] to the brightness of thy rising’ (AV), understood as a prophecy of the adoration of Christ by the Magi at his birth. In *In Parenthesis*, Jones uses the word ‘bright’ to describe supernatural figures such as ‘bright Lucifer’, as well as the supernatural quality of the moon (‘that per-bright shiner stood for Her’), and the Apollo-like sun which he calls ‘the bright healer’.<sup>259</sup> Although still ambiguous, the description of the blood on John Ball’s face as simply ‘bright’ hints at some spiritual quality or sacredness.

Jones added the phrase ‘are bright’ only in the final manuscript stage of this passage, crossing out the transitive verb that appears in several pages of the early manuscript drafts of Part 7: ‘asperge’. The text in these early drafts reads, ‘ruby drops from young beech sprigs / asperge your hands + face’. Crossed out in the early drafts is also that ‘ruby drops . . . wet spatter on’ and ‘brush fine’, giving a more literal account of the physical sensation of his memory.<sup>260</sup> ‘Asperge’ strictly speaking also indicates a light touch of sprayed liquid (‘to sprinkle’ is the only definition in the OED), but for the Roman Catholic David Jones, the ‘*Asperges me*’ chant sung at the very beginning of every Mass that quotes Psalm 50/51:9 (‘Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed,’ [DR]), in which the priest sprinkles the congregation with holy water, could not but be invoked in this usage.<sup>261</sup>

In the ‘*Asperges*’ ritual in the Mass, the sprinkling of holy water (in certain ceremonies with a cut tree-sprig) recalls the sprinkling of blood in the Hebrew Scriptures

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<sup>258</sup> Thomas Dilworth speaks of Jones’ intense sense of ‘emotional fratricide’ and guilt in having survived the war, compounded by a traumatic childhood sense of ‘fratricide’ in his older brother’s untimely death from tuberculosis when they were teenagers. This sense of guilt arguably emerges in a strong way in this particular scene. See *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 242.

<sup>259</sup> *IP*, 84, 39, 62.

<sup>260</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LP1/8.

<sup>261</sup> See Cabrol, *Roman Missal*, 18-19.

as the symbol of the covenant (cf. Exodus 24:4-8) and hence the words of St. Paul in Hebrews 12:24, '[ye are come] . . . to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel' (DR). The 'blood sprinkling' is the blood shed by Christ in the passion. Jones was deeply aware of the 'many overtones or undertones' of words that he always deliberately intended to invoke with his particular word choices. The blood of the German on John Ball's face — a shedding of blood Ball himself has inflicted — therefore takes on a subtle and indirect association with Christ's blood in this early version.

As in the Odin passage of part 4, the connotations of the word 'asperge' could, on the surface, be taken as an instance of direct 'comparison' between the suffering of soldiers and the suffering of Christ. Again, however, according to the nuanced 'theological thinking' Jones developed from his encounter with Frazer, Martindale and de la Taille, the oblique presence of Christ's sacrifice here by means of 'undertone' most likely speaks to the presence of its 'sanctifying action' on a much deeper level than direct 'comparison' can express. Jones' original use of the word 'asperge', in any case, points to a complex theological resonance in the conception of the image. At the same time, his decision to edit it out and substitute it with the more diffuse spiritual identity carried by the strange use of 'bright', supports the suggestion that he thought 'asperge' might give the 'wrong evocation' and imply an inappropriate sanctification of the violence itself.

Jones' editing process, both in the passages from Part 4 and Part 7, witnesses to the theological thinking behind his 'many-faceted' images of the battlefield, especially in his deliberation about the 'shape in words', the particular 'words used & their juxtaposition with other words'. As in the Frontispiece, the central 'shape' of words first of all communicates the 'wounded trees and wounded men' of the battlefield as directly comparable with the figures of Frazer's 'dying god'. The resonance with the sacrifice of Christ in his word-choices is at once deliberately evoked and deliberately oblique, making its appearance only in the 'undertones' of connotation and association, and in doing so witnessing to Jones' unusual vision of Christ's sacrifice as mysteriously 'present' in the suffering of the battlefield but only in a hidden and more cosmic way.

### **The 'Tree of the Cross' as the Renewal of the Land**

In the fourth part of *In Parenthesis*, roughly at the centre of the book, Jones includes one extraordinarily significant exception to his otherwise indirect references to the passion of Christ. In the 'Boast of Dai Greatcoat', the Welsh private Dai represents the 'universal

soldier' and describes his role in some of the most significant battles of Western myth and history. In one episode, he finds himself face to face with Christ crucified, not in his place or as a fellow sufferer—but assisting at his crucifixion. Dai appears as a Roman soldier under the leadership of 'that Dux bat-blind and bent' (i.e., Longinus, the traditional leader of the Roman legion in Jerusalem on duty to crucify Christ), and '[holds] the tunics of these' who nail Christ to the cross, watching them 'work the terrible embroidery that he put / on'; that is, the violent disfiguring of Christ's body that he accepts, and which constitutes his 'immolation'. Maurice de la Taille is at pains to reiterate how 'the Passion is the work of the executioners' ('the Romans') and that Christ's sacrifice is constituted by his acceptance of this suffering, actively anticipated in his self-offering in the Last Supper with the words 'this is my body'.<sup>262</sup>

Vincent Sherry suggests that Dai 'views the crucifixion as a sacrifice to a pagan war-god, specifically Odin', as in Dai's claim that he 'kept the boding raven / from the Dish' he alludes to a pagan practice that 'involved the hanging of captives as propitiatory meals for the raven', the symbol of Odin and war.<sup>263</sup> Although Christ evokes Odin obliquely here (as Odin invoked him a few pages before in the narration of the wood's destruction), Christ on the cross does not appear as just another 'wounded man' on a 'wounded tree' as Odin does, or, moreover, the devastated woodland of the WWI battlefield which Jones invokes the figure of Odin to illustrate. Here instead, man and wood together appear as a living tree. Jones simply calls the crucifixion, 'the Tree / whose Five Sufficient Blossoms / yield for us'.<sup>264</sup> Jones capitalises 'tree' here, as he does not in the other passages that indirectly invoke the cross, in order to indicate its special identity in the passage as representing a theological mystery.<sup>265</sup>

The 'Five Sufficient Blossoms' (on the 'Tree') refer to the five wounds of Christ's body in his crucifixion (two in his hands, two in his feet, and one in his side), retained even in his resurrected body (cf. John 20). Mirroring the 'bilingual inscription' of the human body and the landscape that underlies Jones' descriptions of vegetation throughout the book, Christ's wounds are described with language of flowers and fruit, as here the vegetation is alive and flourishing instead of destroyed and dying. The 'Blossoms',

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<sup>262</sup> *MF*, 10, 369. See especially his explanation on 366-69.

<sup>263</sup> Vincent Sherry, 'The Ineluctable Monolinguality of the Heroic', in *David Jones: Man and Poet*, ed. John Matthias (Oroono, ME: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), 239.

<sup>264</sup> *IP*, 84.

<sup>265</sup> See *IP*, 67, 177.

furthermore, 'yield', making use of a three-fold sense of that word meaning: to 'bear fruit'; to 'submit'; and also to 'pay a debt or ransom' [OED 'yield, v.' 4, 8d, 14a]. The various senses refer at once to the effects of the sacrifice of Christ as that which pays the debt of sin, an action achieved by Christ's submission to suffering, which in turn produces the 'fruit' of eternal life and the eventual restoration of all creation from the effects of sin and death.

The only words of Christ from the cross in Jones' short passage — '*Apples ben ripe in my gardayne*' — likewise speak of 'fruit', and hence living vegetation. They are a direct quotation from a medieval devotional poem about the crucifixion sometimes called *Quia Amore Languo* (also known as 'In a Valley of this Restless Mind'), in which Christ speaks as a lover to his beloved ('Mannes soul'). Despite his beloved's treachery in allowing him to be crucified, Christ invites 'mannes soul' into his 'gardayne', where 'apples' are ripe, images which draw on the Song of Songs and symbolise his eternal and triumphant love shown in his suffering.<sup>266</sup> Here is not the sexual frustration of castration and death that characterises the service of the Queen of the Woods but an image of 'play' and the fruitfulness of love, which happens in the traditional place of nuptial union, the 'garden'.

In this depiction of the crucifixion, Jones uses the same 'deeper philosophy of the relation of the life of man to the life of nature' that Frazer observed in the myths and rituals of the 'dying god' but as 'turned inside out' by the power of grace. What one witnesses in this image is not the shambles of human sacrifice, but the true 'renewal of the land' that informed a desire unachievable in the strictly temporal dimension, and hence, in pagan ritual, or, in keeping with Jones' parallel, in the carnage of war. Human and vegetable forms in this image indeed form a 'bilingual inscription' as in the 'dying god' myths and the landscape of the war portrayed throughout *In Parenthesis*; the 'Tree' stands for both the wood of the cross and the body of Christ upon it—that is, the acceptance of bodily suffering that constitutes his sacrifice. The effect of this sacrifice, however, manifests a radical transformation in the order of nature by grace, and draws on the ancient tradition of liturgical poetry in which the cross is portrayed as the 'Tree of Life', intimately and indistinguishably bound with the life of Christ in his self-offering sacrifice. The 'vegetable' imagery, furthermore, strongly alludes to the 're-presentation' of Christ's

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<sup>266</sup> See 'In a Valley of this Restless Mind', in *Moral Love Songs and Laments*, ed. Susan Greer Fein (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1998), 68. See also Song of Songs 2:5.

sacrifice under the ‘vegetable’ forms of the Eucharist, and in Jones’ case directly speaks to his vision of the Mass in the midst of the WWI wasteland. Jones’ specific appropriation of this tradition will be the subject of the following chapters of this thesis.

Jones most powerfully illustrates the contrast between the ‘living tree’ of the cross and the ‘Waste Land’ of the war’s ‘human sacrifice’ in his placement of the crucifixion sequence at the literal centre of his narrative. The pagan ‘rite’ of the war comes to a ceremonial close with the Queen of the Wood’s distribution of flowers in the last pages of Part 7. Here the English and German rivals in the service of the Queen of the Wood—like the priest of Nemi and his challenger—lie in the ‘serious embrace’ of death as the Queen bestows laurels on her loyal consorts. ‘Some she gives white berries / some she gives brown’.<sup>267</sup> The end of the book, however, does not quite arrive until a page later and ends abruptly — even absurdly — with the suddenly disorienting statement that

The geste says this and the man who was on the field . . . and  
who wrote the book . . . the man who does not know this  
has not understood anything.<sup>268</sup>

These last lines indicate scepticism: although the author has tried to represent his war experience, such a representation can never truly make itself understood. Indeed, the reader witnesses no obvious renewal of the land: Mametz Wood lies in shambles and Jones does not choose to include any narration of its regrowth.

Tom Bromwell has observed, however, that the sense of time in *In Parenthesis* is not simply linear but ‘apocalyptic’, meaning that it situates its action in relation not only to a chronological narrative, but also to the ‘end’ of time in the sense of eternity.<sup>269</sup> Jones indicates in his introduction to the book that the title of *In Parenthesis* refers to ‘our curious existence here’ in the linear and time-bound existence of earthly life, which is ‘altogether in parenthesis’.<sup>270</sup> The dimension ‘outside’ that ‘parenthesis’, which comes before it and follows after, and in a strong sense also persists with it, is the ‘timeless’, changeless existence of eternity. As the war was a ‘parenthesis’ in the span of Jones’ life, so the experience of earthly life is a ‘parenthesis’ in the span of eternity. And yet in the

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<sup>267</sup> *IP*, 185.

<sup>268</sup> *IP*, 187.

<sup>269</sup> Bromwell, ‘The Apocalyptic Paratext’, (forthcoming).

<sup>270</sup> *IP*, xv.

language of Martindale, the sacrifice of Christ ‘in eternity’ —the origin of time and the ‘end’ of time— is ‘the centre point of time’ because eternity is present to all points of time at once.

Responding to Thomas Dilworth’s identification of the structure of *The Anathemata* as governed by a narrative ‘centre’ that meditates on the Paschal Mystery (Christ’s crucifixion and its effects), W. David Soud further insists that its form is ‘both linear and circular’ in that it juxtaposes a ““diachronic” superstructure’ that ‘celebrate[s] the temporal and the creaturely’ with a ‘theological, “synchronic” deep structure’ that ‘gestures towards the Paschal Mystery’ and ‘endows the creaturely with meaning’.<sup>271</sup> A similar, albeit simpler ‘juxtaposition’ exists in the structure of *In Parenthesis* that anticipates the grander scale on which Jones plays out his vision of ‘the relationship between historical time and eternity’ in light of the sacrifice of Christ.<sup>272</sup> In *In Parenthesis*, Jones alludes to the vision of Christ’s eternal sacrifice as the ‘centre’ of time by placing his only direct illustration of the crucifixion in the ‘centre’ of the book in something of the same way he does in *The Anathemata*. The ‘end’ of the book in light of its apocalyptic scope is not the end of the episode that corresponds to its final words on p. 187 of the Faber edition: it is roughly the ‘centre’ (p. 83), in which the reader encounters the sacrifice of Christ from eternity in the midst of the ‘Waste Land’. Here the reader witnesses it much like Jones did in his brief vision of the Mass described in the Introduction to this thesis. Here the ‘living tree’ of Christ’s cross appears as the ‘renewal of the land’ ostensibly missing from the Queen of the Wood’s closing ceremony in Mametz. The ‘human sacrifice’ of the war in its linear framework may be absurd and without visible redemption, but in Jones’ paradigm via Martindale, Dawson and de la Taille, redemption enters history from an altogether different dimension.

Christ’s cross as a ‘living tree’, which appears at the centre of *In Parenthesis* in the ‘Boast of Dai Greatcoat’, and therefore in the midst of the war, is the prototype for Jones’ depiction of the theological mystery of the passion as a primary subject throughout the rest of his *oeuvre*. After the publication of *In Parenthesis* in 1937, Jones’ work (both visual and verbal) eventually shifted from a direct narration of his experience in the war to a narration of the ‘things of this island’, and of what he called ‘our dear West’.<sup>273</sup> These ‘things’ include the sprawling network of Arthurian myths, British history and language, even

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<sup>271</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 168-70. Soud, *Divine Cartographies*, 130.

<sup>272</sup> Soud, *Divine Cartographies*, 130.

<sup>273</sup> *SL*, 82. *AN*, 115.

geology, but at the centre again and again is the mystery of Christ's sacrifice on the 'tree of the cross' and its 're-presentation' in the Mass and the Eucharist.

Evident in the narration of the crucifixion in *In Parenthesis* is the beginning of Jones' adaptation of the traditional poetic language used to meditate on the theological mystery of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Liturgical hymns such as *Vexilla Regis*, *Crux Fidelis* and the medieval absorption of their themes in the Old English *The Dream of the Rood* provided Jones with models for making the 'contactual' experience of 'wounded trees and wounded men' in the WWI battlefield into 'a kind of "Praise"' for the sacrifice of Christ. In the final two chapters of this thesis, I will explore how Jones' vision of the sacrifice of Christ as a 'living tree' at the 'centre point of time' and in the midst of the WWI waste land informs his images of crucifixion as well as his inscriptions of words from the liturgies of Holy Week. This analysis will assist, furthermore, in understanding Jones' visually-charged verbal presentations of the mystery of Christ's sacrifice as a 'living tree' in *The Anathemata* (1952) and *The Sleeping Lord* (1974).

## Chapter 4.

### Renewing the Landscape in Jones' Images of Crucifixion (1919-1948), and Inscriptions (1940-1956)

In 1969, a military historian named Colin Hughes, inspired by the narrative of *In Parenthesis*, made a trip to Mametz Wood in northern France to locate the various features of the terrain described in Jones' writing. Hughes took a series of photographs of the place, and sent them to David Jones to tell him about his venture and to emphasise that it was the accuracy and detail of Jones' work that had made it possible. Jones was delighted with the photographs, and commented especially on one taken of the interior of the wood itself (fig. 28), now entirely regrown after more than 50 years:

I have so often wondered what vestige, if any, remained of that woodland . . . In about 1919 I remember seeing a photograph of the area in some magazine & it appeared as a total 'Waste-land' it wasn't a very good photograph, but a patch of shell-torn & lopt trees & stumps was all that appeared to be left of Mametz Wood — completely unrecognizable — but now, sixty years later, it is clear from your photograph that the 'Queen of the Woods' has revived her groves + it reminded me of that thing in Ezechiel about the wasteland of dry bones: 'Son of man, can these bones live?' or the folk song John Barleycorn — 'And Barleycorn stood up again & that surprised them all'!

Jones goes on to say that the image of the re-grown woodland 'looked amazingly as I remembered it in the eye of my mind'.<sup>274</sup> To witness its regrowth, even in a photograph, must have felt like witnessing a miracle, especially in light of his admission from 1966 that the 'wounded trees and wounded men' of Mametz still clung vividly in his memory.

Jones' commentary shows the vision of the re-grown landscape as mingled with a vision of the resurrection of the human body. The 'thing in Ezechiel' refers to the Hebrew prophet's vision of the resurrection (Ezekiel 37:1-10) in which the 'dry bones' of a 'wasteland' before him miraculously re-joint, regain their flesh, and stand up again as living human beings. The image of the 'revivified . . . groves' of the 'Queen of the Woods'

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<sup>274</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Letters to Colin Hughes NLW MS 21830E, Letter of 18 November 1969, pp. 1-2.



**Figure 28.** Colin Hughes, 'Strip Trench, more than fifty years after the battle' (1969).

distinctively responds to Jones' witness of human death in that landscape, which he had compared in *In Parenthesis* with figures of the 'dying god', including John Barleycorn explicitly.<sup>275</sup> His commentary on the re-grown woods at Mametz as a continuous figure with the resurrection of the human body therefore capitalises on the 'resurrection' narrative embedded in the 'dying god' figure, and reflects the complimentary — but converse — logic of his association of the human body and the landscape as they suffered destruction in *In Parenthesis*.

Jones had long anticipated this 'logic' and vision of the re-grown 'Waste Land' in his art, especially his depictions of the sacrifice of Christ and its special 're-presentation' in the Roman Catholic liturgies of the passion. It is the same logic informing the eucharistic theology of Martindale and de la Taille, in which the living 'body and blood' of Christ becomes present under the vegetable accidents of bread and wine in the Eucharist, and make present Christ's dynamic 'sanctifying action'<sup>276</sup> that transforms the entire created world into his presence. Jones would have encountered this theology just at the precarious moment in which he was reading Frazer and saw the photo he mentions above of Mametz Wood become a 'Waste Land' ('about 1919'). This theology would furthermore have intersected with his personal encounters with the Roman Catholic liturgies of the passion, particularly the Latin hymns that were sung in the main liturgy of Good Friday, the *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis*, and the symbolism of their placement in the liturgy as pointing especially to the inseparability of the cross and the Eucharist.

The central image of these two hymns, as well their reception in the Old English *Dream of the Rood*, is that of a 'living tree' meant to stand for both Christ and the cross at once in the mystery of Christ's sacrifice.<sup>277</sup> The image of the cross as a 'living tree' would extend to the portrayal of the entire 'renewal of the land' in Jones' art, especially his images of crucifixion. The association of the WWI battlefield and the sacrifice of Christ again show themselves as inseparable in Jones' mind but under a different form. As the sacrifice of Christ lingers in the 'undertones' of his images and allusions to the 'dying god', the WWI battlefield lingers in the 'undertones' of his images of Christ's sacrifice, on

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<sup>275</sup> See the narration of soldiers digging up the remains of another soldier as they make a trench *IP*, 43 ('They've / served him barbarously—poor Johnny'), as well as Jones' misattribution to John Barleycorn on *IP*, 182 and 224, note 39. See the full text of 'John Barleycorn' in the *Appendix of Short Texts* in this thesis, no. VI.

<sup>276</sup> *MF*, 216.

<sup>277</sup> See the *Appendix of Short Texts*, nos. I-II, for the full text and translations of both the *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* as they appeared in Jones' missal.

the one hand in the subtle allusions to the battlefield's destruction (such as the 'lopt trees'), but on the other in the image of 'wounded trees and wounded men' turned 'inside out' in the continuous figure of the human body (especially the body of Christ) and the landscape as 'living' and evoking the resurrection.

In this chapter, I will trace the 'renewal' or regrowth of the war landscape in Jones' images of the sacrifice of Christ, especially the crucifixion, in light of his immersion in Catholic liturgy, particularly the liturgy of Good Friday and the Easter Vigil and their accompanying hymns, prayers and liturgical objects. Jones' presentation of the sacrifice of Christ after his painting of *Vexilla Regis* (1948), which summarises many of these themes with unique synthesis, moves away from images of landscape *per se*, but engages on an increasingly literal level with the words and objects of the Roman Catholic liturgy itself in order to present its underlying theological ideas in an artistic form. His 'painted inscriptions' of the 1950s and 60s especially show him seeking to present the paradoxical theology of Christ's sacrifice on the cross as expressed in the *Vexilla Regis*, *Crux Fidelis* and *Dream of the Rood*, but also in light of the eucharistic theology of Martindale and de la Taille. In these images he relies on the visual presence of words themselves in 'juxtaposition' with each other, as well as a more abstract reliance on colour and overall visual 'shape'. These portrayals furthermore intersect with Jones' poetry that presents the theology of Christ's sacrifice as 'a direct object of literary representation',<sup>278</sup> which will be the subject of the following chapter.

### **Encountering the 'Tree of the Cross' in the Liturgy**

Jones' 'first sight of a Mass' was in the midst of the WWI battlefield c. 1917. During the same postwar period in the 1920s that Jones was first developing his theological thinking about the sacrifice of Christ under the influence of Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson, he was also encountering the sacramental 're-presentation' of the sacrifice of Christ in regular attendance at the liturgies of Roman Catholicism.<sup>279</sup> The particular commemoration of the sacrifice and suffering of Christ, which reaches its apex in 'Holy Week' and especially the

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<sup>278</sup> Domestico, *Poetry and Theology*, 5.

<sup>279</sup> *DGC*, 248. For other accounts of Jones' later encounters with the liturgy c. 1919-1935 especially in Westminster Cathedral and Ditchling see: Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 63, 68-69, 74; Ewan Clayton, 'David Jones and the Guild of St. Joseph and St. Dominic', in *David Jones in Ditchling*, ed. Derek Shiel (Ditchling, Sussex: Ditchling Museum, 2003), 17-31; and Jonathan Miles, *Eric Gill and David Jones at Capel-y-ffin* (Bridgend, Wales: Seren, 1992). See also his 1932 account of the 'Vegetation Rites of the Redeemed' (the Holy Saturday liturgy) in *DGC*, 51-52.

Friday preceding Easter (Good Friday), was of profoundest importance for David Jones. Adam Schwartz writes:

Jones claimed once that it was while composing *The Anathemata* that he had occasion to ‘consider the Tree of the Cross as the axial beam round which all things move.’ But he also admitted that Christ’s Passion became ‘almost an obsession’ at a young age, as, when assigned scripture to study, he usually skipped the appointed passages and instead read accounts of the Passion. His Good Friday cross-carrying in the family garden at age six tends to confirm this sense of a lifelong concern for the Crucifixion, and some of his early visual art also substantiates it. Jones’s fascination with the subject persisted, as he even kept a nail in a chalice in his room as a constant reminder of Christ’s death.<sup>280</sup>

The historical event and theological significance of Christ’s death and resurrection were a compelling subject for Jones from his earliest age, and therefore preoccupied him on a deep level well before the experience of the war or his encounter with theology. The Roman Catholic liturgy (especially the liturgies of the passion) provided Jones with a way to meditate on the mystery of Christ’s death he would not otherwise have possessed. In the liturgy of Good Friday that Jones would have known in the 1920s and up to 1955, he encountered two significant works of art that would profoundly influence his own portrayal of the sacrifice of Christ across various media. These were the 6th-century Latin hymns *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis*, which, in Jones’ words, describe ‘the Cross as a Tree in concise and very noble and moving language’.<sup>281</sup>

These hymns summarise the imagery and theology of what is now often called the ‘Cult of the Cross’ tradition, which follows the prophecy of Isaiah 11:10-12 about the re-grown ‘root of Jesse’ (a symbol of the restored Davidic kingship and the Messiah) that also stands ‘for an ensign of the people’ (AV and DR). When applied to Christ, this dual image interprets Christ’s suffering on the cross, which is understood as the central manifestation of his ‘kingship’ and status as the Messiah, as a ‘battle’ and hence the cross itself as a victorious ‘ensign’ or ‘war banner’; the cross is also a ‘life-giving tree’.<sup>282</sup> This latter image has resonance with the ‘vine’ of John 15, a metaphor Christ uses to describe

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<sup>280</sup> Schwartz, *Third Spring*, 335. Jones recounts the ‘cross-carrying’ event in *DGC*, 246-7.

<sup>281</sup> *DGC*, 149.

<sup>282</sup> *EA*, 39.

himself, as well as the ‘Tree of Life’ of Genesis 3 and Revelation 22. Jones furthermore explains in his essay ‘Art and Sacrament’ (1955) that the image of the ‘tree’

. . . presupposes the sign-world and looks back to foreshadowing rites and arts of mediation and conjugation stretching back for tens of thousands of years in actual pre-history. Or, to speak in theological terms, the Tree of the Cross presupposes the other Tree, and stretches back to the ‘truly necessary sin of Adam’ and the ‘happy fault’ . . .<sup>283</sup>

Jones makes the above statement in the context of assigning the quality of *poiesis* to Christ’s sacrifice not only ‘in the Cenacle’ (that is, in the Last Supper and first Mass) but also in the suffering of the cross itself, which he says is indeed a ‘making’ and not just a ‘doing’ because of the ‘sign-world’ it presupposed. This ‘sign-world’ includes the imagery of the Hebrew scriptures, but also the gamut of tree symbols throughout history that includes the ‘tree’ imagery of pre-Christian paganism seen in the ‘dying god’.

He points to the line ‘*ars ut artem falleret*’ (‘art by art would be beguiled’) of the *Crux Fidelis* from the Good Friday liturgy as a justification for this claim, because it refers to the ‘art’ of Christ on the cross as that which outsmarted the plan of the devil, who had originally deceived humanity by tricking them into eating from the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil’ (Genesis 3 [AV]). Jones was impressed by a similar line in the ‘Preface for the Cross’, a prayer said in the liturgies of Holy Week and other feasts in honour of the cross, which reads: ‘*et qui in ligno vincébat, in ligno quoque vincerétur*’ (‘and he that overcame on the tree, on the tree might be overcome’).<sup>284</sup> Jones’ appreciation of these verses begins to indicate his vision of the sacrifice of Christ itself, expressed in the ‘shape’ of the liturgy, as the greatest work of art.

The hymns and prayers of these liturgies, especially the *Crux Fidelis* and *Vexilla Regis*, explain in a poetic ‘shape’ the most important theology underlying the liturgies of Holy Week and its presentation of the Paschal Mystery. Most significantly, the image of the living tree from these hymns expresses in poetic language what would be defined as the unusual theology of ‘*latria*’ (or ‘adoration’) for the cross, in which the cross, also pierced with nails and covered with Christ’s blood, becomes so deeply entangled with Christ’s

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<sup>283</sup> *EA*, 168.

<sup>284</sup> Fernand Cabrol (ed.), *Holy Week: The Complete Offices in Latin and English*, 4th edn. (London: B. Herder, 1931), 15.

suffering upon it that it blurs with him in mystical assimilation. The theology of ‘*latria*’ expressed in these hymns is best articulated by Thomas Aquinas, who would have been Jones’ own source, as can be seen in comparing Aquinas’ account with Jones’ note on ‘*latria*’ in *The Anathemata*.<sup>285</sup> The cross, Aquinas says, is due the reverence of Christ himself, both because it ‘represents’ him (as an image does) and because it is literally ‘united’ to him by being ‘saturated with his blood’.<sup>286</sup> The authority to which Aquinas appeals in this question is unusual. He cites neither the Church Fathers nor Scripture (the most common theological authorities to which he appeals in the *Summa*) but the *Vexilla Regis* hymn itself, quoting the 6th verse, which begins: ‘*O crux ave, spes unica*’.

A line such as ‘*Arbor decora et fulgida / ornata regis purpura*’ (‘O bright and dazzling tree / adorned with the purple of the king’), from the *Vexilla Regis* poetically expresses this mystical understanding of the union of the cross with Christ. In this image, the ‘tree’ of the cross radiates light and is covered with kingly garments. Strictly speaking, however, the kingly purple ‘garments’ are Christ’s blood, and what is shining is Christ himself in supernatural glory. The cross becomes a symbol for the entirety of the supernatural mystery of Christ’s sacrifice unable to be distinguished from his own life in his salvific suffering. The refrain of the *Crux Fidelis*, furthermore, calls the cross ‘*inter omnes, arbor una nobilis / nulla silva talem profert fronde flore germine*’ (‘tree noble amongst all / no forest could produce such leaves, flowers, fruit’). The tactile ‘leaves’ and ‘fruit’ allegorically embody the spiritual merits of Christ’s death, but also hint at the life of Christ as the origin of creation and the natural world. The imagery of living vegetation, furthermore, has a strong allusion to the Eucharist, which, like the ‘Body of Christ’, has been portrayed as the ‘fruit’ of the ‘tree’ of the cross because it re-presents, under the form of vegetable bread and wine, Christ’s body in his sacrifice as a nourishing food.<sup>287</sup> In this ‘nourishment’, the Eucharist enacts what de la Taille calls ‘an Incarnation continued’: God’s dynamic, ‘sanctifying action’ that turns human beings, and through them the natural world, ‘into Christ’.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> *AN*, 165, note 2.

<sup>286</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae of Thomas Aquinas* III, Q. 25, Art. 4, ‘Respondeo’, ed. and trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 2nd and rev. edn. (London: Oates and Washburne, 1920).

<sup>287</sup> See especially the second chapter (‘The Apple and the Eucharist: Foods for a Theological Aesthetics’) of Ann W. Astell, *Eating Beauty: The Eucharist and the Spiritual Arts of the Middle Ages* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2016), 27-61.

<sup>288</sup> *MF*, 216, 213.

The imagery and theological symbolism of these hymns speaks directly to their place in the liturgy. David Jones would have been most familiar not only with what is now known as the ‘Tridentine’ (or ‘Extraordinary’) form of the Roman Catholic Mass, but especially with the form of it that existed before the experimental changes gradually put in place by Pius XII in the 1950s, and leading up to the major liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council (from the mid-1960s).<sup>289</sup> *Crux Fidelis* (also sometimes called by the first words of its first verse, ‘*Pange Lingua*’<sup>290</sup>) appears in Jones’ 1931 missal as part of the section titled, ‘The Adoration of the Cross’, during which a relic (or image) of the cross is venerated, first in a procession of the ministers, and then by the congregation who come forward and make a gesture of reverence (such as kissing it). During the ministers’ procession, the ‘Reproaches’ are sung (the alternating verses of Latin and Greek that Jones mentions in his introduction to *The Anathemata*<sup>291</sup>); during the veneration by the congregation, the *Crux Fidelis* is sung.

The *Vexilla Regis*, on the other hand, accompanies an even more symbolic procession in the liturgy, which would have had profound significance for David Jones. In Jones’ day, Good Friday (the commemoration of Christ’s suffering and death) was the one day in the year in which the faithful were not allowed to receive the Eucharist; only the priest received it. Abbot Cabrol writes that: ‘strictly speaking [the ‘Liturgy of the Presanctified’ of Good Friday] is not a Mass because there is no sacrifice. Bread and wine are neither offered nor consecrated, the priest communicating with the Host consecrated the previous day’.<sup>292</sup> The painful absence of the sacrifice of the Mass and the people’s communion therefore stood as a visceral reminder of the deprivation of Christ’s physical presence in his death—a symbol that David Jones found particularly moving. The presence of Christ in the figure of the cross itself in the Good Friday liturgy therefore largely took the place normally commanded by the eucharistic host. In the poignant moment of the priest’s communion, the *Vexilla Regis* accompanied a special procession of a single host of the Eucharist (from a side chapel where it has been reserved during the previous day’s liturgy of ‘Maundy Thursday’) for consumption by the priest at the central altar of the

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<sup>289</sup> The records of these changes are contained in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (Rome, Italy: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis) 1939-1959.

<sup>290</sup> Not to be confused with the 12th-c. ‘*Pange Lingua*’ of Thomas Aquinas (sung on Holy Thursday), which was inspired by this older hymn.

<sup>291</sup> See *AN*, 13.

<sup>292</sup> Cabrol, ‘The Mass of the Presanctified’, in *Holy Week*, 269.

church.<sup>293</sup> The commentary by Abbot Cabrol in Jones' missal states that the appearance of the *Vexilla Regis* at this particular part of the liturgy emphasises how 'the idea of the Cross is inseparable from that of the Eucharist'.<sup>294</sup>

The *Vexilla Regis* procession strongly emphasised the unity therefore of the two 'vegetable' signs of the Body of Christ in Catholicism: the 'tree of the cross', become one with Christ according to the theology of 'latria' by being covered in his blood, and the 'Real Presence' of the 'Body and Blood' of Christ under the form of vegetable-based bread and wine. Not only the imagery of the *Vexilla Regis* chant but also and especially its particular place in this moment of the Good Friday liturgy would have powerfully shown forth the theology of the Eucharist that Jones had read about in Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson: here was the embodiment, in both art and sacrament, of God's dynamic union with all of creation through Christ's sacrifice. Given the clinging image of 'wounded trees and wounded men' that would have been relatively fresh in Jones' mind in the early 1920s, the image of Christ on the cross as the 'living tree', and the renewal of the entirety of creation in the Eucharist would have had a forceful and personally healing significance for Jones, and would have reminded him of his first vision of the Mass in the midst of the WWI waste land.

This part of the liturgy, however, was completely changed in the 1950s when in 1955 the faithful were permitted to receive communion on Good Friday, essentially eliminating the need for the special procession of the eucharistic host— with all of its symbolism — for consumption by the priest alone. Jones was deeply bewildered and wrote to René Hague in 1955,

I don't agree with this Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites whereby the Faithful are to be given the Sacrament on Good Friday. It seems to me insensitive to the whole shape of the mythus & altogether wrong artistically and altogether a break with something about Good Friday that is found in the early centuries — Their argument is that if the Celebrant consumes the Preconsecrated host at the 'Mass' of the presanctified then it is right the Faithful to communicate — I think that a completely wrong headed argument — I mean the celebrant silently

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<sup>293</sup> That is, Holy Thursday, the liturgy commemorating the Last Supper of Christ with his disciples before his death, and in which the Eucharist was instituted; i.e. the first Mass. See Cabrol, *Holy Week*, 167-175.

<sup>294</sup> See Cabrol, *Holy Week*, 269.

communicating from a solitary host and the broken & stripped forms & empty tabernacle have a great rightness whereas a general communion of the people will be quite a different matter. & something which belongs properly to Easter Day, don't you think?<sup>295</sup>

In 1958, the *Vexilla Regis* hymn was taken out of the liturgy altogether and placed into the Vespers service of the two Sundays preceding Holy Week, an action which prompted a further outpouring of objections from David Jones and many enraged letters to *The Tablet*. The best known of these letters now appears in *Epoch and Artist* under the title 'The Eclipse of a Hymn' in which Jones is at pains to describe how the removal of the *Vexilla Regis* from the liturgy is 'no ordinary loss'.<sup>296</sup>

Jones was especially bothered at the aesthetic insensibility of the changes, which he saw as 'altogether wrong artistically', and 'a break' with 'the whole shape of the mythus'. It was precisely in this 'insensitive' artistic failure that the profound and multi-faceted theology at work in the liturgy would fail to be communicated. For Jones, the 'shape' of the liturgy as an artwork was itself a vessel of theological truth and one of the most important means of transmitting the mystery at hand. Jones' particularly passionate response to the liturgical changes of Good Friday suggests the profound personal significance for him of the 'inseparability of the cross and the Eucharist' as a counter to the vision of 'wounded trees and wounded men' that haunted him from Mametz. The removal of the *Vexilla Regis* and its eucharistic symbolism from the Good Friday liturgy must have struck him as a fresh bruising of a very old wound — a vision of the 'Waste Land' all over again. One of the most poignant images of the 'renewal of the land' by Christ's sacrifice was suddenly gone.

Although I will discuss the Old English poem *The Dream of the Rood* as an artistic model for Jones in more detail in the context of Jones' poetry in the following chapter, it is important to mention the significance of this poem in relation to the liturgy and to the theology of '*latrìa*' imaged by the 'living tree' in the Good Friday hymns. The anonymous Old English dream vision images the Paschal Mystery from the unusual perspective of the cross itself as it suffers with Christ. It tells the story of its origin as a living tree cut down from the forest, made to be the instrument of Christ's death and eventually to become a

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<sup>295</sup> Fisher Rare Book Library, David Jones Papers Box 1, Jones to René Hague 1 November 1955.

<sup>296</sup> *EA*, 261.

symbol of Christ's glory, seen by the narrator of the poem as *'hwilum . . . mid wætan bestemed . . . hwilum mid since gegyrwed'* ('sometimes . . . soaked with wetness . . . sometimes adorned with treasure').<sup>297</sup> The resemblance with the image from the *Vexilla Regis* of the 'living tree' both covered with the blood of Christ and shining in the glory of the resurrection is clear. At moments, furthermore, the language of the poem takes on a deliberate ambiguity so that it is unclear whether Christ or the cross itself is speaking, such as when the cross says *'þurhdrifan hi me mid deorcum næglum'* ('they pierced me with dark nails').<sup>298</sup> The language therefore identifies the cross and Christ as mysteriously indistinguishable.

Jones intuited a relationship between the *Vexilla* and the *Dream*, writing to René Hague in 1974: 'In the A.S. *Dream of the Rood* it does speak of axemen felling the tree at the holt-edge — and I've long wondered if the marvel of O.E. poetry was in any way "influenced" by the *Vexilla Regis* and was told by a chap a little back that it was now considered pretty certain that there was a link-up between *The Dream of the Rood* and the somewhat earlier Latin *Vexilla Regis* & the *Crux Fidelis*'.<sup>299</sup> Scholars have long speculated about the influence of liturgy on the composition of the *Dream*, and recent scholarship now cites much external evidence of the use of the hymns such as *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* in Anglo Saxon liturgies.<sup>300</sup> Francesca Brooks argues that David Jones' allusions to the *Dream* and the liturgy in *The Anathemata* anticipated the consensus among Anglo Saxonists of the *Vexilla*'s influence and the *Dream*'s engagement with the liturgical veneration of the cross more generally, a claim which is bolstered by Jones' speculation in the quotation above. Brooks reads the *Dream*, via Jones, as placed in the contested 'paralitururgical' margin of the medieval liturgical veneration of the cross.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> *The Dream of the Rood*, trans. Elaine Treharne, in *Old and Middle English, c.890 - c.1400: An Anthology*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), lines 22-23. All further citations will be taken from this dual-language edition and cited by line number.

<sup>298</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 46.

<sup>299</sup> Toronto, Canada, Fisher Rare Book Library, David Jones Papers Box 1, Jones to René Hague, 4 May 1974.

<sup>300</sup> See: H.R. Patch, 'Liturgical Influence in the *Dream of the Rood*', *PMLA* 34, no. 2 (1919): 233-257; Inge Milfull, 'Hymns to the Cross: Contexts for the Reception of *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt*', in *The Place of the Cross in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Catherine Karkov et al (Suffolk, U.K.: Boydell Press, 2006), 43-57; Sarah Laratt Keefer, 'The Veneration of the Cross in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Liturgy of the Late Anglo-Saxon Church*, ed. Helen Gittos and M. Bradford Bedingfeld (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 2005), 143-84.

<sup>301</sup> Francesca Brooks, 'Liturgy, Performance and Poetry of the Passion: David Jones and *The Dream of the Rood*', David Jones Special Issue, ed. Anna Svendsen and Jasmine Hunter Evans, *Religion and Literature* 49, no. 1 (forthcoming).

Scholars note that the borderland between ‘liturgical’ and ‘paraliturgical’ art is not as clear in the medieval period as in the post-Tridentine reforms of the 16th century that have persisted to the present, and Jones’ own work reflects this earlier interweaving of what would now be more strictly separated out into the ‘liturgical’ and ‘non-liturgical’ spheres.<sup>302</sup> The *Dream*, like Jones’ work, was not meant as part of the prescribed liturgies of the Church *per se* (as the *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* were and are) but as Brooks argues, it distinctly incarnates in much of its imagery the experience of being at Mass and contemplating the theology of the cross. The ‘paraliturgical’ status of the *Dream*, as well as its incarnation of the ideas and imagery of the Good Friday hymns into a distinctly British idiom, would make the poem an important artistic model for Jones and his own transmission of the Paschal Mystery in the context of his own experience of liturgy. In his visual art it appears as closely related to the Latin Good Friday hymns, especially the identification of the cross with Christ as a ‘living tree’ and the transformation of the WWI battlefield as a ‘paraliturgical’ engagement with the mystery of Christ’s sacrifice.

### **Transforming the War Landscape in Jones’ Crucifixion Paintings (1919-1948)**

One can read the dialogue between the memory of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ and the eucharistic theology of ‘*latria*’ envisaged in the ‘living tree’ of the Good Friday hymns in the conglomeration of imagery Jones incorporates into his images of the crucifixion of Christ. As Jones indicates in his note on ‘*latria*’ in *The Anathemata*, the cross (or crucifixion) of Christ is not adored because it is simply a ‘sacred object’ but because it ‘is a singular sign of our Redemption’; that is, it stands for the entire theological mystery involved in Christ’s sacrifice and is therefore one with the life and action of Christ himself.<sup>303</sup> When Jones represents the cross or crucifixion, he always has the full scope of this theological thinking in mind.

His works provide an unusual counterpart to the portrayal of crucifixion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century generally. Most major artists working in the 1920s to 1950s such as Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Paul Delvaux, Graham Sutherland, and Francis Bacon interpreted the traditional image of ‘crucifixion’, especially making use of grotesque or abstract forms and

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<sup>302</sup> See John Caldwell, ‘Relations Between Liturgical and Vernacular Music in Medieval England’, in *Music in the Medieval English Liturgy*, ed. Sue Rankin and David Hiley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 285-293. See also Carol Symes, ‘Liturgical Texts and Performance Practices’, in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2016), 239.

<sup>303</sup> *AN*, 165, note 2.

extremes of colour (particularly red and black) to express the unprecedented experience of human suffering and despair in aftermath of the First and Second World Wars. Their works are also more often a vehicle for expressing a personal mythology or perception than a conscious engagement with theology of any kind. Deeply religious artists such as Maurice Denis, Georges Rouault and and Albert Servaes, however, also chose to rely on the image of crucifixion as a poignant and (in the case of Servaes) even horrifying image of suffering and contemporary fracture. David Jones' work, like that of his contemporaries, responds profoundly to the suffering that he personally witnessed. He presents the crucifixion, however, not as horrifying but uniquely in light of its engagement with the liturgy, and therefore as life-giving. His distinctive vision shows itself especially in the way he juxtaposes the image of crucifixion with landscape.

Jones' 'earliest surviving depictions of the crucifixion attest to its association in his mind with his experience of warfare. Jones destroyed many of his works from the pre-war and immediate post-war periods whilst he was an art school student, but among the few that survive are the curious sketches and studies for crucifixion scenes drawn during the important immediate postwar moment of c. 1919-21. In these now tattered and piecemeal sketches Jones shows the traditional depiction of Christ on the Cross as foregrounded by the 'fatigue party' of Roman soldiers detailed to carry out the practical work of execution, but who wear WWI Tommy hats (fig. 29). A similar image appears in Jones' 1922 *Jesus Mocked* (fig. 30) painted on the wall of a workshop in Ditchling and now in the National Museum of Wales, which shows Christ 'scourged' by soldiers who both carry spears and wear WWI Tommy hats.

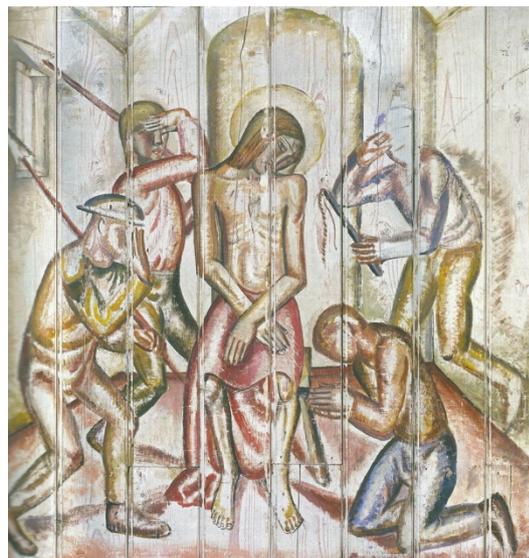
Many have interpreted these images as a deliberate counter to the religious propaganda, poetry and drawings of the time that sought to make a comparison between the self-sacrifice of soldiers in the war effort (on both sides of the conflict) and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross in order to encourage young men to enlist.<sup>304</sup> Soldiers in contemporary uniform inflicting the suffering of the crucifixion was an extraordinarily unusual image in the context of WWI art subjects, but not a new one in the history of art, and speaks for instance to the Roman soldiers of El Greco's *El Espolio* dressed in 16th-c. armour, or the contemporary leggings, hats and helmets on the 'fatigue party' in one of Signorelli's crucifixion scenes. Jones' deliberate merging of Roman soldiers and WWI

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<sup>304</sup> See especially the discussion of Rowan Williams in *In Search of David Jones: Artist, Soldier, Poet*, film by Derek Shiel (2008).



**Figure 29.** David Jones, 'Study of Soldiers Playing Dice at the Foot of the Cross' (c. 1919-1921).



**Figure 30.** David Jones, *Jesus Mocked* (1922).

Tommies would, however, take on more significance the more Jones reflected ‘in tranquility’<sup>305</sup> upon his experience of the war, and the mysterious presence of the sacrifice of Christ in it.

As early as the 1920s, however, Jones’ images of crucifixion begin to show both a vestige of the war landscape as well as a hint of the juxtaposition of Christ’s body with the living landscape implied in the theology of ‘*latria*’. The majority of his representations in the 1920s of Christ’s crucifixion are devotional, made for prayerbooks or church decoration, such as his boxwood carving of *The Crucifixion* (1925), (fig. 31), or his pencil and gouache *Sanctus Christus de Capel-y-ffin* (1925), (fig. 33), now in the Tate Britain. The latter, as with an engraving from 1926 also titled *The Crucifixion* (fig. 32), are as Paul Hills says, ‘eloquent of organic life’<sup>306</sup> in that they surround Christ on the cross with living vegetation in the landscape.

In the *Crucifixion* engraving (1926), Christ’s cross stands on a desert-like hill dotted with scraggy plants in what is otherwise a ‘waste land’, next to a leafless tree with ‘lopped’ branches. Hills suggests that this ‘lopped’ tree is alive because it is rooted in the ground, but its cut branches reflect the pain seen in the image of Christ’s mother now separated from her beloved son. He adds that the image could possibly be an allusion to the ‘root of Jesse’ in Isaiah 11:10-12.<sup>307</sup> The ‘lopped’ tree, however, certainly shows a reminiscence of the WWI battlefield, as Miles and Shiel have argued the cut branches of trees in his landscapes in the 1920s often do.<sup>308</sup> The grain of the wood in the lopped but ‘living’ tree is mirrored in the grain of Christ’s cut-wood cross, and suggests that the cross is another suffering but ‘living tree’ in this barren landscape. It is an image of desolation, but also one with a distinctive presence of life and renewal.

In *Sanctus Christus*, which has some resonance with the juxtaposition between Christ’s body and the landscape in Paul Gauguin’s *Yellow Christ* (1906), Christ is surrounded by lush green hills, several assumedly living (although leafless) trees, and other signs of life such as a pony, a bird in flight, and a church. The large swathe of Christ’s loincloth blends tonally with the hill behind and to the right as well as the red curves of the valley. The boundaries of its shape are therefore difficult to distinguish as it lies in the landscape of Capel-y-ffin, Wales, the mountainous rural retreat of the Gill family where

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<sup>305</sup> *DGC*, 246.

<sup>306</sup> Hills, ‘Pierced Hermaphrodite’, 432.

<sup>307</sup> Hills, ‘Pierced Hermaphrodite’, 432-33.

<sup>308</sup> See Miles and Shiel, *Maker Unmade*, 101.



**Figure 31**, David Jones, *The Crucifixion* (1925).



**Figure 32**, David Jones, *The Crucifixion* (1926).



Figure 33, David Jones, *Sanctus Christus de Capel-y-ffin* (1925).

Jones spent some time in the mid-1920s. Richard Harries comments on the resonance between the landscape and the body of Christ in that ‘Christ’s limbs are like the branches of a tree’.<sup>309</sup> The picture, however, in a less pronounced way, shows evidence of violence suffered by the landscape: Christ’s cross is made of rounded tree timber, literally a ‘lopped’ tree propped up with cut-wood stakes. Tree stumps also ominously dot the hills amidst the living trees, subtly reminiscent, as in the first image, of the WWI battlefield. More striking in the context of Jones’ developing theological thinking in the 1920s, however, is that these ‘lopt trees & stumps’ resembling those of Mametz are found amidst a primarily living and flourishing landscape with Christ at the centre. The scars of Mametz remain, but they are absorbed into an entirely different juxtaposition of the human body and the landscape presented by the Paschal Mystery. ‘Wounded trees and wounded men’ appear as features of an entirely transfigured landscape hearkened by the Eucharist.

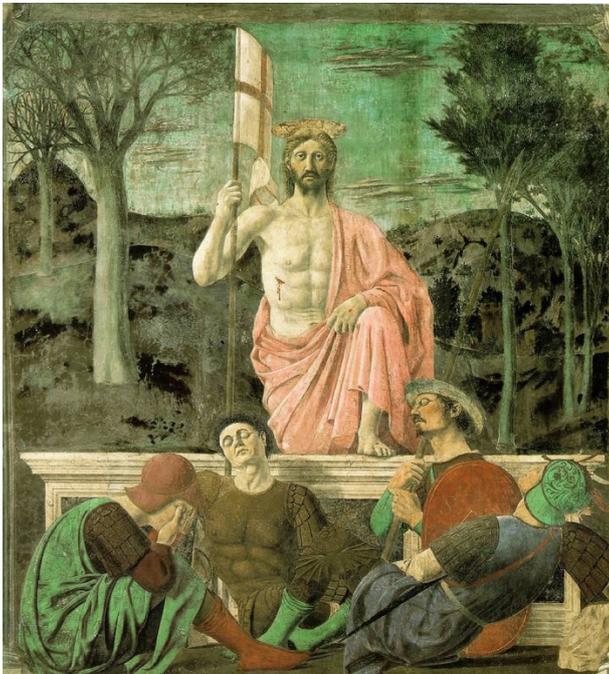
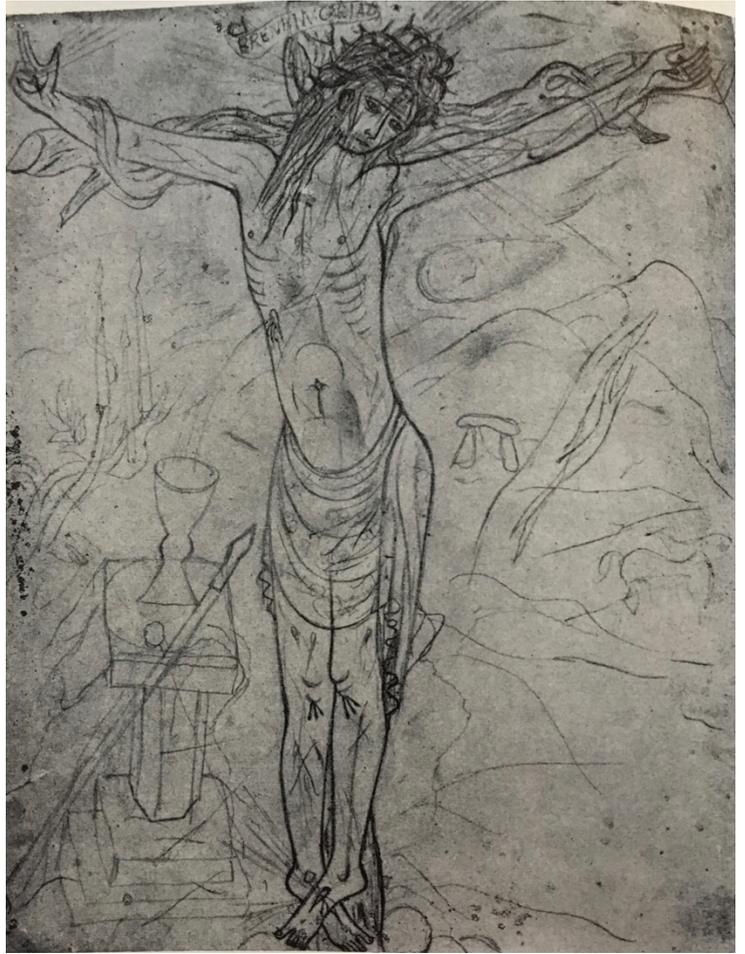
In 1929 Jones made another important crucifixion image,<sup>310</sup> which combines a number of these elements but with more explicit allusions to the theology of Good Friday and its liturgy. The pencil sketch *Tywysog Cariad* (fig. 34) shows Christ on the cross, but in this case, the cross is literally a ‘living tree’ whose branches entwine his arms. Like the grain of wood of the ‘lopt’ tree juxtaposed with the grain of the cross in the 1926 Crucifixion (pictured above), Jones again highlights the grain of the cross but juxtaposes it here with the long scratch-marks on Christ’s arms and legs, hence making a direct alliance between Christ’s body and the ‘living’ wood of the cross. Jones furthermore presents a contrast between living and dead landscape in the vein of Piero della Francesca’s 15th c. *Resurrection* (fig. 35) in which the trees of the background are in green leaf next to Christ’s foot rising from his tomb, while the trees on the opposite side (next to his foot remaining in the tomb) are still leafless and grey. The renewal of the dead landscape is directly the result of Christ’s resurrection and the Paschal Mystery. Faintly in the background of Jones’ sketch are the outlines—on Christ’s left side (viewer’s right)—of a lonely and dead (or perhaps simply broken) tree branch, which could easily be a ‘stump’ in the WWI waste land. On his right side (viewer’s left) by contrast, just above the chalice into which Christ’s blood flows from the wound in his heart, there sprouts a living branch

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<sup>309</sup> Richard Harries, *The Image of Christ in Modern Art* (London: Routledge, 2016), 65.

<sup>310</sup> Jones backdated the image as from 1929 (for a special of *Agenda* in which it was reproduced) but Paul Hills insisted it was more likely from the mid-30s. See Paul Hills, *David Jones* (London: Tate Gallery, 1981), 91.

**Figure 34,** David Jones,  
*Tywysog Cariad* (1929?)



**Figure 35,** Piero della Francesca.  
*The Resurrection* (c. 1460).

in full leaf, serving as a kind of candelabra, which Paul Hills insists may suggest a ‘marriage feast’.<sup>311</sup>

Hills suggests, furthermore, in his commentary on the painting in its entry in the exhibition catalogue for the 1981 *David Jones* exhibition at the Tate, that ‘this drawing must be one of Jones’s first statements about the inseparable nature of the Crucifixion and the Eucharist’ — an association that would have been reinforced in witnessing the *Vexilla Regis* procession — in that he places the eucharistic chalice (and host) on an altar next to Christ on the cross, with the chalice catching Christ’s blood.<sup>312</sup> The juxtaposition of the Eucharist with living, flourishing nature, especially in deliberate contrast with the lifeless and ‘lopped’ branch directly opposite, embodies the ‘renewal of the land’ imaged in the Good Friday hymns and its elaboration in the eucharistic theology of Martindale and de la Taille. Here Christ’s sacrifice on the ‘tree’ is one with the power that made (and hence re-makes) creation, and which appears under the vegetable veils of the Eucharist.

In the 1930s, especially after the publication of *In Parenthesis*, Jones began to embed the depiction of the crucifixion more subtly in his visual narratives. Jones would use the technique of visually mirroring the human body and the landscape seen in his 1920s crucifixions with a different force in his Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis* (fig. 11, p. 77). As discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, the limbs and body of the central soldier directly mirror the devastated landscape. The Frontispiece is not a crucifixion image *per se*, as for instance, the juxtaposition of the body and the landscape speaks more to the interpretation of the soldiers as an image of the ‘dying god’, but the position of the figure deliberately allows itself to resonate with the crucifixion in light of its relationship to the ‘dying god’ and indeed to all of history from its vantage point of eternity.

The explicit engagement with pagan nature religion as a mediation between war and the image of crucifixion continues in Jones’ 1941 *Aphrodite in Aulis* (fig. 36), which Paul Hills identifies as a ‘disguised crucifixion’ in which the buxom female ‘Aphrodite’ (which Jones called ‘all goddesses rolled into one’<sup>313</sup>) stands in place of Christ. Bearing the stigmata, incensed by a priest, and standing on an altar with an ‘Agnus Dei’ on it, ‘Aphrodite’ is also attended by WWI soldiers (one German and one English) in place of Roman legionaries, as in Jones’ first crucifixion scenes of the late teens and early 1920s.

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<sup>311</sup> Hills, ‘Pierced Hermaphrodite’, 431.

<sup>312</sup> Hills, *David Jones*, 91.

<sup>313</sup> Jones quoted by Hague, *Commentary on the Anathemata*, 38.



**Figure 36,** David Jones, *Aphrodite in Aulis* (1940-1).

The soldiers' strange half-nudeness from the waist down strikingly recalls the soldier of the Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis*, which I identified in the second chapter as recalling Attis in the moment of castration. Images of warfare and fighting fill the background: on the one hand Roman soldiers in their plumed helmets, and on the other WWI soldiers in their *stahlhelme* and Tommy hats.

Hills attributes the substitution of Aphrodite for Christ to Jones' supposed Oedipus complex, (a condition discussed also at length by Thomas Dilworth<sup>314</sup>) and analyses the painting in detail in light of Freud's *Totem and Taboo*. He identifies the 'Agnus Dei' on the pedestal as the 'totem' sacrifice made in place of killing the father, so that the son may enjoy the incestuous love of his mother. In this reading Aphrodite appears as strongly resonant with an earth-mother goddess such as Cybele, attended by her son-like young consorts (in the role of Attis, Adonis, etc.) in the WWI soldiers at the base of her pedestal. As in *In Parenthesis*, both German and English soldiers alike serve as ministers to this powerful female figure, who in this sense has a strong resonance with the Queen of the Woods. The central goddess's status as a 'Jesus-figure',<sup>315</sup> wounded with the stigmata, has resonance with a 'crucifixion' image in that it takes the general 'format . . . of a Crucifixion'.<sup>316</sup>

Like the Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis*, however, the picture shows itself as an image of ritual pagan sacrifice immediately juxtaposed with the violence of warfare—the phrase 'in Aulis' refers to Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis* (5th c. BC) in which the Greek general Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter to allow for his fleet to sail to Troy for battle. In this case, the female at the centre is the sacrificial victim and not *per se* the young soldiers at her pedestal, but as Hills points out, 'the goddess' embraces' are one with the soldiers' violent deaths. As in the Frontispiece, therefore, the reference to the sacrifice of Christ shines through as from a different dimension, and is part of what makes the painting an example of the artist's 'quest for redemption' through his art.<sup>317</sup> Here again the unratified ritual of warfare is mysteriously 'redeemed' in an eternal economy.

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<sup>314</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 241.

<sup>315</sup> Thomas Dilworth, Foreword to David Jones, *Wedding Poems*, ed. Thomas Dilworth (London: Enitharmon, 2002), 27.

<sup>316</sup> Hills, 'Pierced Hermaphrodite', 433.

<sup>317</sup> Hills, 'Pierced Hermaphrodite', 435, 437.

### ***Vexilla Regis* (1948)**

The increasingly literal engagement with liturgy that was seen in the eucharistic host and chalice of *Tywysog Cariad* and the incensing priest and *Agnus Dei* in the ‘disguised crucifixion’ of *Aphrodite in Aulis* reveals itself even more clearly in the title of this ‘greatest drawing on the mystery of the Crucifixion’<sup>318</sup> in Jones’ *oeuvre*, *Vexilla Regis* (1948), (fig. 37). It takes its title directly from the Good Friday liturgy, and therefore specifically invokes the eucharistic procession of the *Vexilla Regis* and its theological symbolism. Jones’ picture is an image of resurrection and the restoration of creation: the full flowering of the mystery of the sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist. Like Jones’ pictures of the war, however, he presents a dynamic interaction of ideas in the multiple significances he works into a single ‘shape’. *Vexilla Regis* presents a group of trees in a living forest or woodland scene. Only on closer inspection do other details appear in the ‘shape’ of the trees that shows them also to be vessels of symbolic and abstract meaning.

Uniquely amongst Jones’ works, a record survives with Jones’ account of the origin of the painting’s composition as well as a letter with his interpretation of much of this subtle symbolism. The former he made for his psychiatrist at Bowden House, where he painted much of the work; the latter appears in a letter to Mildred Ede (the mother of Jones’ friend and patron, Jim Ede), who bought the painting in 1949. In this letter, Jones is quick to explain how ‘so many confluent ideas are involved in a single image’ and therefore how it is difficult to identify any single element precisely, but that this particular picture ‘is something an “illustration” as well as a picture’, assumedly responding to the title.<sup>319</sup> He reveals outright the biblical inspiration of trees as well as the hymns for the cross that make up the ‘Cult of the Cross’ liturgical tradition. The presence of the Roman military and ‘tree symbolism’ of northern European paganism also appear. Jones conceded to ‘Mrs. Ede’ in his letter that:

Yes, Rev. 22:2 [the ‘tree of life’] certainly comes into it, though the main jumping-off ground was, I think, a Latin hymn we sing as part of the Good Friday liturgy in the Roman rite. Two hymns in fact, one starting *Vexilla Regis prodeunt* . . . a very ancient processional hymn, in which are many allusions to the tree and the Cross, and to the Cross as a tree, etc., and the other starting: *Crux fidelis inter*

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<sup>318</sup> Hills, ‘Pierced Hermaphrodite’, 439.

<sup>319</sup> *DGC*, 151.



Figure 37, David Jones, *Vexilla Regis* (1948).

*omnes, arbor una nobilis*. This is a rather long hymn and in various of its verses deals with the Cross as a Tree in concise and very noble and moving language.<sup>320</sup>

He identifies the three trees at the centre of the picture, therefore, as the three trees on Calvary, each one especially symbolising the man crucified upon it as recounted in the gospels. He therefore elucidates the ‘inverse logic’ of ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ presented in the Paschal Mystery (and the imagery of the *Vexilla Regis* hymn) in which the continuous figure of the human body and the landscape is represented by a living tree. Christ’s is the tall tree in the centre; the ‘good thief’ is on the left, the ‘other thief’ (Jones does not say ‘bad’) on the right.

Jones channels a presence of the ‘dying god’ myth of Odin (referenced in his depictions of the devastated woodland in *In Parenthesis*) when he adds, at the very end of the letter that ‘also of course the Yggdrasil of Northern mythology, the great tree with its roots far in the earth and its flowers in heaven no doubt comes into the picture—for all these things are one thing in some sense’.<sup>321</sup> One might read this statement as simply implying syncretism on Jones’ part, but in light of his reading and thinking about paganism and Christianity shown elsewhere, the statement more likely speaks to the Patristic vision of creation as having its origin in Christ and his saving action ‘from the foundation of the world’.<sup>322</sup> The ‘one thing’ that makes up ‘all these things’, pagan and Christian, in this vision of the natural world, is the dynamic, cosmic action of Christ—the ‘thing’ most strongly expressed in the liturgy and theology of the ‘cult of the Cross’ tradition that the *Vexilla Regis* represents.

The understated presence of the ‘dying god’ in the figure of Odin on the Yggdrasil, which Jones used to describe the devastated woodland in *In Parenthesis*, also brings the ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ of the war into the picture. Here, however, they are entirely turned ‘inside out’ to appear as ‘living’ instead of wounded and dying. Jones allows a further reminder of the war in the allusions to the Roman military, which he often overlaps with the British military, for instance in the collusion of British and Roman soldiers in his early crucifixion scenes pictured above. Jones writes that ‘the tree on the right’, the traditional position of the ‘bad’ or ‘cursed’ thief in the crucifixion narrative, ‘is partly tree and partly triumphal column and partly imperial standard—a power symbol, it

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<sup>320</sup> *DGC*, 149.

<sup>321</sup> *DGC*, 152.

<sup>322</sup> See Martindale, ‘Cults and Christianity’, 48. See also Rev. 13:8.

is not rooted to the ground but is part supported by wedges. St. Augustine's remark that "empire is great robbery" influenced me here'. Jones insists, however, that even though he places this symbol of the military in the 'cursed' position, he intends to show it as mysteriously 'redeemed too!' by the presence of Christ's sacrifice.<sup>323</sup> The strange tension in his explanation, however, fits into place with his treatment of warfare as a blasphemous rite or anti-ritual in *In Parenthesis* and elsewhere. The visible traces of both the 'dying god' and the military are therefore the most important manifestations of 'redemption' in the picture, as, strictly speaking they contain much evil in themselves, and yet in the economy of grace and the radical presence of Christ's sacrifice in its eternal dimension, Jones insists that they are 'redeemed' and made into 'something else'.

The predominance of 'living vegetation' in the image speaks to the vision of the Eucharist laid out by Martindale, de la Taille and Dawson: it shows the full accomplishment of the Incarnation via the sacrifice of Christ, as the union of God and man in Christ and through him the entire creation, making it into a sign of his living presence. The living landscape shows the crucifixion 'turned inside out', inseparable from the resurrection, and the revelation of the 'new heaven and new earth' at the end of time. The picture bears explicit reference to the resurrection in the presence of the five nails in a diamond shape on the central tree, which are meant, as Jones explains, to recall the 'five separate grains of incense . . . arranged in diamond formation' on the Paschal candle—the symbol of the resurrection in the Easter liturgies.<sup>324</sup> The presence of the liturgy seeps through the overall 'shape' of the painting not only in the pronunciation of the title that quotes the Good Friday liturgy, but also in the distinctive symbolism of the Easter Vigil's Paschal candle as a liturgical object. It is the witness of the liturgy itself in these details that makes the theological mysteries at hand present in a more immediate way than anything else.

The picture must also contain a hope for the 're-growth' of the decimated woodland of Mametz in Jones' memory, which was a sight not only of exterior but also interior and personal devastation. In this regard, the picture also represents a personal 'victory' and renewal of life for David Jones, related to his psychological recovery at Bowden House in 1946-47. It seems that both of Jones' breakdowns (in 1932 and 1946) were part of a delayed reaction to the trauma of the war. Thomas Dilworth has made some compelling

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<sup>323</sup> *DGC*, 150.

<sup>324</sup> *DGC*, 151-52.

revelations in his latest biography, however, that both breakdowns were even more strongly tied to elements of Jones' childhood (especially the death of his older brother), exacerbated by the war; they were also much more deeply tied to the exercise of his art than has heretofore been acknowledged.<sup>325</sup> René Hague recounts that Jones' first psychological treatment advised 'masterly inactivity' in terms of his painting (the 'rest cure' made infamous by Virginia Woolf and others who also suffered deeply from similar forms of neurasthenia), the thinking behind it being that, as painting caused a psychological strain, the cessation of painting would lead to a cure. After Jones' second breakdown, however, his doctor advised the opposite: this time, as Jones himself recounted in his notes for his psychiatrist, he would need to confront the unconscious anxiety generated by his painting 'in open war'.<sup>326</sup>

Jones wrote that this painting was inspired by several trees outside his bedroom window in the nursing home where he took refuge after this second breakdown in 1946, and was 'very much influenced' by a series of drawings of the trees that he did leading up to the 1948 painting. 'The picture went through many vicissitudes', he recounted, 'and suffered much alteration and was nearly torn up more than once. The psychiatrist, under whose care I was, *made* me go on, so that it was produced under rather special circumstances. (In a sense my doctor could be said to have been a "part-producer" I feel)'.<sup>327</sup> After Jones' treatment by his doctor—which in part, as he recounts, consisted in the making of this painting—he was able to regain a certain stability in his life and indeed went on to write *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord*, as well as produce many inscriptions and a few other visual works in the 1950s and 60s. The painting therefore marks a definite turn in Jones' life, both personal and artistic, and it embodies his battle-like confrontation with and victory over the residual effects of the war's trauma. It is therefore fitting, in light of his fixation on 'wounded trees and wounded men' that he saw in the war, that the portrayal of a flourishing 'woods', standing especially for the restoration of man and landscape together, would accompany a significant healing of the effects of this memory. In René Hague's estimation, Jones valued *Vexilla Regis* 'more highly than any other' of his paintings given the amount of money he charged for it to keep it from selling.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> See Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 241-44.

<sup>326</sup> *DGC*, 140.

<sup>327</sup> *DGC*, 151.

<sup>328</sup> *DGC*, 132.

Immediately after making the painting, however, Jones expressed a certain dissatisfaction with it, saying, ‘This picture, in my view, exemplifies unsolved dilemmas in a rather acute manner. The Aphrodite picture [*Aphrodite in Aulis*], on the other hand, does in my view, and on the whole, resolve them. The balance between form and content and many extremes of conception are satisfactorily maintained—that is why I like it’.<sup>329</sup> Jones’ attribution of ‘unsolved’ dilemmas to his *Vexilla Regis* seems quite the opposite of the effect it had in his psychology. It also seems to downplay the harmony of its internal relationships of content and form, which have made it one of Jones’ best-received artworks. The dissatisfaction in his commentary, however, relates especially to his feeling about the execution of the picture’s form in relation to its content and speaks to a restlessness in his desire to find a more apt expression for the ‘extremes of conception’ he had in mind to present. After this time, Jones turned his artistic energy with increased zeal to the matter of words, especially the words of the liturgy, both the sound of them (in his poetry) and the presence they convey with their visually-observed ‘shape’ in both his poetry and his ‘painted inscriptions’ that make words themselves into pictures.

### **Shaping Sacrifice in Jones’ Painted Inscriptions (1940-1956)**

It is unclear whether the title of *Vexilla Regis* inspired the painting or it was given after it had been accomplished, but it witnesses to what Jones’ called the ‘literal’ or ‘literary’ symbolism that saturates his art, something which he struggled not to let clutter his visual forms.<sup>330</sup> Jones was convinced that the words titling a painting were part of the ‘life’ of the work. He calls the title of his painting, ‘Violin & Flowers’, for instance, ‘a dead title’.<sup>331</sup> Indeed many of the titles of his works, such as the seascape *Manawyddan’s Glass Door* (1931) or another of the pre-*Vexilla* ‘tree paintings’ of the late 1940s, *Laetare Sunday*, *Thrush* (1948), imbue them with mythological or religious significance that is not otherwise strikingly obvious from the colours and shapes of the work itself. Miles and Shiel suggest that Jones ‘ultimately felt incapable of evoking the unseen without the aid of an intellectual superstructure’, which may explain something of his reliance on his literary titles.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> *DGC*, 138.

<sup>330</sup> *DGC*, 138.

<sup>331</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers CD1/17, Jones to Jim Ede, 25 June 1936.

<sup>332</sup> Miles and Shiel, *Maker Unmade*, 166.

On the other hand, Miles and Shiel's observation does not make room for the extraordinary reverence Jones had for the 'shapes' of words themselves as vessels of spiritual presence. As was the case with *In Parenthesis*,<sup>333</sup> Jones often started artistic projects with a visual image, looked for a title or caption for it as an accompaniment, but then found himself entirely enthralled by the sound and shape of the words as exhibiting their own life-forms. The 'captions' of his paintings, as in the lettering in *Sanctus Christus de Capel-y-ffin* (1925) discussed above, often become an organic aspect integrated into the picture. Critics speculate that it was out of these letterings that appear as part of his paintings that the art-form he called his 'painted inscriptions' developed.<sup>334</sup> The literal word-pictures made in these inscriptions have a shapely, life-like quality to them; he wrote to his friend Nicolette Gray, that he wanted them to be 'living lettering' that could 'run on' and 'look free'.<sup>335</sup> Bankes and Hills suggest that the letters of Jones' inscriptions 'appear as sentient as his images of animals' in that 'each limb has an organic relation to the other limbs'.<sup>336</sup> Douglas Cleverdon observed that, furthermore, in contrast to Eric Gill, who 'aimed to achieve the ideal shapes of individual letters, so that they would blend perfectly in whatever order they were placed' Jones created each inscription 'as a single unit, with every letter adapted to the total design', and hence as an organism, or as Jones himself said, a 'whole'.<sup>337</sup> The inscriptions make words appear as animate and moving in a playful and deeply mysterious way.

After the painting of *Vexilla Regis* discussed above, Jones' visual depiction of theology of the cross (i.e. 'latria') and its relation to the Eucharist was primarily with inscriptions of the Latin cross hymns themselves, entwining the words of the *Vexilla Regis* and *The Dream of the Rood* especially with other words taken directly from the Good Friday liturgy and the 'Preface for the Cross' used in Holy Week. As Nicolette Gray observes, the texts of Jones' inscriptions are taken 'predominantly from the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church',<sup>338</sup> and therefore engage with the living form and action of the

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<sup>333</sup> See Jones discussion of the creation of *In Parenthesis* as an extension of a project to portray his experience in images in: Fisher Rare Book Library, David Jones Papers Box 1, Jones to René Hague, 9-15 July 1973.

<sup>334</sup> Harries, *Image of Christ*, 65.

<sup>335</sup> Jones quoted in Gray, *Painted Inscriptions*, 103.

<sup>336</sup> Bankes and Hills, *Vision and Memory*, 156-57.

<sup>337</sup> Douglas Cleverdon, 'Introduction to the Exhibition of Paintings, Engravings and Writings of David Jones at the National Book League, 1972', in *Word and Image IV: David Jones, b. 1895* (Chatham: W&J Mackay, 1972), 7. See David Jones, interview by Saunders Lewis, *Writer's World*, BBC, film by Tristram Powell (1965).

<sup>338</sup> Gray, *Painted Inscriptions*, 13.

Mass, which Jones took as an artistic model, in a more literal way than any other of his works.

Miles and Shiel observe a quality of his work evident from the early 1930s that can be read as anticipating the liturgical orientation of Jones' later forms:

It is not so much that Jones was searching, as Waldemar Januszczak and many others have suggested, 'like Moore or Nicholson or Sutherland, for something fundamentally stable beneath all the twisted surfaces, the distractions of nature' but rather for an energy which pulsates beneath creation. Jones is not, at this time, recasting the Bible in a solid, contemporary world like Stanley Spencer, nor searching for an abstract harmony like Moore or Hepworth, but trying to break into a world re-made in light and vibration.<sup>339</sup>

Miles and Shiel posit that the potential of breaking into this 'world re-made in light and vibration' would never be realised, impeded by Jones' psychological complications. They continue: 'Jones's watercolours of the early thirties increasingly dissolved his world and yet he seemed unwilling to relinquish little details and his ultimate reluctance to abandon the outward and visible signs for the inward journey kept him from fully realizing what he had begun to achieve in the loosest of his 1932 watercolours'.<sup>340</sup>

Jones himself complained that he thought after his breakdowns he would never be able to return to this early period c. 1932, which he felt was "'me" . . . sure of direction and . . . pleasurable' in a way the work of the 1940s period was not.<sup>341</sup> It was from the 1940s and especially 1950s, however, that he turned in earnest to the matter of words themselves as the subject for visual art; he also invested more effort in the visual dimension of his poetry. Arguably, Jones came closer to 'breaking through' to 'an energy that pulsates beneath creation' and 'a world re-made by light and vibration' in the synaesthetic intersection of colour, pattern, sound and verbal significance that characterise his painted inscriptions and his late poetry than he did in his earlier work. The inscriptions witness, in all events, that his 'search' for this 'world re-made' was the source of a continually

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<sup>339</sup> Miles and Shiel, *Maker Unmade*, 138.

<sup>340</sup> Miles and Shiel, *Maker Unmade*, 166.

<sup>341</sup> *DGC*, 138.

renewed engagement with the possibilities that the 'shape' of a work could take and the 'presence' that it could convey. He called his inscriptions 'my form of abstraction'.<sup>342</sup>

The entryway for Jones into this 'world re-made' was the Roman Catholic liturgy, which, in the eucharistic theology of Martindale and de la Taille, was animated by the same power that made the life of creation itself, and hence 're-made' it: the 'energy that pulsates beneath creation' in the work of Christ's redeeming sacrifice. The artist, who in Maritain's words 'carries . . . on' the work of the creation, by extension participates with Christ in his work of redemption. In this sense, Jones' attempt to represent the redeeming work of Christ on the cross artistically relies on the 'shape' of its expression in the Roman Catholic liturgy and consciously sees itself as an extension of its effects.

Nicolette Gray's *The Painted Inscriptions of David Jones* is the most comprehensive catalogue of Jones' inscriptions, and makes visually available many works that are not otherwise now accessible. This collection includes three inscriptions (and one informal inscription in a letter) that explicitly draw on the liturgy of the passion. Unfortunately, only one is reproduced in colour, which muffles the interpretation of the works considerably; Jones' use of colour has enormous significance in this art form. *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* (1944) was made for Jones' patron, Helen Sutherland, and begins the experiment with colour and form that he would take up with more intricacy later. Its entry describes it as composed in 'black, red and green watercolour', although this inscription is unfortunately one of the two reproduced in black and white. The words 'VEXILLA' in the first line and the year (in Roman numerals) contained in the last line stand out as slightly fainter than the other lettering in the picture, indicating that the first and last words are probably those painted in 'red and green'. Without knowing which word is painted in which colour it is hard to comment on them intelligently aside from observing that the opening words of the hymn were in Jones' mind as an artistic subject in the time leading up to the creation of his *Vexilla Regis* painting in 1948.

Gray includes another inscription featuring the *Vexilla Regis* text, *Arbor Decora (I)*, (fig. 38), which is undated, but which she dates as likely deriving from Jones' 'experimental' period, c. 1950-1. Again it is reproduced in black and white, but Gray describes it as painted in 'green, red and brownish-yellow water-colour', and hence 'decorative' but in Gray's estimation 'in fact oddly unsuited to the theme' because of its

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<sup>342</sup> Jones, interview with Saunders Lewis, 1965.

ARBOR·DECORA·ET·FVLGIDA·  
ORNATA·REGIS·PVRP·VRA·  
ELECTA·DIGNO·STI·PITE·  
TAM·SANCTA·MEMBRATA·TAN  
GERE·O·C<sup>+</sup>·R<sup>+</sup>·V<sup>+</sup>·X·A·V·E·  
VNDE·MORS·ORIEBATVR·  
INDE·VITA·RESVRGERET·  
ET·QVI·IN·LIGNO·VINCEBAT·  
IN·LIGNO·QVOQVE·VINCERETVR

Figure 38. David Jones, *Arbor Decora (I)* (1950-1).

colourfulness and absence of black.<sup>343</sup> The focus of this inscription is the title of the cross as ‘*arbor decora*’ from the fourth verse of the *Vexilla Regis*; that is, the title of the cross ‘as a tree’, particularly as a ‘beautiful’, ‘decorated’ or ‘honourable’ (‘*decora*’) but also ‘shining’ (‘*fulgida*’) tree, speaking to the spiritual beauty and mystery of the cross as one with Christ’s sacrifice and hence with the resurrection.

Jones follows the verse from *Vexilla Regis* with an excerpt from the ‘Preface’ that is said ‘At Masses of the Passion or of the Cross’. The prayer, like the *Vexilla Regis* chant alludes to ‘the cross as a tree’, saying with a poetic chiasmus quoted earlier in this chapter, ‘*qui in ligno vincébat, in ligno quoque vincerétur*’ (‘he that overcame on the tree, by the tree might be overcome’), speaking of the overthrow of Satan, who ‘overcame’ Adam and Eve by his deception ‘on the tree’, but was ‘overcome’ ‘by the tree’; that is, by Christ in his sacrifice on the cross.<sup>344</sup> Three Latin words for the cross appear in these two phrases, as in the hymn: ‘*lignum*’, the biblical word for both ‘tree’ and ‘wood’ that has the most theological charge, as in the ‘*lignum vitae*’ (‘tree of life’) in the Vulgate Genesis and Revelation; also ‘*arbor*’, indicating a biologically ‘living tree’, not used in the bible for the ‘tree of the cross’, and hence giving the cross an unusually tactile imaging in the hymn.

The word ‘*crux*’ for the cross appeals to its use in the bible to describe instrument of torture used by the Roman empire, and so here in this word, at the literal centre of the picture, dwells the sense of the human suffering of Christ on the cross that both fulfils the typological role of the ‘*lignum*’ and rejuvenates the life of the ‘*arbor*’; that is, the created world. Uniting the two prayers (and two uses of the word ‘tree’ to describe the cross) in the centre is the quotation from the penultimate line of the *Vexilla*, ‘O CRUX AVE’, studded with five small crosses hovering amidst the hollow spaces in the word ‘CRUX’. These marks are an abstract allusion to the five wounds of Christ that Jones elsewhere describes as ‘blossoms’. In this sense, the placement of ‘CRUX’ recalls his placement of the image of Christ on the ‘living tree’ of the cross at the physical centre of *In Parenthesis*, in turn a reference to the human suffering of Christ as at the ‘centre point of time’ in its union with his sacrifice in its eternal aspect.

Nicolette Gray identifies both the *Vexilla Regis* and the ‘Preface of the Cross’ quoted in this inscription as recited during the ‘Tridentine liturgy of Good Friday’ but in fact the ‘Preface of the Cross’ is only said ‘from Passion Sunday through Maundy

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<sup>343</sup> Gray, *Painted Inscriptions*, 31.

<sup>344</sup> See Cabrol, *Holy Week*, 15.

Thursday' in Holy Week and hence not actually said in the liturgy of Good Friday: the *Vexilla Regis* roughly speaking replaces the Preface in the Good Friday liturgy. Jones' association of the two texts — one spoken and one sung, one from the Mass of Maundy Thursday (celebrating the Last Supper and the first consecration of the Eucharist) and one from the liturgy of Good Friday (celebrating Christ's victorious suffering on the cross) — into one visual artistic unit speaks to his deep association of the cross and the Eucharist as 'inseparable', as well as the oneness of Christ's action over time. They represent two different moments in chronological time, both liturgically in the distinction of the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday rubrics, and historically in the life of Christ, but they are the 'same' moment in the aspect of Christ's eternal sacrifice. The 'oneness' of these two actions, though separate in time, was the essential articulation of Maurice de la Taille about the oneness of the 'Supper' and 'the Hill' that Jones found so compelling. Jones' turning the words of the liturgy themselves into a subject for visual contemplation in effect extends their presence and function as well as their oneness across these two liturgies in a strikingly literal way.

In Jones' second inscription titled *Arbor Decora (2)* (fig. 39) (dated 1956, and reproduced in colour in Gray's book) dedicates itself exclusively to the texts of the Good Friday liturgy, surrounded by a line of the 'paraliturgical' Old English poem about the sacrifice of Christ from the perspective of the 'tree' of the cross, *The Dream of the Rood*. The antiphonal structure and use of colour in the inscription is particularly striking and significant. Jones stacks the lines of the fourth verse of *Vexilla Regis* ('*Arbor decora et fulgida / ornata regis purpura / electa digno stipite / tam sancta membra tangere*') in the centre of the painting so as to emphasise unexpected associations between words, for instance highlighting the internal rhymes of the lines ('*Decora / fulgida*'; '*ornata / purpura*', etc.). He builds on the relationships created by these juxtapositions furthermore by painting individual words in particular colours, showing relationships between matching or contrasting colours in addition to the relationships indicated by their visual position.

Jones' depiction of living 'landscape' in these inscriptions appears in the different words for the 'tree' of the cross itself found in the Good Friday hymns such as '*lignum*', '*arbor*', '*crux*' and '*stipite*'. Jones also alludes abstractly to the 'renewal' of landscape with the colour green. Jones uses green for the words 'ARBOR' ('tree'), left justified in the first line, and 'STIPITE' ('post, stake'), right justified near the last line, both concrete and

þA·GEONð·hÆLEð·þÆT·  
 ARBOR·DECORA·  
 ET·FVLGIDA·  
 ORNATA·REGIS·  
 PVRPURA·ELECTA·  
 DIGNO·STIPITE·  
 TAM·SANCTA·  
 MEMBRA·TANGERE·  
 ΑΓΙΟΣ·ΙΣΧΥΡΟΣ·

ongrrede·hine·  
 WAES·GOD·ÆLMHTIG

Figure 39. David Jones, *Arbor Decora (II)* (1956).

tactile words for the cross itself as both a ‘living tree’ and a dead wood post, which in a ‘contactual’, historical sense it would have been. Bankes and Hills point out that green is a colour Jones uses to indicate the mystery of the ‘evergreen tree, the living cross’<sup>345</sup> so that here the already tactile word ‘*arbor*’ speaks to the spiritual identity of the cross and sacrifice of Christ as one with the literal origin of life.

Jones uses a yellowish-gold colour for the words ‘FULGIDA’ (‘shining’), ‘REGIS’ (‘king’) and ‘SANCTA’ (‘holy’), all of which are right-justified in the central frame of the picture and hence ‘stacked’ over each other to emphasise a relationship. Gold is traditionally associated with kingship (as the gift of gold for the infant Christ signifies in Matthew 2:11); it is also the colour used in icons to indicate eternity or supernatural glory, often allied in biblical language with light and holiness.<sup>346</sup> The choice of yellow-gold for these three words is symbolically fairly straightforward, emphasising the conception of Christ as ‘reigning’ from the cross, and by virtue of his sacrifice.

Left-justified on the line between the right-justified words ‘REGIS’ and ‘SANCTA’ on the lines above and below is the word ‘PURPURA’ (‘purples’) in dark red-purple. This word is part of the phrase ‘*regis purpura*’ (‘the purple of the king’), making use of the tradition of purple as the colour of royalty so as to refer to Christ’s blood, which is on the most literal level the ‘garment’ covering the wood of the cross in Christ’s suffering. Juxtaposed in this way, the words ‘FULGIDA’, ‘REGIS’, ‘SANCTA’ against ‘PURPURA’ show the central paradox of the cross, which is shining in glory because drenched in shed blood. The juxtaposition of these words from each other nonetheless makes a single pattern, showing a visual alternation in which one builds on the other like pieces of dovetailed carpentry.

The image of the cross as both shining and covered with blood at once is the central, opening image of the Old English *Dream of the Rood*: ‘I saw that urgent beacon / change its covering and colours: sometimes soaked with wetness / stained with coursing of blood; sometimes adorned with treasure’.<sup>347</sup> Like a marginal gloss, or one of the marginal insertions in his hand-written letters, Jones wraps a line from *The Dream of the Rood* around the edges of the central frame, which narrates the moment of Christ’s crucifixion, describing him as a ‘*geong hæleð*’ (‘young hero’) climbing onto the cross himself.<sup>348</sup> The

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<sup>345</sup> Bankes and Hills, *Vision and Memory*, 160.

<sup>346</sup> See for instance the description of the New Jerusalem in Rev. 21:18.

<sup>347</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 22-23.

<sup>348</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 39.

phrase ‘*þa geong hæled*’, has a prominent place as the top-most line of the inscription, and recalls its similar prominence and bright red colour in an inscription he did of a longer section of the Old English text, *Ongyrede* (1952), which he included in *The Anathemata*. The Old English (included also in Jones’ 1952 inscription) characterises Christ in the action of climbing on the cross as ‘*strang ond stiðmod*’ (‘strong and resolute’). Here, however, Jones substitutes ‘strong and resolute’ with a Greek phrase from the ‘Reproaches’ chant of the Good Friday liturgy, ‘*Āgios Ischyros*’ (‘Holy Strong’, from the litany ‘*Āgios o Theos . . . Āgios Ischyros . . . Āgios Athanatos*’, ‘Holy is God . . . Holy Strong . . . Holy Immortal’).

In the Preface to *The Anathemata*, Jones describes the sound of this Greek chant in the Good Friday liturgy saying: ‘When in the Good Friday Office, the Latin, without any warning, is suddenly pierced by the Greek cry *Āgios o Theos* the Greek-speaking Roman Church of the third century becomes almost visibly present to us’.<sup>349</sup> Taking as it does from a poem and two different chants of the Good Friday liturgy, the inscription uses visual shape and colour to project a powerful but silent presence of sound, and the closeness to the ‘Real Presence’ of the liturgy that this sound embodies. Francesca Brooks writes that in *The Anathemata*, Jones’ inclusion of an inscription of chant notation meant for the Good Friday reading of the Gospel (and a detailed note about it) ‘suggests a desire to see the soundscape of the liturgical service . . . re-created in the performance of his poem’.<sup>350</sup> Something of this dynamic operates here as well, but communicated in the experience of colour and light interacting with the visual position and abstract sense of the words. Here, the arrangement of words themselves are the means by which Jones comes closer to ‘break[ing] into a world re-made in light and vibration’ and engaging the ‘pulse underneath creation’; that is, the dynamic making at creation’s unseen, eternal source, which the liturgy itself ‘re-presents’ in its re-presentation of Christ’s sacrifice.

### **Between Inscriptions and Poetry**

Jones was making his inscriptions of the 1940s and 50s in tandem with his writing of *The Anathemata*, which indicates that his movement from ‘image to word’ and back again in his portrayal of the theology of the cross was hardly straightforward or progressive, but concomitant and complimentary. As Jones’ artistic career developed, his sense of the

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<sup>349</sup> *AN*, 13.

<sup>350</sup> Brooks, ‘Liturgy, Performance and Poetry’, (forthcoming).

oneness of all making did as well, a sense that is particularly noticeable in his merging of word and image both in his inscriptions and his poetry in *The Anathemata* (1952) and *The Sleeping Lord* (1974). Saunders Lewis asked him in 1965 about whether he saw himself more as a painter or writer, but he replied that ‘I can’t see a distinction really’, reflecting his quip once made to Jim Ede that he saw writing and visual art as ‘presenting just the same problems of matter and form’.<sup>351</sup>

Jones was annoyed similarly by the distinction between ‘abstract’ and ‘non-abstract’ art, as he insisted all ‘good art’ had to be abstract in some sense, but at the same time had to ‘represent’ something.<sup>352</sup> Thomas Dilworth writes that Jones’ most important artistic model was the Roman Catholic Mass, because ‘it contradicted “the ludicrous division” between abstract and non-abstract art, “for nothing”, he said, “could . . . be more “abstract” than the Mass, or less “realistic” or more “real”’.<sup>353</sup> In Jones’ desire to portray the sacrifice of Christ itself as an artistic subject, he turned to the combined vision and sound of words themselves in a way that more closely followed the ‘supreme art-form’ of the liturgy, and hence gave his works an unusually strong affinity with the Mass as an artistic action—and in turn as an act of worship. Whereas the inscriptions evoke this action silently in their use of shape and colour, his poetry evokes it in the use of the visual shape and juxtaposition of words in tandem with their sound. For the ‘shape’ of words for Jones was as much aural as it was visual.

In the final chapter of this thesis, I will turn to Jones’ presentation of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as understood via Martindale and de la Taille in the audio-visual ‘shape’ of his later poetry, with its distinct resonance of the ‘Cult of the Cross’ tradition and its interaction with the Mass. Neither the poetry nor the inscriptions alone are able to replicate the multi-media and *sui generis* form of the Mass, which makes use of spoken word, silent gesture, light, colour, smell and architectural structure at once. Jones’ inscriptions and poetry from the 1950s onward together make a complimentary ‘paraliturgical’ testament to his elucidation of the ‘shape’ of the liturgy as itself the best artistic ‘re-presentation’ of Christ’s sacrifice and the work of redemption.

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<sup>351</sup> Jones, ‘Mabon Studios Interview’, (forthcoming). *DGC*, 155.

<sup>352</sup> Jones, interview by Saunders Lewis, 1965.

<sup>353</sup> Dilworth, *Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, 69.

## Chapter 5.

### **‘Poet of Christ’s Passion’: The ‘Shape’ of the Paschal Mystery in *In Parenthesis* (1937), *The Anathemata* (1952), and *The Sleeping Lord* (1974)**

In his 1958 editorial, ‘The Eclipse of a Hymn’, expressing his dismay about the removal of the *Vexilla Regis* from the Good Friday liturgy, Jones lauded the artistic and cultural precedent set by both the *Vexilla* and the Old English *Dream of the Rood* that was inspired by it, saying of them,

There are works, few in number and not, necessarily, well-known, that can be made only in a given cultural phase, but which, once made, have a unique validity for all the subsequent phases of that culture. I think this could be argued for the Anglo-Saxon ‘Dream of the Rood’. I am certain it is true of the *Vexilla Regis* . . .<sup>354</sup>

Jones was particularly impressed, in the case of the *Vexilla Regis*, with the author’s appropriation of concrete language and imagery from his own historically-situated ‘cultural phase’—specifically the experience of war—to speak about the ‘universal’ mystery of the sacrifice of Christ. He continues a few paragraphs later,

[Fortunatus’] concept of the advancing *vexilla*, which provides not only a concrete poetic image but the poem’s initial thrust, is even more poignant when we recall that the actual *vexilla* Fortunatus saw with his physical eyes were standards, imitative of a past imperium, but in fact now carried before petty Merovingian dynasts at fratricidal wars of loot. Such was the sordid violence from which the poet gave the Liturgy this enduring image of banners. It is the sort of thing that poets are for; to redeem is part of their job.<sup>355</sup>

Jones’ admiration for Fortunatus indirectly reflects his own desire to make a poetic incarnation of the sacrifice of Christ, using his own contemporary, sensible experience of ‘sordid violence’, and in doing so to ‘redeem’ it; that is, to turn it ‘into something else’. For Jones, as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the most effective material in art

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<sup>354</sup> *EA*, 260.

<sup>355</sup> *EA*, 260.

for making present a spiritual reality, is that which evokes one's most 'contactual' experience (the 'data' one has observed with his senses and retained in his memory), as in his example of Fortunatus' 'banners'.

As in his visual images of the crucifixion, certain of Jones' depictions of the sacrifice of Christ in *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord* enact a kind of 'redemption' of his memories of the First World War battlefield, using his unique sense of 'shape' to show the vestiges of their suffering but as turned 'into something else'; namely, as transformed into descriptions of the passion and the Eucharist. His general artistic method subscribes in large measure to the 'Cult of the Cross' tradition, taking the poetic principles of the *Vexilla Regis* and the *Dream* that made use of their own 'contactual' imagery of warfare, the theology of '*latría*' for the cross, and contemporary poetic forms, to image the sacrifice of Christ as a victorious battle and a living 'tree'. Jones' reading of contemporary eucharistic theology enabled him to understand better the cosmic and dynamic operation of the creative action of Christ in nature, history and the liturgy that appears in the 'Cult of the Cross' tradition and hence deepened the 'paraliturgical' dimension of his art. His own more specific method of poetic practice builds on the distinctly modern sense of 'shape' from *In Parenthesis* and his inscriptions in which he creates complex images by evoking 'as many overtones or undertones as possible a propos the context' in 'the words used & their juxtaposition with other words'.<sup>356</sup>

In his presentation of his 'contactual' experience of the battlefield in *In Parenthesis*, as discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, this 'juxtaposition' happens especially in the multiple interacting senses of a single word or phrase, hence allowing an 'undertone' of the cross to shine out from a description of Odin that overtly framed the violence of the devastated woodland on the WWI Front. In his verbal presentation of the mystery of the cross itself as a primary subject in *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord* the sense of 'overtone' and 'undertone' are reversed, and the war landscape (especially 'wounded trees and wounded men'), as well as the 'dying god', appear in the 'undertone' of single words and phrases. The work's 'shape' is furthermore made up of a more deliberately visual juxtaposition of words meant to participate in the audible performance of the text as it is read aloud. Richard Bradford discusses the use of the visual dimension of the poetic text at the service of audible recitation as characteristic of poetic

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<sup>356</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LO1/4, Letter draft fragment — Jones to John H. Johnston, 28 February 1963.

experimentations with visual form in the 1950s-1980s, especially in the work of W.H. Auden and Geoffrey Hill, who both had deep respect for Jones' work.<sup>357</sup>

### ***Vexilla Regis* and *The Dream of the Rood* as Poetic Models**

Jones' admiration for the 'contactual' material of sensible experience relates to his concern with 'nowness' of form, and by extension with its effectiveness in communication, or following the language of de la Taille, its dynamic 'function'.<sup>358</sup> An analogous relationship between an artwork and the Eucharist was never far from Jones' thinking. In his essay 'The Arthurian Legend' (1948), Jones writes (glancing towards Catholic sacramental theology) that 'what the artist lifts up must have a kind of transubstantiated actual-ness. Our images, not only our ideas, must be valid *now*'. Only then, he insists, as he does in his essay on the *Vexilla Regis*, are artworks '*therefore, valid for the future*'.<sup>359</sup> For Jones what makes Fortunatus' poetry for the crucifixion 'valid' is not only his participation in a tradition of imagining and contemplating the cross but the artistic incarnation of that mystery and tradition into the language of his own contemporary experience, particularly that of war and contemporary idiom. Jones' own verbal presentation of the sacrifice of Christ aspires towards this essentially sacramental condition, 'making present' Christ's sacrifice by means of the most concrete forms of his historically-rooted experience, and acquaintance with contemporary language.

Both the *Vexilla Regis* and the *Dream* make use not only of their own 'contactual' experience but also of the literary forms that grew out of their particular cultures. *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* were composed by the poet-priest Venantius Fortunatus in 569 for a special liturgy in honour of a relic of the 'True Cross' when it was transferred to a monastery in Poitiers (modern France) as a gift from the Emperor Justin II. As the ceremony was itself a Christian adaptation of the Roman '*adventus*' procession ('used for the ceremonial reception of a secular ruler into the city'<sup>360</sup>) the hymns used the same 'measure as Roman military marching songs', a 'metre' which was also used in Latin poetry for 'love songs and idyllic descriptions of nature'.<sup>361</sup> The anonymous *Dream of the Rood*, similarly, makes use of the complex rhythmic and alliterative patterns of Anglo

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<sup>357</sup> See Richard Bradford, *The Look of It: A Theory of Visual Form in English Poetry* (Cork, Ireland: University of Cork Press, 1993), 162-66, 171-74.

<sup>358</sup> See *MF*, 215.

<sup>359</sup> *EA*, 211, 260.

<sup>360</sup> Inge Milfull, 'Hymns to the Cross', 43-4.

<sup>361</sup> van Tongeren, *Exaltation of the Cross*, 238 and 241, note 44.

Saxon epics and battle songs, such as that of *Beowulf* and the *Battle of Brunanburgh*, but in order to describe the ‘battle’ of Christ in the passion.

One of the most obvious difficulties inherent in Jones’ adaptation of this tradition, therefore, was deciding not only what ‘contactual’ material but also what kind of poetic form would in fact achieve the ‘nowness’ he desired. He did not think that the simple return to and reproduction of inherited forms would produce ‘valid’ art in the contemporary ‘civilizational situation’, and yet he also did not think the present was irreparably cut off from the past. The task for Jones was to find a kind of language and form that drew on the multi-layered symbols, mysteries and languages of the tradition, but which also genuinely expressed the fracture in the contemporary reassessment of that tradition.

Jones achieves a historically-rooted ‘nowness’ of style in his presentation of the sacrifice of Christ by exhibiting a distinctly modern attitude towards the visual and aural matter of words themselves as objects of meditation. He also creates meaning through juxtaposition and fracture, for instance employing bits and pieces of texts in new arrangements. The uniquely modern ‘shape’ of his late poetry therefore enables a cooperation between the words and images of the liturgical and ‘paraliturgical’ ‘Cult of the Cross’ tradition, other works of medieval and modern literature, folk culture, and his own ‘contactual’ memories of modern warfare in the narration of the mystery of Christ’s sacrifice. Jones especially uses the *mise en page* in his poetry in order to juxtapose words and emphasise aspects of their relationship as representing different facets of the central theological paradox at hand—the dual identity of Christ’s sacrifice as both full of suffering and full of glory. His precise word-choices furthermore incorporate in a subtle way the presence of the ravaged battlefield as ‘redeemed’ by being transformed into the presence of Christ in the cosmic scope of the Eucharist’s dynamic ‘function’ in history.

The interaction of visual and aural dimensions in this technique has a strong affinity with his inscriptions. Reminiscent of his *Arbor Decora (2)* (1956), he especially uses the antiphonal justification of lines into visually separate vertical alignments that meet on a ‘hinge’ in the centre of a textual section to embody contrasting dimensions of theological paradox. Although visually broken apart, the re-arrangement of words on the page takes on more meaning than it could have as a single block of text. Furthermore, the words aurally form a unity in making a single stream of sound when read aloud from left to right, and hence show the mysterious unity-in-disunity of the paradox they present in their imagery. They show, in the interaction of the visual and aural dimensions of the words’

‘shape’ that even though the suffering and glory of Christ’s sacrifice (along with the suffering and redemption of creation) seem entirely opposed, they are ‘one’ in the light of faith, and Jones expresses this strange oneness in the unity of the poetic section made up of seemingly disjointed parts.

Jones’ verbal depiction of the sacrifice of Christ begins as early as *In Parenthesis*, with his illustration of Christ’s cross as a sign of contradiction to the ‘Waste Land’ of the WWI battlefield. I have discussed this passage briefly in the third chapter of this thesis in relation to the larger structure of *In Parenthesis*, but here turn to its minute structure and how it serves as a springboard for Jones’ later poetic depictions of the crucifixion. I should note that Jones portrays the sacrifice of Christ with many concrete images throughout his visual and written *oeuvre* in his late period, for instance in his different ‘Mass drawings’ (such as *A Latere Dextro* [1949]), *The Paschal Lamb* (1951), or in the metaphor of the ship’s mast in the ‘Keel, Ram and Stauros’ chapter of *The Anathemata*. In this chapter, I will discuss only three distinct examples of Jones’ poetic presentation of the sacrifice of Christ, one from each of the major works (*In Parenthesis*, *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord*). I choose these because each is particularly representative of the way in which Jones’ unique conception of ‘shape’ serves to associate the sacrifice of Christ with his experience of the First World War in light of the eucharistic theology of Martindale and de la Taille, and in doing so follows most closely in the ‘paraliturgical’ mode of the *Dream of the Rood* and the Good Friday chants.

### ***In Parenthesis* (1937)**

As discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, the ‘Boast of Dai Greatcoat’ in *In Parenthesis* suddenly opens onto the image of a ‘living tree’ at the very centre of the WWI waste land, the only moment in the entire narrative in which Christ in his sacrifice appears plainly and not by means of indirect allusion or resonance in the undertones of the ‘dying god’, Hebrew sacrificial figures, the prayers of soldiers, or even the language of the Good Friday liturgy. The imagery of ‘living’ vegetation in the ‘Tree’ of the cross, an image reinforced by Christ himself calling it a ‘*gardayne*’ in the quotation from the Middle English *Quia Amore Languet*,<sup>362</sup> is a direct contradiction to the destroyed and dying ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ of the waste land and the sterile sacrificial ‘fertility rite’ of the war’s violence. The placement of this narration in the text at its literal ‘centre’

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<sup>362</sup> See *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. V, line 82.

furthermore embodies the theological thinking that understands Christ on the cross as being the ‘centre point of time’ as well as its being one with his dynamic creative power in eternity manifested in the Eucharist. It has a strong suggestion of Jones’ own first vision of the Mass in the very midst of the battlefield, c. 1917.

The character of Dai Greatcoat narrates this episode in a 21-line section that can be separated from the rest of the text, as follows:

I served Longinus that Dux bat-blind and bent;  
The Dandy Xth are my regiment  
who diced  
Crown and Mudhook  
under the Tree,  
whose Five Sufficient Blossoms  
yield for us.  
I kept the boding raven  
from the Dish.  
With my long pilum  
I beat the crow  
from that heavy bough.  
But I held the tunics of these—  
I watched them work the terrible embroidery that He put  
on.  
I heard there, sighing for the Feet so shod.  
I saw cock-robin gain  
his rosy breast  
I heard Him cry:  
*Apples ben ripe in my gardayne.*  
I saw Him die.<sup>363</sup>

In general, the ‘Boast of Dai Greatcoat’ distinguishes itself stylistically and typographically from the rest of the text of *In Parenthesis* in its peculiarly strong reliance on anaphora. Jones maintains continuity with the rest of the ‘Boast’ in his repetition of ‘I’:

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<sup>363</sup> *IP*, 83.

‘I served . . . I kept . . . I beat . . . I held . . . I watched . . . I heard . . . I saw . . . I heard . . . I saw’. What differentiates this section of Dai’s ‘Boast’ is Jones’ construction of it as a distinct visual-aural unit by means of juxtaposing visually-perceived line-breaks and aurally-perceived sound-patterns. Although line-breaks function significantly in multiple ways throughout the text, this small passage has a tighter organisation than many others and more strongly resembles the sound-play and structure of his later poetry.

The 21-line section is composed of six complete ‘sentences’ typographically; that is, units of text (not always constituting a complete subject and predicate) that fall between a capital and a full stop. The passage is also sub-divided into two thematic parts narrating the viewpoint of Dai Greatcoat in his conflicted assistance at the crucifixion of Christ—and paradoxical oneness with him. The image strongly recalls Jones’ earliest surviving images of the crucifixion (c. 1919-21) discussed in the previous chapter (figs. 29 and 30, p. 142), and like those pictures suggests an unusual vision of soldiering as both guilty of great crime, and an innocent participation in a greater mystery touching on the salvation of the world. The image also recalls, as mentioned above and in the Introduction of this thesis, the tension inherent in participators at Mass, the first Mass congregation Jones ever saw being composed of soldiers on the WWI battlefield. Jones relinquishes neither extreme of this depiction but allows its tension to determine the passage’s form.

The former sub-section (the first 12 lines) expounds Dai’s sympathy with Christ and his active attempts to ameliorate Christ’s suffering; the latter (last 9 lines) admits Dai’s complicity in Christ’s suffering as a passive accomplice. Jones binds the sections together with larger patterns of visual and aural repetition that carry over from one line to the next, such as using end-rhyme to open the passage (‘bent / regiment’) and close it (‘cry / die’). End-rhymes (both ABAB and rhyming couplets) figure prominently in the *Vexilla Regis*, particularly the important verse, ‘*arbor decora et fulgida / ornata regis purpura, etc.*’, and given the rarity of Jones’ use of end-rhyme in *In Parenthesis*, the formal features of the Latin hymn may at least linger in the background.

Another interlinking feature is the anaphoric, left-justified repetition of ‘I’ phrases mentioned above, which identify Dai’s action in the passage. The first three ‘I’ phrases pinpoint the ways in which Dai defends the vulnerable Christ: ‘I served Longinus . . . I kept the boding raven from the dish . . . I beat the crow from that heavy bough’. As Thomas Dilworth points out, however, a ‘pivotal’ turn happens in the 9-line, second part of the passage in which Dai confesses his indirect complicity in the violence and his passive

witness of Christ's suffering.<sup>364</sup> The left-justified 'I' phrases proliferate in this smaller second section, twice the number as in the longer first part—'I held', 'I watched', 'I heard', 'I saw', 'I heard', 'I saw'—and correspond with an intensified self-accusation.

The dominant image in the second section is that of Christ's bloodied body in the passion, but whose wounds have become something beautiful and life-giving when his suffering is understood as a theological mystery. The suffering of the passion is a work of 'embroidery' that Christ has 'put on'; it is also a '*gardayne*' (garden) with 'apples'. These images, both lifted from the Middle English poem *Quia Amore Languet*, distinctly recall the description of Christ's blood from the *Vexilla Regis* as '*regis purpura*' ('purple [cloak] of the king') as well as the cross's dual aspect in the *Dream of the Rood* as 'soaked with [the] wetness' (of blood) and yet 'adorned with treasure' and 'cased in gold'.<sup>365</sup> It also recalls the image of the cross as a 'living tree'.

Jones breaks apart and re-fashions lines from the nursery rhyme 'Who Killed Cock Robin?'<sup>366</sup> to intersect with the language of the Middle English poem, turning the former's confessional responses into a mouthpiece for Dai's admission of his complicity in Christ's suffering. The use of the name 'Cock-robin', however, also plays on the English legend, which Jones references in his explanation of the *Vexilla Regis* painting, that the robin gained its red breast by pulling a thorn from Christ's head to try and alleviate some of his suffering on the cross.<sup>367</sup> 'Cock-robin' therefore refers firstly to Christ himself (the 'rosy breast' resonating with the blood of Christ described as 'embroidery'). The 'robin', however, is a figure of compassionate witness who, like Dai, becomes unified with Christ by being smeared with his blood in his attempts to alleviate his suffering. The multiple application of the cock-robin's 'rosy breast' in this image itself communicates something of Dai's conflicted position; that is, Dai's paradoxical unity with Christ as the instrument of his death—a position which in turn strikingly mirrors the plight of the cross in *The Dream of the Rood*.

In the second section, furthermore, the visual dimension of the words themselves abstractly assists in the perception of the paradox at hand. The words describing the body of Christ (both his suffering and his glory)—the 'embroidery', 'Feet so shod', 'his rosy breast', as well as the words of Christ quoted from the *Quia Amore Languet* ('*Apples ben*

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<sup>364</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 113.

<sup>365</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 22-23, 7.

<sup>366</sup> See the full text in the *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. VIII.

<sup>367</sup> *DGC*, 150.

*ripe in my gardayne*')—all appear either at the visual centre or ends of lines, and hence visually separated from the strictly left-justified lines describing the action of Dai, all of which begin with 'I'. The position and action of Dai is therefore visually distinct, even opposed, to Christ on the cross. The audible performance of reading the text aloud, however, serves to bind together the two visually-opposed sides of the text corresponding to the two seemingly irreconcilable sides of the vision. The action of the murdering Dai as legionary-cum-Tommy and the living Christ in his eternal sacrifice make one single line of poetic annunciation.

Jones' images in this passage show themselves in profound continuity with the tradition of poetry written for the cross, especially the central paradox of the cross as the means of Christ's historical physical suffering, but also his eternal, life-giving and therefore 'glorious' sacrifice. He expresses this continuity in a distinctly modern presentation of breakage remade into its own unprecedented unity. 'Fractured' pieces of individual works (for instance, the totally unrelated works of *Quia Amore Languo* and 'Who Killed Cock-Robin?'), as well as the visual opposition of the action of Dai and the figure of Christ become individual pieces jointed into a new whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Here one finds not the absence of formal structure, but one that responds uniquely to the subject matter of human destruction and divine re-creation, using both the aural and visual dimension of words in order to communicate much of its sense.

### ***The Anathemata (1952)***

Building on the sense of 'shape' from *In Parenthesis*, Jones summarises the writing of *The Anathemata* in a letter to his friend Desmond Chute, saying,

I merely tried, as hard as I know how, to say with precision what I wanted to say and to lose as little as possible of the overtones & undertones evoked by the words used. So that nearly all the time I had to think of how, in certain juxtapositions, *this* word rather than *that* would best call up the somewhat complex image required.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> David Jones, *Inner Necessities: The Letters of David Jones to Desmond Chute*, ed. Thomas Dilworth (Toronto, ON: Anson-Cartwright Editions, 1984), 24.

For David Jones, this endeavour was deeply related to his work as a visual artist. He continues in this letter, describing his ‘method’ a bit crudely as

. . . to arse around with such words as are available to me until the passage in question takes on something of the shape I think it requires & evokes the image I want. I find, or think I find, the process almost identical to what one tries to do in paintin’ or drawin’. Having tried to the best of one’s powers, to make the lines, smudges, colours, opacities, translucencies, tightnesses, hardnesses, pencil marks, paint marks, chalk marks, spit marks, thumb marks, etc. evoke the image one requires as much as poss., one only *hopes* that some *other* chap, someone looking at the picture, may recognize the image intended.<sup>369</sup>

The strongly visual dimension of his poetry that he began to experiment with in *In Parenthesis* therefore becomes even more pronounced in this later project. Taking on a stronger resemblance with the use of line-breaks, visual juxtaposition, and colour in his inscriptions, Jones develops several features from the narration of the crucifixion in the ‘Boast of Dai Greatcoat’ in his descriptions of the Paschal Mystery in *The Anathemata*. Most notably, he makes use of the same pastiche-like technique of plucking individual words and phrases from other sources (both ancient and modern) and arranging them so that they take on a new significance as the narration of a theological mystery. He also firms the structural ‘opposition’ of left- and centre-justified lines to correspond with the different aspects of theological paradox described therein.

In *The Anathemata*, Jones further developed the sense of the cross as providing a structural and thematic ‘centre’ that is suggested in *In Parenthesis*. Writing to friend Desmond Chute in 1953, Jones said that if *The Anathemata* had any kind of ‘plot’ it was ‘a kind of “dance round the maypole” of the *stauros*—I suppose’, the ‘*stauros*’ being the Greek word for ‘cross’.<sup>370</sup> He said similarly in a 1953 essay that ‘in the course of writing *The Anathemata* I had occasion to consider the Tree of the Cross as the axial beam round which all things move’, connecting this ‘axial beam’, furthermore, with ‘a monastic motto which implies that the Cross stands still while the world revolves round it’, and calling the movement of creation therefore a ‘world-dance which has for its maypole the gleaming

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<sup>369</sup> Jones, *Inner Necessities*, 24.

<sup>370</sup> Jones, *Inner Necessities*, 75.

Tree on which the world-ransom was weighed'.<sup>371</sup> Thomas Dilworth has therefore identified a 'parenthetical', or rather 'circular' structure in *The Anathemata* as revolving in concentric circles around a single passage just shy of the book's literal 'centre': the narration by the medieval lavender seller Elen Monica of 'the redemption and the Eucharist'.<sup>372</sup>

Jones' minute construction of 'the redemption and the Eucharist' in this section has strong structural parallels with the crucifixion scene in the centre of *In Parenthesis*. Like the language of Dai Greatcoat, Elen Monica's description of the Paschal Mystery adapts the 'Cult of the Cross' tradition in both imagery and style but into a distinctly modern 'shape'. Breaking apart and fitting back together fragments of the *Vexilla Regis*, nursery rhymes, *The Canterbury Tales*, and T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, a complex visual-aural amalgam appears to narrate the sacrifice of Christ according to the paradoxes of its theology as being one with Christ's creative action in the Eucharist and 'the centre point of time'.

In this passage, the 'tree' of the cross appears as part of the bloom of spring itself:

On the ste'lyard on the Hill  
weighed against our man-geld  
between March and April  
when bough begins to yield  
and West-wood springs new.  
Such was his counting-house  
whose queen was in her silent parlour  
on that same hill of dolour  
about the virid month of Averil  
that the poet will call cruel.  
Such was her bread and honey  
when with his darling Body (of her body)  
he won Tartary.  
Then was the droughts of March moisted to the root by that  
shower that does all fruit engender—and do constitute what

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<sup>371</sup> *EA*, 39.

<sup>372</sup> Dilworth, *Shape of Meaning*, 168-70. See *AN*, pp. 156-57 in the section titled 'The Lady of the Pool'.

they hallow an' chrisem these clerks to minister that kings  
and queens may eat thereof and all poor men besides.<sup>373</sup>

The setting of springtime recalls that the historical event of the crucifixion would have taken place 'between March and April / when bough begins to yield / when West-wood springs new'. It is also, however, the 'bloom' of the cross in its eternal dimension, embodied in the Eucharist. The word 'yield' recalls Jones' own complex use of 'Five Sufficient Blossoms / yield' in *In Parenthesis*. The structure also immediately shows an influence of the *Vexilla Regis*. The word 'Tartary' (signifying 'Hell' conquered by Christ in the passion), takes directly from the word 'tártari' in the fifth verse of the *Vexilla* in which 'statera' ('ste'lyard') and 'corporis' ('Body') also appear in corresponding order.<sup>374</sup>

'Averil' (Middle English spelling of 'April'), coming in the springtime, appears 'virid', but a reference to it as 'cruel' doubtless invokes T.S. Eliot's ironic transformation of the first lines of the 'General Prologue' of *The Canterbury Tales* in his *The Waste Land* (1922) in order to portray the cultural fruitlessness of 20th-century postwar Europe.<sup>375</sup> Jones here subverts Eliot's subversion by re-using Chaucer's words (about the rain of April that makes the flowers grow<sup>376</sup>) to narrate the growth of the 'fruit' of the crucifixion in its eternal dimension: 'Then was the droughts of March moisted to the root by that / shower that does all fruit engender'. The 'shower that does all fruit engender' is here Christ's blood covering both himself and the cross, a moisture that 'engenders' both the natural and the supernatural realm as a 'new creation'.<sup>377</sup> Jones therefore fuses the important image of Christ's blood in the *Vexilla Regis* and the 'fruit' in the *Crux Fidelis* with Chaucer's narration of the spiritual fervour of springtime to ally in an extremely 'contactual' way the miraculous growth of spring with the spiritual life given by Christ's body on the cross. As in *In Parenthesis*, the 'living tree' of the cross is the true antidote to the 'Waste Land' both physical and spiritual. The images of fertility, particularly, resonate with the narration of the sacrifice of Christ that Jones places in the midst of the battlefield, which stands in

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<sup>373</sup> AN, 157-58.

<sup>374</sup> See *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. II.

<sup>375</sup> See the first line of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, 'April is the cruellest month . . .' *T.S. Eliot: the Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1958), p. 37, line 1.

<sup>376</sup> See *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. IV.

<sup>377</sup> See Romans 8:19-22.

contrast to the fruitless and frustrated rite of warfare, as well as to what Jones thought of as the artistic and cultural sterility of modernity.<sup>378</sup>

Jones perhaps glances at the *Dream of the Rood* when he uses his own coinage, ‘man-geld’, here for ‘debt’, alluding to the Old English ‘*wergild*’ (‘man-yield’ or ‘man-payment’), which was ‘the price set upon a man according to his rank, paid by way of compensation or fine in cases of homicide and certain other crimes to free the offender from further obligation or punishment’ [OED ‘*wergild* | *wergeld*, n.’]. He continues the monetary metaphor by calling the cross a ‘counting-house’. Both images speak to the use of the word ‘redemption’ (to ‘buy back’) in the context of theology of the passion.<sup>379</sup> The ‘counting house’ of course, in conjunction with the ‘Queen’ in her ‘parlour’ eating ‘bread and honey’, grafts language from the 18th-c. nursery rhyme *Sing a Song of Sixpence*,<sup>380</sup> which Jones strategically disjoints and re-fashions into the narration of Christ’s sacrifice. Not only does the ‘King . . . in his counting-house’ of the rhyme become Christ the king ‘reigning’ from the cross as he pays the debt of ‘man-geld’, but also the parallel, dis-unified action of the ‘King’ and ‘Queen’ in their private endeavours in the rhyme becomes, in Jones’ poetic re-fashioning, the unification of the souls of Mary and Jesus as she compassionately suffers with him at Calvary. The ‘parlour’ of the rhyme becomes the ‘silent parlour’ of Mary’s interiority, spiritually in union with Christ on the ‘same hill of dolour’ where he is crucified. The ‘bread and honey’ eaten by the Queen in the rhyme becomes the Eucharist, ‘his darling Body (of her body)’.

Even more than in *In Parenthesis*, as discussed above, the visual construction of the passage immediately stands out, clearly dividing left and centre-justified half-lines so that they meet along a central ‘hinge’. The passage is composed of four punctuated ‘sentences’ as in the sense, again, of text falling between a capital and full stop. The placement of line-breaks, however, serves to create distinctive patterns of visual and aural repetition that make the passage stand out from the rest of the text. This visual breakage and justification of half-lines disrupts the usual symmetry of the typed page, and hence forces the reader to perceive certain words in surprising relationships. At the same time, the visual breakage makes the passage appear as a unit in which each broken piece builds upon the next and forges a new whole.

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<sup>378</sup> See his discussion in ‘Art in Relation to War’, *DG*, 150.

<sup>379</sup> See for instance, Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45.

<sup>380</sup> See *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. VII.

As in *In Parenthesis*, and in Jones' inscriptions, the left- and centre-alignments of half lines emphasise an otherwise understated relationship between words. For instance, Jones visually aligns the words 'geld' and 'yield' to emphasise their common etymology and juxtapose the natural or biological 'yield' of leaves, flowers and fruit on the boughs of bushes and trees in the spring with the 'geld' ('yield') of Christ's body weighed as both the 'fruit' and the 'ransom' on the tree of the Cross. The line-breaks create two distinctly polarised columns in order to express the paradoxical presence of seemingly contradictory realities, in this case Christ's death on the cross and his life in the resurrection and the Eucharist that are understood theologically as one and the same mystery. The left-justified lines fixate on the suffering human body of Christ ('man-geld', 'counting-house' [of the cross], 'doulour', 'cruel', and 'Body'), whereas the centre-justified lines describe the fruits of the suffering embodied in the springtime life and nourishment of the Eucharist received by the Church in the figure of Christ's mother ('Hill,' 'April,' 'new,' 'parlour,' 'Averil,' 'honey').

In a concrete sense recalling Jones' inscription *Arbor Decora (2)*, discussed in the last chapter, the dovetailed construction of opposing half-lines in the passage resembles the jointing of carpentry, a favourite metaphor of Jones' for the craft of poetry or other arts, and in *The Anathemata* a common reference in Jones' descriptions of the cross.<sup>381</sup> Although Jones plays with the typography of half-lines throughout his work, the precise alignment of words as meeting along a central hinge (as in this passage) is rare, and hence makes it stand out from the rest of the text. It also partially recalls the visual layout of Jones' shortest single poem, 'A, a, a, DOMINE DEUS' now in *The Sleeping Lord* (1974), which Elizabeth Powell has considered akin to a concrete poem shaped as a cross or a tree.<sup>382</sup> Given the passage's subject matter, the central 'hinge' may suggest a cruciform shape, but even more so resembles the central trunk of a living tree, with asymmetrically-spaced branches sprouting from its centre, and the block of text at the bottom serving as its roots in earth.

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<sup>381</sup> Jones loved, for instance, James Joyce's statement that poetry was as much a craft as boatbuilding (see Jones, *EA*, 172). See also his references to the Cross as a 'balk' and its being made of 'mortised stakes' on *AN*, 190.

<sup>382</sup> Elizabeth Powell, 'The Quest for Sacrament in Jones' Poem "A, a, a, DOMINE DEUS"', in David Jones Special Issue, ed. Anna Svendsen and Jasmine Hunter Evans, *Religion and Literature* 49 no. 1 (forthcoming).

Harman Grisewood insisted that Jones thought of ‘all’ his ‘poetic writing . . . as vocalised’.<sup>383</sup> One can see therefore that the broken and re-constructed lines of this passage are ultimately made into a unified whole in that they make a continuous line of sound when read aloud; several uses of verbal patterns aurally tie together what is visually broken apart. An alternating (ABAB) or repeating (AABBCCC, etc.) rhyme scheme appear over several sections (‘hill/April’ and ‘geld/yeild’; as well as ‘parlour/dolour’, ‘Averil/cruel’ and ‘honey/body/Tartary’), which must at least nod not only to the *Vexilla Regis*, but also to the rhyming couplets of the Prologue and Chaucer’s 7-line ‘rime royal’ stanza from the *Tales* and elsewhere. The one line un-rhymed to the eye (‘house’) in fact aurally forms a chiasmus, ‘counting-house / whose queen’ across the centre of the passage, which knots the ABAB and AABBCCC rhymed sections together. Jones’ artistic vision presents the tradition in fragments, but does not accede to the Waste Land’s fragmentation as the final word: it makes them ‘into something else’.

In the interaction of imagery, etymology, visual form, and sound Jones presents the sacrifice of Christ (in both the crucifixion and the Eucharist at once) by breaking apart, rearranging and fitting back together under a new form the sixth verse of the *Vexilla Regis*, the ‘General Prologue’ to *The Canterbury Tales*, and the second verse of the nursery rhyme *Sing a Song of Sixpence*, with a nod to Eliot’s *The Waste Land*. The unseen mystery of the sacrifice of Christ becomes ‘incarnate’ with the particular and concrete language of the British tradition, but one garbled and fractured with a strong awareness of modernity. The breakage of the language has something in common with Eliot’s ‘fragments shored against my ruins’ of *The Waste Land*, and yet with a further twist of irony than Eliot, Jones ‘quietly, almost perversely’ turns the breakage into an ‘affirmative’ euphony.<sup>384</sup>

### ***The Sleeping Lord (1974)***

Jones’ last published collection relies more than any of his other works on the intersection of the visual and aural dimensions of words themselves in its presentation of theological mysteries, engaging especially with the liturgies of the passion, Jones’ interior conversation with contemporary eucharistic theology, and his own memories of the WWI battlefield. Like the passages discussed above from *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata*,

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<sup>383</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LP5/5, Harman Grisewood, Introductory note on a ‘Broadcast Script’ of radio version of *In Parenthesis* (1946).

<sup>384</sup> Kathleen Staudt has insisted that compared to Eliot, Jones’ vision of the modern world is ‘quietly, almost perversely, affirmative’, *Turn of a Civilization*, 67.

Jones places these disparate themes in dialogue with each other in the ‘shape’ made by his unique reliance on the multiple etymological, sonic and visual resonances of words and letters placed in ‘juxtaposition’ to each other in small textual space.

The interplay of these various resonances appears with particular force in his poem ‘The Fatigue’, which Jones lists as one of several ‘interrelated fragments’ in *The Sleeping Lord* also including ‘The Tribune’s Visitation’, ‘The Tutelar of the Place’ and ‘The Wall’, all of which were produced in the 1950s and 60s. Jones identifies the setting of these fragments as ‘Syria Palestine at the time of the Passion’.<sup>385</sup> In ‘The Fatigue’, the dialogue of the characters is primarily amongst several legionaries of the 1st-century AD Roman army—whom Jones makes a point of identifying as both Romans and ‘Celts from Gaul or Britain’, but who speak with WWI Tommy slang and accents—who are on ‘fatigue duty’ to crucify Christ.<sup>386</sup> The poem therefore makes a record of their unique witness to the historical sufferings of Christ that were the occasion of his eternal sacrifice, also ‘re-presented’ in the Mass.

The particular amalgamation of images in the poem, like the crucifixion narrative of Dai Greatcoat, shows an uncanny continuity with Jones’ earliest crucifixion images, especially the c. 1919-21 ‘Study for a Crucifixion’ that focusses on the soldiers at the foot of the cross, themselves blended versions of Roman legionaries and WWI Tommies (fig. 29, p. 142). It also speaks to Jones’ first sight of the sacramental ‘re-presentation’ of the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass on the battlefield c. 1917. ‘The Fatigue’ projects this image in words, including not only the sound of Tommies giving voice to the mundane details of Roman soldiery but also the language of liturgy and the ‘Cult of the Cross’ tradition, especially the Old English *Dream of the Rood*. In the centre of the work appears what Jones calls ‘a soliloquy or reflection made in the context of Catholic Xtian tradition and theology upon an event which, for the soldiers involved, was but one more guard, fatigue or escort duty’.<sup>387</sup> In this dream-like ‘soliloquy’ the cross appears as a living, ‘Dreaming Tree’, ‘the leaning *lignum* / the *spolia*-bloom’ (elsewhere the ‘flowering transom’) on which the ‘Conqueror’ (Christ) sacrifices ‘himself to himself / on the Windy Tree’, also called the ‘thirsting Yggdrasil’.<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> *SL*, 24.

<sup>386</sup> *SL*, 24-26.

<sup>387</sup> *SL*, 26.

<sup>388</sup> *SL*, 32, 34-35.

Jones channels not only the mythology of northern European tree-worship in this narration of the sacrifice of Christ, but also invokes the Mass in the language of the liturgical rubric. He places the phrase ‘(*Extensis manibus . . .*)’, which describes the instruction for the priest to ‘stretch out’ his hands over the bread and wine about to be consecrated, amidst the descriptions of Christ’s physical suffering in the ‘stretching out’ of his arms on the cross (‘his racked-out limbs’ and ‘spined-dark wreath’).<sup>389</sup> Not only the obvious military setting and the cockney accents of soldiers, but also direct linguistic borrowings taken from *In Parenthesis* (such as Jones’ coinage ‘scape-beast’, and the ‘many eyes’ and ‘scrutting feet’ of rats) allude to the presence of the First World War alongside these images of the tradition.<sup>390</sup> In this intersection of Christ’s sacrifice, the First World War and pagan nature-worship via the patterns of the ‘Cult of the Cross’ tradition Jones succinctly reiterates the themes informing his association of the passion with his memories of the battlefield throughout his *oeuvre*.

Jones writes in the introduction to the poem about the biographical realism behind his conception of the legionary-cum-Tommy image as taking root in his visit to Jerusalem in 1934. Not only, as he describes elsewhere, did the presence of British troops posted in the city cast his mind immediately to the Roman Legion at the time of Christ,<sup>391</sup> but also, as he describes in this short introduction, the Roman military inscriptions he saw in Syria and Palestine immediately recalled his mind to the ‘ill-scrawled inscriptions of the Forward Zone, equally domestic and regimental, marking at the turn of a duck-board track, the flimsy shelter that served as the cook-house of B Coy’.<sup>392</sup> Jones does not make any explicit connection between these inscriptions and the 13-line block of text in all-capitals between this introductory section and the poem, but it has much in common with the Roman inscriptions Jones would have seen near Jerusalem. As Paul Robichaud has observed, it furthermore recalls Jones’ own painted inscriptions inspired by the Roman style.<sup>393</sup> This text, serving as the epigraph to ‘The Fatigue’, reads as follows:

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<sup>389</sup> Cabrol, *Roman Missal*, 30. Note: the instruction appears in both Jones’ missals in English, so he must have known the phrase from some other source. *SL*, 32.

<sup>390</sup> *SL*, 34; *IP*, 45, 54, 70.

<sup>391</sup> See *DGC*, 57.

<sup>392</sup> *SL*, 25.

<sup>393</sup> Robichaud, *Making the Past Present*, 129.

GWANWYN YN Y LLWYN  
 ARBOR AXED FROM ARBOUR-SIDE  
 THAT NOW STRIPT  
 IS MORE ARRAYED  
 MORE THAN IN THE SILVAN RIDE  
 WHEN TO PIERCE THE GREEN  
 AND TANGLED TENEBRAE  
 COMES APOLLO'S RAY  
 SEE WHAT SHEEN THE LOPPED BOUGHS  
 NOW LIFT HIGH  
 . . . FRONDE, FLORE, GERMINE  
 O CRUX AVE  
 AVE VEXILLUM<sup>394</sup>

In this small text Jones makes a summary of his entire ‘paraliturgical’ artistic engagement with the Paschal Mystery: the ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ of the war; pagan religion; Arthuriana; and especially the language and imagery of *The Dream of the Rood* and the cross hymns themselves, *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis*, in their liturgical context as pointing to the ‘inseparable’ mystery of the cross and the Eucharist.

Formally speaking, it is an artwork that falls between an inscription and a poem: it is an inscription that is meant to be read aloud and manifests what Geoffrey Hill called ‘the true realisation of the poet’s voice [that] comes from a blending or a marriage of the silent and the spoken forms’.<sup>395</sup> It merges his technique of the *mise en page* of both his poetry and painted inscriptions with his ability to create what he called a ‘shape in . . . sound’,<sup>396</sup> making use of visual and aural patterns in equal measure to communicate many hidden significances, especially the paradoxes contained in individual words and the relationships between words. The relationships between words are then perceived ‘at once’ as in a painting, but also ‘in time’ in the linear pronunciation of sounds so that the work is not fully perceived unless both seen and heard. Its technique builds on the interaction of the visual and aural dimensions of the passages discussed from *In Parenthesis* and *The*

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<sup>394</sup> *SL*, 27.

<sup>395</sup> Geoffrey Hill quoted in Bradford, *Look of It*, 171.

<sup>396</sup> National Library of Wales, David Jones Papers LO1/4, Letter draft fragment — Jones to John H. Johnston, 28 February 1963.

*Anathemata* in that the visually-perceived text is the repository of multiple aural and visual patterns at once, each of which brings out different shades of etymological, cultural, religious and personal resonance.

The primary image of the epigraph, like Jones' painting *Vexilla Regis*, discussed in the last chapter, is a living forest. The words 'ARBOUR', 'SYLVAN', 'GREEN' and 'BOUGHS' all immediately bring images of living vegetation to mind. Furthermore, the opening line in Welsh, 'GWANWYN YN Y LLWYN', translates loosely as 'spring-time in the woods', taking from the 1938 hymn lyrics of T. Rowland Hughes, '*Tydi a roddaist*', a poem which itself places the bloom of spring and the crucifixion of Christ in juxtaposition. It had for Jones a similar 'feeling' to *The Dream of the Rood* and the *Vexilla Regis*.<sup>397</sup> The word '*llwyn*', has a wide application in Welsh and refers to a range of living vegetation, including 'bush, shrub, brake, thicket; copse, grove, arbour; woods', but also more poetically to a 'forest (esp. in love-poetry) the traditional rendezvous of lovers, symbol of love or romance'. The Welsh-language dictionary *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* indicates that the word has its origin in the Latin word '*lignum*', an extraordinarily important term in the context of the biblical discussion of the cross, which is called neither '*crux*' nor '*arbor*' when it is discussed as a theological mystery but '*lignum*' (both 'tree' and 'wood') in keeping with the Hebrew language and typology set up in the 'tree of life' in Genesis translated in the Vulgate as '*lignum vitae*'.<sup>398</sup> A secondary meaning of '*llwyn*' is 'loins' or 'side' with the sense of being 'the seat of physical strength and generative power'.<sup>399</sup> As an image of the cross, 'LLWYN' here takes on both the sense of living vegetation and that of a 'seat of . . . generative power' and reflects Jones' theological thinking about the sacrifice of Christ as one with his creative power at the origin of all life, including the life of the natural world.

In keeping with the imagery of trees, Jones also plays with the word 'ARBOR', likewise an important word from *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* in light of the Christian

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<sup>397</sup> See *SL*, 32, note 1. See '*Tydi a Roddaist*' and English translation in *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. IX.

<sup>398</sup> The 'tree of life' in Genesis 3 is taken from the Hebrew *etz chaim*, translated in the Vulgate as '*lignum vitae*', which is then repeated in Revelation 22. The discussion of 1 Peter 2:24 then uses the word '*lignum*' ('tree' or 'wood') as opposed to '*arbor*' ('tree') in the phrase '*qui peccata nostra ipse pertulit in corpore suo super lignum*', 'Who his own self bore our sins in his body upon the tree' (DR). The word '*arbor*' tends to appear in the Vulgate in descriptions of the natural environment (viz. the story of Zacchaeus: '*praecurrens ascendit in arborem sycomorum*', ['And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree'] of Luke 19:4).

<sup>399</sup> See '*llwyn*, 1' and '*llwyn*, 2,' *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru/A Dictionary of the Welsh Language*, University of Wales. Web. <<http://welsh-dictionary.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>>

Scriptures. ‘ARBOR’ and ‘ARBOUR’ have the same sonic value in English, although the latter is made into a sonic and grammatical variation on the former by its being transformed into the compound ‘ARBOUR-SIDE’. The word ‘arbor’ in English, visually identical with its Latin ancestor, derives its primary sense from mechanics, being ‘the main support or beam of a machine’ or, more likely what Jones has in mind here ‘the axle or spindle on which a wheel revolves’ [OED ‘arbor, n.1,’]. This sense alludes to one of Jones’ favourite ‘monastic’ sayings about the cross, which, as discussed above, he paraphrases in ‘Wales and the Crown’: ‘the Cross stands while the world revolves around it’.<sup>400</sup> The ‘tree’ of the cross in this line is both a Latin ‘*arbor*’ (natural tree) and an English ‘arbor’, but in a radically dual, sacramental sense. As the ‘arbor’ (or ‘axle’) of the world, it is an entity with the profoundest immaterial value. As an ‘*arbor*’ (natural tree), it is a product of the humblest material creation, coming as it does from ‘arbour-side’; that is, the edge of a living forest as the Rood describes its own story in the *Dream*.<sup>401</sup>

At one time, as a tree of the forest, the cross caught the natural light of the sun (‘APOLLO’S RAY’) when it ‘PIERCED’ the gaps in the green leaves around it. ‘NOW’, as the cross is ‘STRIPT’ of its leaves, branches and flowers, it is nonetheless ‘MORE ARRAYED’ than in its natural splendour, because of its identification with Christ’s redemptory suffering and sacrifice. The natural tree that was used to make the cross is ‘ARRAYED’ or clothed in a number of different senses [OED ‘array, v. 8,9’]. In the words of the *Vexilla Regis*, it is ‘*ornata regis purpura*’ (‘decorated with the purple of the king’), referring to the ‘purple’ blood of Christ that covers it in the crucifixion. It is ‘arrayed’ also in the sense of being the object of ‘array, v.10’ [‘put into (sore) plight, trouble, afflict’ or ‘disfigure, dirty, befoul, defile’]; and ‘ray, v.1’: ‘smear, bespatter, soil with blood, dirt, etc.’, OED]. This use appears in the 15th-c. work, ‘Woefully Arrayed’ (by one of Jones’ favourite poets, John Skelton), which describes the body of Christ in the passion as ‘arrayed’ in that it is ‘blo and wan’ (bruised and pale) with suffering.<sup>402</sup>

The cross is, furthermore, in keeping with the *Vexilla Regis*, ‘arrayed’ in that it is ‘prepared for battle’, an ‘array’ according to another definition being an ordered line of soldiers or weapons [OED ‘array, v. 1’]. In the tradition of both *Vexilla Regis* and *The Dream of the Rood*, the cross stands as either a war banner (the ‘*vexilla regis*’ being the

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<sup>400</sup> *EA*, 39.

<sup>401</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 29

<sup>402</sup> See John Skelton, *The Complete Poems of John Skelton*, ed. Philip Henderson (London: Dent, 1959), 11-12.

‘(war) banners of the king’) or as a soldier, as it shows itself to be in the *Dream* when it expresses obedience to Christ in the language of a loyal thane for his lord.<sup>403</sup> ‘Ray’ in this vein can also refer to ‘a king’ (having an aural resonance with Spanish ‘rey’ from Latin ‘rex, regis’ [OED ‘ray, n. 7’]) and so the cross being ‘arrayed’ could indicate its assuming the noble bearing of a king, being the seat from which Christ reigns as the heir of King David as described in the third verse of the *Vexilla Regis*.

On the other hand, the range of definitions in the word ‘ARRAYED’ itself unites the imagery of suffering and battle-weariness with the imagery of glory and light. The word ‘arrayed’ has a distinctive intertextual overlap with Christ’s injunction about the ‘lilies of the field’: as they grow in their natural environment, they are more finely ‘arrayed’ than the richest king of biblical history, King Solomon, in his jewels and man-made clothing.<sup>404</sup> What makes the cross more beautiful now (‘MORE ARRAYED’) than it was even as a growth of nature is a spiritual quality tacitly compared to light—the *super-natural* beauty of Christ’s renewal of creation in his resurrection. One of the first definitions of ‘ray’ indicates ‘a single line or narrow beam of light’ and relatedly can mean simply ‘light, radiance’ [OED, ‘ray, n. 5’]. The cross is ‘arrayed’ therefore in the sense that it radiates light, as visions of the cross in the tradition often appear and as the Rood in the *Dream* is ‘leohte bewunden’ (‘wound round with light’).<sup>405</sup>

The word ‘arrayed’ indeed visually mirrors and aurally chimes with ‘APOLLO’S RAY’, several lines later, directly alluding to the light of the sun god. It has ‘NOW’ a spiritual ‘SHEEN’ (in ‘SEE WHAT SHEEN THE LOPPED BOUGHS / NOW’) that is ‘shining, brightness’ or ‘gorgeous or bright attire’ [OED ‘sheen, n.1,’]. In the *Vexilla Regis*, the cross is the ‘*arbor decora et fulgida*’ (‘O tree of dazzling beauty’), ‘*fulgida*’ implying its being ‘clothed’ in the spiritual light of the resurrection. Several definitions of ‘ray’ may also suggest a comparison between the Cross and the Maypole to which Jones has compared the Cross elsewhere, especially *The Anathemata*. ‘Ray’ can refer to a kind of striped, colourful cloth, like the strips of fabric woven around a Maypole by a special dance. A ‘ray’ indeed can also be ‘a kind of round dance’, [OED ‘ray, n.1 and adj.; n.8’], so that in these senses the cross is ‘arrayed’ like the Maypole in that it is covered with colourful cloth and also ‘arrayed’ in that that which Jones calls the ‘world-dance’ is done around it.

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<sup>403</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 35-43.

<sup>404</sup> See Matthew 6:28-9, both in AV and DR.

<sup>405</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 5.

Both *The Dream of the Rood* and *Vexilla Regis* reflect the vision of the cross as being simultaneously blood-spattered and sorrowful as well as luminous and joyful in its being ‘sometimes . . . soaked with wetness, / stained with the coursing of blood; sometimes adorned with treasure’.<sup>406</sup> Drawing on this paradoxical image of the tradition, Jones uses the simultaneous facets captured by the word ‘ARRAYED’ itself to create a multi-dimensional image of the various senses in which the cross is ‘clothed’ in the *Vexilla Regis* and *The Dream of the Rood*. The technique indicates a development of Jones’ use of ambiguity in *In Parenthesis*, in which he chose words that would allow for the resonance of Christ’s presence as from an ‘unseen dimension’. Here Jones communicates profound and complex theological paradox by means of the ‘shape’ made by contradictory facets in the definitions and etymology of individual words in their context.

The word ‘TENEBRAE’, situated at the visual centre of the epigraph, provides a complimentary thematic and linguistic vortex to ‘ARRAYED’, in that it illustrates the ‘darkness’ against which the light shines in the Paschal Mystery. The intermediate passage describing the ray of Apollo — itself an image of natural light — stands out against the background made by the ‘TANGLED TENEBRAE’ of the forest. Apollo was a fitting early-Christian analogue for Christ, as the face of Christ in the Book of Revelation is described as ‘the sun [that] shineth in his strength’.<sup>407</sup> Christ here also has a parallel with King Arthur, most apparent in the word ‘RIDE’. ‘Ride’ can indicate both ‘a turn or spell of riding on a horse or other animal’, or ‘a path or track, esp. one through a wood, usually made for riding on horseback; a riding’ [OED ‘ride, n.2,’].

Considering the themes of Jones’ other poems in the *The Sleeping Lord* collection, both senses of ‘ride’ strongly suggest Arthur on his mythical ‘ride’ through the woods to catch the land-ravaging boar, Trwrch Trwyth, which Jones associates in *In Parenthesis* with the war’s violence.<sup>408</sup> As in the other *Sleeping Lord* material, Arthur is confused here with the dark trees and vegetation of the forest, and hence also recalls Jones’ own confusion of seeing ‘men as walking trees’<sup>409</sup> in Mametz Wood. Jones made his statement on ‘wounded trees and wounded men’ as a ‘hangover from the war’ to David Blamires in 1966, the year after he first published ‘The Fatigue’, connecting this image explicitly with

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<sup>406</sup> *Dream of the Rood*, 21-23.

<sup>407</sup> Revelation 1:16 (AV).

<sup>408</sup> *IP*, 86, 155.

<sup>409</sup> *IP*, 179.

the forest setting of his late poems.<sup>410</sup> In the epigraph Jones indeed reuses some of the exact words and constructions from the descriptions of wounded vegetation that carry resonance of the WWI battlefield's violence in *In Parenthesis* and elsewhere such as 'tangled' and 'lopped'.<sup>411</sup> The placement of 'TENEBRAE' in the visual centre of the poem, also recalls 'the very core and navel of the wood' of dark and gory Mametz where 'there / seemed a vacuum, if you stayed quite still, as though you'd / come on ancient stillnesses in his most interior place'.<sup>412</sup> One aspect of the 'darkness' against which the light of Christ's sacrifice shines is the violence of the war. The 'LOPPED BOUGHS', however 'NOW' are transfigured by the 'SHEEN' of Christ's redeeming sacrifice.

Not only the multiple definitions and thematic resonances of words but also their status as sensible objects plays into the meaning-making of the epigraph. As in his inscriptions, Jones' visual juxtaposition of words in his epigraph is part of the poetry and arguably gives it status as a work of visual art. Jones does not rely, as he does in the passages from *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata*, on a basic visual opposition of words in line-breaks and line-justification for the expression of paradox, but relies in an even more radical way on the visual juxtaposition and alignment of letter-shapes within individual words to reinforce the relationships created by etymology and aural patterns. In this way he makes the visual and aural dimensions of words intersect as much like the shapes in a painting as words on a page—but both visual and aural dimensions serve the deeper apprehension of language.

Paul Robichaud has referred to 'GWANWYN YN Y LLWYN' as the poem's title,<sup>413</sup> as it seems to stand apart from the rest of the text, and yet the characteristic Welsh liquid-sounds of this first line ('GW-', 'WY-' in conjunction with 'N' particularly) introduce a sonic motif that will punctuate the epigraph, particularly in the markers of time: 'NOW', 'WHEN' and 'NOW'. The double 'LL' (which appears in 'LLWYN'), and to which Jones paid particular attention in his inscriptions,<sup>414</sup> presents a conflict between ear and eye to the English speaker, as this sound in Welsh is not a liquid as in English and Latin, but instead takes an aspirated sound somewhat like the German 'ch'. Visually, however, the double 'LL' corresponds to the liquid Latin 'LL' in 'APOLLO'S' and

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<sup>410</sup> Blamires, *Artist and Writer*, 3.

<sup>411</sup> For the use of 'tangled' see *IP*, 70, 165, 177; for 'lopped' see 31.

<sup>412</sup> *IP*, 181.

<sup>413</sup> See Robichaud, *Making the Past Present*, 130.

<sup>414</sup> See his discussion of taking the 'LL' in his inscriptions from Welsh manuscripts, in Gray, *Painted Inscriptions*, 107.

‘VEXILLUM’ in the eighth and thirteenth lines. All three ‘LL’s are justified on the page in a vertical column that runs down the centre of the text. As a visual shape, the ‘LL’ therefore creates a relationship between the Welsh word for natural vegetation with the image of natural light, and the sacramental ‘sign’ of the *vexillum*, itself referring both to the cross and the Eucharist.

The words ‘ARRAYED’ and ‘TENEBRAE’ serve as two important aural as well as visual centres of the poem, providing keys not only for the range of imagery in their multiple facets of definition, etymology and cultural reference (as discussed above), but also for the sonic and visual patterns they govern in their particular placement in the epigraph. The ‘AR’ in ‘ARBOR’, for instance, links it visually to ‘ARBOUR-SIDE,’ then ‘ARRAYED’, where Jones introduces the long [eɪ] sound in the accented syllable ‘-RAY’. It then speaks to the initial letters of ‘APOLLO’S RAY’. ‘ARRAYED’ is echoed visually and verbally in ‘A . . . RAY’ of ‘APOLLO’S RAY’. It then chimes across the rest of the poem in the ‘E’s of ‘GERMINE’, ‘AVE’ and ‘VEXILLUM’. ‘ARRAYED,’ containing both ‘AR’ and the sound ‘[eɪ]’, as well as its position in the visual schema falling under ‘ARBOR’ and above the Latin quotations, serves as a sonic and visual link binding together the disparate edges of the epigraph.

Similar to the narration of the crucifixion in *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata*, Jones furthermore ties the range of the epigraph together with unexpected patterns of end-rhyme (made in part by his peculiar line-breaks), as well as internal rhyme. The word ‘TENEBRAE’, because of its singular status as a visual form, but multivalent status as an audible form in its various pronunciations, is able to participate in three different end-rhyme and consonantal patterns, and hence tie together several disparate aural threads. Notable first of all is the end-rhymed pair, ‘side / ride’ in the second and fifth lines. The long diphthong [aɪ] of ‘SIDE’ and ‘RIDE’ is echoed in the last syllable of ‘TENEBRAE’ when pronounced according to Classical Latin practice, chiming then also with ‘HIGH’ in the tenth line. According to traditional English pronunciation, the last syllable of ‘TENEBRAE’ could be pronounced with a long [i:] sound so as to chime with ‘PIERCE’, ‘GREEN’ and ‘SHEEN’. Pronounced according to Ecclesiastical Latin, however, ‘TENEBRAE’ chimes with the middle syllable of ‘ARRAYED’ and end-rhymes with ‘APOLLO’S RAY’ [OED ‘Tenebrae, n.,’]. In this pattern it also therefore rhymes with the Latin words ‘GERMINE’ and ‘AVE’ and chimes with the double ‘VE’ in ‘AVE VEXILLUM’, separated from the rest of the epigraph by its only punctuation marks: the ellipsis [‘. . .’] before ‘FRONDE FLORE GERMINE.’

These visual and aural patterns serve to highlight the otherwise implicit or hidden relationship between the diverse images of natural splendour, the horror of violence (both in the crucifixion of Christ and in Jones' own personal experience), the layered mythical types of the British cultural psyche, and the supernatural light of the 'new creation' brought about by the sacrifice of Christ present sacramentally in the Eucharist and at the 'centre point of time' in eternity. Their representation as part of one interdependent artistic unit presents both the paradoxical inextricability of these elements and a deep sense of modernist fracture turned into a euphonic whole.

Paul Robichaud has furthermore observed the deeply liturgical quality of the poem's language, connecting 'TENEBRAE' to the '*Tenebrae*' ('darkness') service of Good Friday morning, as well as the poem's direct quotations of both the *Crux Fidelis* ('FRONDE, FLORE, GERMINE') and *Vexilla Regis* ('O CRUX AVE') which accompanied the liturgical veneration of the cross and the Eucharist in the pre-1958 'Liturgy of the Presanctified' on Good Friday.<sup>415</sup> Considering the importance Jones placed on this particular liturgy and the placement of these hymns in it (especially the *Vexilla Regis*) as witnessing to the 'inseparable' relationship between the cross and the Eucharist, it becomes evident that a eucharistic presence resides in the epigraph in Jones' presentation of the liturgical language itself.

The last line, 'AVE VEXILLUM', which Robichaud supposes is 'Jones' own construction',<sup>416</sup> may be more likely an allusion to a late medieval genre of Latin hymns in the same thematic family as the *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* that featured in pre-Tridentine British devotions to the cross and the Eucharist. The first line of '*Salutatur crux, vexillum regis splendidum!*' by the 14th-century English Franciscan John of Hoveden,<sup>417</sup> has a striking resonance with the last two lines of Jones' epigraph. It reads: '*O crux, ave, vexillum regium!*', cleverly reversing and fusing the opening phrases of the 6th and 1st verses of the *Vexilla Regis* — '*O Crux ave*' and '*Vexilla regis*'—as Jones himself does in the last two lines of his poem. The rest of Hoveden's stanza makes an elaborate metaphor of a rose garden ('*rosarium*') to describe the cross, reiterating the image of the 'rose-arbour' that appears in both *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata* to describe the five

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<sup>415</sup> Robichaud, *Making the Past Present*, 129.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*; Note: Robichaud misquotes Jones saying the last line reads 'AVE VEXILLA' instead of 'AVE VEXILLUM.'

<sup>417</sup> See *Appendix of Short Texts*, no. III, for the full text.

wounds of Christ.<sup>418</sup> ‘*Salutatur Crux*’ was probably one of many related variations on the *Vexilla Regis* and *Crux Fidelis* used for the veneration of the cross such as ‘*O Crux viride lignum*’, described by Reginald Pecock as part of the ‘Feast of the Cross’s Finding’ of the medieval English liturgical calendar in the 15th-century MS Cmb Kk.4.26 (Cambridge, University Library).<sup>419</sup> Others, such as ‘*Ave, vexillum nostrae salvationis*’ from the 13th- to 15th-century Harley MS 211 (British Library), were sung or said during the elevation of the host in certain pre-Tridentine Masses in Britain. The dual presence the cross and the Eucharist in these and other hymns may also be invoked in the final ‘O CRUX AVE / AVE VEXILLUM’ of Jones’ epigraph.<sup>420</sup>

The image of the living forest in springtime communicated by the epigraph’s first line in Welsh is answered by the final lines in Latin, which stand for the cross inseparable from the Eucharist, the embodiment of Christ’s ‘saving action’ in the restoration of all creation. The vegetable Eucharist is hidden but also radically immanent in the fragmentary Latin references that themselves witness to their liturgical context. The various interplay of light and dark, of the violence of war and the ‘peace’ of natural growth speaks to the image as being, like Jones’ painting *Vexilla Regis*, an image of the ‘Waste Land’ of the First World War and modern fracture ‘redeemed’ by being turned into the presence of Christ.

Jones’ epigraph therefore merges the function of the ‘ill-scrawled inscriptions of the Forward Zone’ with the Roman inscriptions he saw in the Holy Land, both of which served as ‘marking’ the sites of the ordinary labour of soldiers. The Gospels describe such a sign explicitly in the context of the ‘fatigue’ of Christ’s crucifixion, which was the hand-written ‘title’ nailed to the cross itself by the Roman soldiers, and which read ‘in Hebrew, Latin and Greek’: ‘JESUS OF NAZARETH: KING OF THE JEWS’ (cf. John 19:20 [DR]). This title summarises Christ’s entire identity and mission, especially in light of the paradoxical union of his human and divine natures at play in the mystery of his sacrifice. Jones’ ‘inscription’ at the top of his consummate poem about the sacrifice of Christ serves as a similarly pithy summary of the mystery it labels, proclaiming in a mixture of

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<sup>418</sup> *IP*, 83. *AN*, 190-91.

<sup>419</sup> Reginald Pecock, *The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy*, ed. Churchill Babington, in *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, Or, Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages* 19, no. 1 (London: Longmans, 1860), 200, 262. Owain Tudor Evans attests to the use of ‘*O Crux Viride*’ in 14th c. Welsh Penpont Antiphonal for the Finding of the Cross, see *Matins, Lauds and Vespers for St. David’s Day: The Medieval Office of the Welsh Patron Saint in National Library of Wales MS 20541 E* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1990), 29.

<sup>420</sup> See J. Moyes, ‘Nova et Vetera: How English Catholics Prayed in the Fourteenth Century’, *The Dublin Review* 123, no. 28 (October, 1898): 396, 400.

languages not only the identity of the immediate task at hand, but also the ‘work’ of Christ’s sacrifice at the source of creation that turns all labours into the sign of God’s presence.

### **‘Poet of Christ’s Passion’**

Perhaps Seamus Heaney had ‘The Fatigue’ and its epigraph especially in mind when he called David Jones a ‘poet of Christ’s passion . . . and sacramental nature’ in the ‘lineage’ both of Hopkins and the medieval author of *The Dream of the Rood*. Heaney unwittingly draws attention to the influence of Martindale and de la Taille, the ‘hangover’ of the war, and Jones’ experience of liturgy when he summarises Jones’ vision as one in which the ‘world is certainly charged with the grandeur of God but God bleeds as a maimed god at the centre of the world, on the “tump” of Calvary, on a tree’.<sup>421</sup> Jones shows himself a modern ‘poet of Christ’s passion’ in the spirit of Fortunatus and the medieval *Dream* author in ‘sing[ing] of the passion’ with the ‘contactual’ ‘data’ of modern warfare and the fractured forms of modern poetry.

Building on the liturgical resonance of his inscriptions, and also in line with the *Vexilla* and the *Dream*, Jones’ poetic presentation of the sacrifice of Christ takes on a distinct dialogue with liturgical action, extending the ‘re-presentation’ of the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass and liturgies of the passion into the decidedly non-liturgical sphere of modern poetry by meditation on the words of the liturgy and the tradition themselves. Jones’ method particularly follows the ‘paraliturgical’ mode of the *Dream* that elucidates the theology and experience of being at Mass. Jones, however, works according to what he called ‘the problems of the contemporary artist’, which he claims stem from the inescapably private or ‘personal’ orientation of contemporary artistic form, which is generally opposed to the ‘public’ nature of liturgy and religious symbolism.<sup>422</sup>

The ‘redemptive’ model of poetry made for and about the liturgy seen in the *Vexilla* and the *Dream*, which makes use of personal and ‘contactual’ ‘data’ (especially that of warfare) to narrate the mystery of the passion, itself provides a thoroughfare between the public and private, and between secular and sacred space in Jones’ own work. The 20th-century theological articulations of Cyril Martindale and Maurice de la Taille on the sacrifice of Christ and its ‘dynamic function’ in the Eucharist, as well as Jones’

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<sup>421</sup> Heaney, ‘Now and in England’, 547.

<sup>422</sup> *EA*, 272-73.

personal experience of the Mass and the liturgies of the passion, enabled him therefore to extend the principles of the 'Cult of the Cross' tradition in a new way, especially to understand the sacrifice of Christ in light of his experience of the WWI waste land. An inescapable tension at the heart of this project provides the engine for an unprecedented display of what poetry is capable of being and doing in a 20th-century context.

## Epilogue.

### Jones ‘Liturgical’ Language

Although the Roman Catholic liturgy has a striking presence in Jones’ own artistic representation of the sacrifice of Christ, Jones does not himself make ‘liturgical art’; that is, his art is not meant as an accompaniment to prescribed liturgical action *per se* as one would understand it in a 20th-century context. In response to a letter to the Editor in *The Tablet* in 1941 that called for a ‘Catholic Contemporary Arts Society’,<sup>423</sup> Jones declared that:

. . . in the arts “the best” can only easily and naturally be available to the hierarchic, corporate, symbolic demands of the Church if the epoch itself is characterized by those qualities. This cannot, by any means, be said of our epoch. The characteristic bents and virtues of modern painting, for instance, are not in fact easily amenable to these demands. This has little or nothing to do with the will or wishes of this or that artist. He cannot by taking thought change himself into an artist of some other culture-sequence . . . Modern painting tends to be idiosyncratic and personal in expression and experimental in technique, intimate and private rather than public and corporate’.<sup>424</sup>

Despite Jones’ protests that his own art does not try to be ‘obscure’ or ‘experimental’,<sup>425</sup> he includes himself in this generation of ‘modern’ artists whom he sees not as unwilling but simply incapable—because of their place in the ‘epoch’—of making art for the liturgy that both authentically expresses the tradition and has authentic ‘nowness’ of form.

Jones’ art is ‘liturgical’, therefore, in a profoundly different sense. It has something in common with the blurring of sacred and secular seen in medieval art in which the strict distinction between ‘liturgical’ and ‘paraliturgical’ was less pronounced.<sup>426</sup> Jones’ mingling of sacred and profane, however, reflects not the ubiquity of symbol seen in medieval art and culture in which the liturgy spilled into every aspect of life, but the

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<sup>423</sup> Wilfred Childe, ‘Church Decoration in England’, *The Tablet*, 30 August 1941, p. 141.

<sup>424</sup> *EA*, 97-8.

<sup>425</sup> David Jones, *David Jones: Letters to Vernon Watkins*, ed. Ruth Pryor (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1976), 61. Jones, *Inner Necessities*, 24.

<sup>426</sup> Caldwell, ‘Liturgical and Vernacular Music’, 286.

distinctly opposite condition of the modern world in which, as Jones saw it, the nature of art-making itself resists the public dimension of communal symbolism. In a cultural moment that privileged the self-contained world of the individual artist, Jones embraced ‘private’ forms, for instance calling his inscriptions ‘in a sort of way . . . private’.<sup>427</sup> In his unflagging optimism about the cosmic and dynamic action of Christ at work in creation, however, Jones used the ‘private’ and fractured forms of his ‘civilizational situation’ to cooperate instead with the ubiquitous origin of liturgy; that is, the ‘continuation’ of God’s creative work in the world, one with his eternal sacrifice and the ‘Incarnation continued’ that he understood as the source of any creative act.

David Jones was known to say, quoting his friend Saunders Lewis, that ‘the Mass makes sense of everything’.<sup>428</sup> He rarely elaborated on this statement, but it summarises an integral aspect of his artistic and philosophical *oeuvre*, which began to take shape in his unexpected ‘first sight of a Mass’ in the midst of the WWI battlefield c. 1917.<sup>429</sup> Not only his constant return to the imagery and language of the Mass in his art, but also the fundamental basis and function of his artistic form speaks to his deeply theological — and especially liturgical — conception of sign-making itself. For Jones, as this study has explored, the work of the artist is an extension of the created world, itself the ‘artwork’ of God, and hence deeply touching God’s own creative power. It therefore also participates in the redemption of creation enacted by Christ in his sacrifice ‘re-presented’ in the action of the Mass, and embodied in the Eucharist.

Jones’ diagnosis of contemporary art as necessarily unfit for the liturgy because of its ‘private’ and fragmented (as opposed to public and symbolic) mode anticipates some important claims in the work of Catherine Pickstock and others in the analysis of language and theology in a postmodern context. In her *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (1998), Pickstock responds to the Derridean challenge to meaning in language (and by extension, arguably, other kinds of embodied sign-making) with the suggestion that language is indeed meaningless in a contemporary world insomuch as it has lost its ancient and more proper function as liturgical or ‘doxological’; that is, necessarily rendering praise to a ‘transcendent source which “gives” all reality as a

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<sup>427</sup> Jones quoted in Gray, *Painted Inscriptions*, 103.

<sup>428</sup> Saunders Lewis, ‘Two Letters Introduced by Saunders Lewis’, *Agenda* 11/4—12, no. 1 (Winter—Spring 1973-74), 20.

<sup>429</sup> *DGC*, 248.

mystery'.<sup>430</sup> For Pickstock, the 'shifting flux' of modern fragmentation is ironically 'a sign of our dependency' on this 'transcendent source', so that only 'the event of transubstantiation in the Eucharist is the condition of possibility for all human meaning'.<sup>431</sup>

Jones' work embodies much of the struggle for meaning — to 'make sense' — in 20th-century art. He refused to relinquish the 'nowness' of words, which he saw so aptly portrayed in the fragmentary, etymologically self-conscious styles of Eliot and Joyce. Unique among artists in the 20th century, however, his work also embodies Pickstock's curious insistence on the governing, meaning-making role of the liturgical mode of language and sign-making itself — the mode of gratuitous rendering of praise to an unseen, 'transcendent source' that makes something new out of the fragments it finds. Jones' artistic work is therefore 'liturgical' in this deeper mode described by Pickstock. At the same time, it embodies the modern anxiety of fragmentation and threat of meaninglessness, especially in the unprecedented scale of warfare and violence in the 20th century, to which Jones responds with the witness of liturgy and the theology of Christ's sacrifice. His constant return to the words, shapes and other forms of the liturgy, and use of it as his most significant intellectual and artistic framework speaks to a similar confidence in its being the only sign that 'makes sense' of everything and 'the condition of possibility for all human meaning'. He neither relinquishes the agony of the modern world, nor abdicates his belief in its 'transcendent source'. His work is not meant for the liturgy *per se*, but in an unseen and profound way, extends the work of liturgy.

Artists who have followed after him have appreciated especially the torque and tenderness in his art fuelled by this relentless endeavour to make existential experience into communal 'praise', especially in the deeply liturgical mode of his meditation on the sacrifice of Christ itself as well as his engagement with the words of the liturgy. Poets have recognised, and grafted into their art, Jones' own 'groping syntax',<sup>432</sup> his use of language and visual shape that strives after 'praise' in attempting to turn the darkness of faith and suffering in its most acute and tactile brutality into the presence of Christ.

Geoffrey Hill included 'Three Mystical Songs' (later incorporated as stanzas 8, 9 and 13 of 'Pentecost Castle' in his *Tenebrae* [1978]), in the 1973 Special Issue of *Agenda* dedicated to David Jones, in which he follows directly on Jones' use of linguistic

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<sup>430</sup> Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), xii.

<sup>431</sup> Pickstock, *After Writing*, xv.

<sup>432</sup> *AN*, 49.



taken from the *Dies Irae* chant of the Latin Requiem Mass in which ‘*Teste David cum sibylla*’ ([King] David testifies with the sibyl’); that is, two pre-Christian prophetic figures — one Jewish and one pagan — speak of the afterlife and judgment that finds its way into Christian theology.<sup>435</sup> ‘David’s’ own testimony on suffering therefore becomes another ‘sign’ of the presence of the mystery of redemption and has a deeply liturgical orientation in that it transforms his own very personal suffering into ‘praise’.

‘Lord of the Animals’ intertwines one of Jones’ laments about the changes in the Mass — ‘Look what they’ve done / to the Latin Mass / those damned clerics . . .’ — with Montague’s own childhood memories of the Latin Mass, as well as the ‘Mass of St. Hubert’. The latter refers to a tradition amongst French nobility in which in preparation for a hunt, a Mass would be celebrated outside in a forest or field, and the music accompanying it would consist entirely of the ‘fanfare’ of horns that would also announce the chase.<sup>436</sup> In this vision, very much in the spirit of David Jones, Christ in the elevation of the host at the Mass becomes ‘the Great Stag / slain by the hunter’ with a cross between his horns as in the vision of St. Hubert (the patron of hunters). He is also the ‘Lord of the Animals . . . in the sacred dance / as the forest creatures / tread gently towards Him’. Montague interprets the Mass, as Jones does in his work, as taking up both ‘pagan and Christian’ aspirations, being one with the source of the life of creation itself — with the suffering Christ on the ‘tree’ of the cross at its centre.<sup>437</sup>

The direct engagement with Jones’ ‘liturgical’ mode appears also across different media. In 2016, the Welsh National Opera’s adaptation of *In Parenthesis* closed the final scene, in which the Queen of the Woods distributes laurels to the fallen English and German soldiers, with the singing of the *Salve Regina*, a chant which traditionally closes the Latin ‘Compline’ service and inaugurates the ‘great silence’ and sleep each night in monastic life in which the monks symbolically prepare for death. The presence of the *Salve* places the soldiers’ deaths into the perspective of liturgical action and recalls both Poulenc’s *Dialogue des Carmelites* and Britten’s *War Requiem*, turning the horror of death and the war into ‘something else’; namely, the ‘praise’ of liturgical song.

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<sup>435</sup> Cabrol, *Roman Missal*, 1351.

<sup>436</sup> See Wilhelm Bruns, ‘The St. Hubert’s Mass’, trans. Susan Marie Praeder, CD booklet for *Masses for Saint Hubert*, Deutsche Naturhorn Solisten (Detmold, Germany: Dabinghaus und Grimm Audiovision, 2009)

<sup>437</sup> Montague, *Second Childhood*, 71-72.

John Rowlands-Pritchard's 2015 musical sequence 'DAVID JONES: The Battle of Mametz Wood from *In Parenthesis*', performed on several occasions in 2015 and 2016 by the British vocal ensemble Opus Anglicanum, arguably captures the deeply liturgical orientation of Jones' vision of the war in a more compelling way than the opera. In its medley of spoken and sung language, it weaves the musicality of Jones' text itself recited aloud with antiphonal interspersions of polyphony, notably including music in honour of the passion and from the Mass. Josquin des Prez's *Stabat Mater* and Palestrina's *Agnus Dei* from his *Requiem* (Mass for the Dead) appear between excerpts from *In Parenthesis* labeled 'The Tree' and 'Wounded in the Wood'. An original musical setting of a section of text taken from the last part of the book (called 'In the Crypt of the Wood') appears near the very end of the sequence and uses the melody of the liturgical hymn *Vexilla Regis*, which, as has been discussed at length in this thesis, was at the centre of Jones' multi-faceted thinking about the sacrifice of Christ, the war, the natural world and the liturgy. Here, as in Jones' work itself, is not a 'comparison' of the suffering soldiers with the suffering Christ, but the radical presence of Christ's sacrifice alongside the horror of the war, mediated by the Mass, and appearing as from an unseen dimension to work its redemption.

One could point to many instances of Jones' influence on engravers in the 20th century, especially in Great Britain, but the stone-carving of sculptor Philip Chatfield extends Jones' engagement with the words of the liturgy in a strikingly literal way—bringing them into the action of liturgy itself. In a ring on the inner wall inside the circular 'Celtic Chapel' of Nicholaston House Christian Centre in Gower (Wales), Chatfield has carved the lines from Jones' Welsh and Latin inscription *Pwr yw r Gŵr* ('Who is the Man') that contains words from the Canon of the Mass referring directly to the 'victim' or 'sacrifice' embodied in the Eucharist ('*hostiam puram, hostiam sanctam, hostiam immaculatam*'). This work allows the inscription partially to fulfil its original intended purpose as the decoration of a nuns' chapel in Wales but which had been rejected for being too 'esoteric',<sup>438</sup> an experience that may have confirmed Jones' fear that his own forms were not suitable as an accompaniment to liturgical action strictly speaking. In a different context, however, and under a slightly different form, the deeply 'paraliturgical' inspiration of Jones' work comes to stand as a witness to liturgical action, or at least stand directly in juxtaposition to it.

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<sup>438</sup> Gray, *Painted Inscriptions*, 34.

Critical assessment of Jones' work in the 20th century has tended to wax and wane, seeing certain periods of intense interest (often coinciding with important events, such as Jones' death in 1974, the centenary of Jones' birth in 1995, and the current commemorations for the WWI centenary in 2014-18). But such moments seem inevitably to fade into obscurity again. The current enthusiasm in contemporary criticism about the intersections of 'religion and the arts', as well as interest in the intersections of word and image may place Jones' work into the canon in a more lasting way, as it certainly does open dimensions of his work in light of other 20th-century artists that have not properly been explored before. Jones' work, however, will more likely continue to provide inspiration and sustenance first of all for other artists. The direct engagement with Jones' work by the artists mentioned above are but a few examples of the profound and continual influence Jones has had in the 20th century into the present — both direct and indirect.

One could point to many more examples of 20th-century and contemporary poets (including Kathleen Raine, W.S. Merwin, John Matthias, Ted Hughes, Owen Sheers, Michael Symmons Roberts, Gillian Clarke and Hilary Davies), visual artists and sculptors (such as Peter Kelly, John Uzzell Edwards, Elizabeth Cramp, Robert MacDonald, Elizabeth Haines, and Bill Lazard), engravers (notably Ewan Clayton and Stephen Raw), musicians (such as Igor Stravinsky), filmmakers (Derek Shiel, Tristram Powell and Leo Aylan) and other performers who draw profound inspiration from the 'detailed, gentle mind' of David Jones.<sup>439</sup> Not explicitly in every case perhaps, but very often, these artists witness to the particular way in which the 'liturgical' orientation of Jones' form (in theme as well as in the minute craft of his *oeuvre's* 'shape') has provided a model for poets grappling with questions of faith, theology and spirituality in a 20th-century context, especially in the portrayal of landscape and animal life, and the engagement with liturgy, myth and religious symbolism.

Mary Uzzell Edwards (wife of the Welsh painter John Uzzell Edwards and niece of Jones' friend Tom Burns) described a visit to Jones' flat in Harrow in a short article for the *Western Mail* in 1968. The visit had been the inspiration for one of the few painted portraits that have been made of Jones—a painting made by her husband John later that year. The title of the article is 'Genius for whom the dark is light enough', and the play of light and dark, eternity and time, in Mary's descriptions is subtly emphasised in her verbal portrait. She describes entering his room as going 'down three steps into the three o'clock

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<sup>439</sup> Montague, *Second Childhood*, 51.

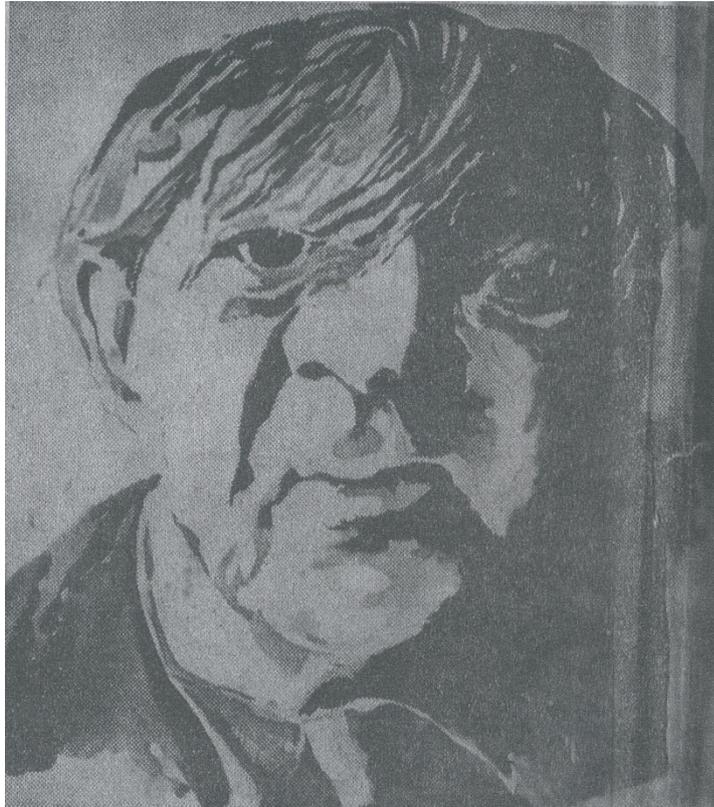
gloom' (like another famous 'darkness' that 'covered the earth' at three o'clock?), amidst Jones' protests not to turn on the lights; he instead asked his guests to adjust to his sensitivity of sight.<sup>440</sup> As in many accounts, she notes the particular kind of happy chaos of Jones' room, his range of conversational anecdotes in turns jolly (chuckling about Augustus John's gold earring as 'a bit silly') and mournful (speaking of the painter Christopher Wood's 'tragic end' in his suicide) as well as his tender treatment of his own paintings as his 'children'—his careful blowing of dust off them reminding her (in a version of the article given for a talk in 2014) 'of a benediction'.<sup>441</sup>

Mary notes that John hoped to buy one of Jones' paintings some day, 'not to display as a "picture" on the wall, but just to possess as "a part of David Jones's vision'. She describes his paintings as 'fine, flowery, delicate' but also 'important, dateless', reflective of the man himself whose imagination (following his words) had both 'roots in hard earth' and 'leaves conceptual and in the clouds', and for whom the gloomy drudge of a 'February afternoon' was, as it became for Mary and John visiting him, 'timeless'. 'This isn't a "by the world forgot" story', she insists, 'more that of a man whose being was so complete, and whose wisdom was such that he was happiest when alone'. John's portrait of Jones as it is re-printed in the *Western Mail* (fig. 40) shows his face slightly distorted as if by a magnifying glass, half in the light and half obscured — almost two different faces — with the right side (viewer's left) illuminated, his eye seen through strands of his hair like the palimpsestic pencil lines of his own mythical drawings that both conceal and reveal his symbolically-charged figures. He looks both like he is about to speak, but also that he is keeping silent. It is an image of Jones on that February afternoon — his eyes adjusted to the dark — but seeing as he did: according to an altogether different brightness.

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<sup>440</sup> Mary Uzzell Edwards, 'Genius for whom the dark is light enough', *Western Mail*, 4 May 1968.

<sup>441</sup> Mary Uzzell Edwards, Typescript of talk based on the *Western Mail* article given at Cyfarthfa Castle, Merthyr, Tydfil, Wales in April 2014, the text sent to me by the author.



**Figure 40**, John Uzzell Edwards, *Portrait of David Jones* (1968).



## **Appendix of Short Texts**

(Arranged in Chronological Order)



## I. *Crux Fidelis*, Venantius Fortunatus (569 AD)

Latin version	English Translation
Crux fidélis, inter omnes Arbor una nóbilis: Nulla silva talem profert Fronde, flore, gérmine: Dulce lignum, dulces clavos, Dulce pondus sústinet.	Faithful Cross, O Tree all beauteous, Tree all peerless and divine: Not a grove on earth can show us Such a leaf and flower as thine. Sweet the nails and sweet the wood, Laden with so sweet a load.
Pange lingua gloriósi Láuream certáminis, Et super Crucis trophæo Dic triúmphum nóbilem: Quáliter Rédemptor orbis Immolátus vicerit.	Sing, my tongue, the Saviour's glory; Tell his triumph far and wide; Tell aloud the famous story Of his Body crucified; How upon a cross a Victim, Vanquishing in death, he died.

*Here Crux fidélis is repeated as far as Dulce lignum*

De paréntis protoplásti Fraude factor cóndolens, Quando pomi noxiális In necem morsu ruit: Ipse lignum tunc notávit, Damni ligni ut sólveret.	Eating of the tree forbidden, Man had sunk in Satan's snare, When his pitying Creator Did this second tree prepare, Destined, many ages later, That first evil did repair.
--	---

*Here Dulce lignum is repeated*

Hoc opus nostrae salútis Ordo depopóscerat: Multifórmis proditóris Ars ut artem fálleret: Et medélam ferret inde, Hostis unde læserat.	Such the order God appointed When for sin he would atone; To the serpent thus opposing Schemes yet deeper than his own; Thence the remedy procuring Whence the fatal wound had come.
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*Crux fidelis, &c.*

Quando venit ergo sacri Plenitúdo témporis, Missus est ab arce Patris Natus, orbis Cónditor: Atque ventre virgináli Carne amíctus prodiit.	So when now at length the fulness Of the sacred time drew nigh, Then the Son who moulded all things Left his Father's throne on high: From a Virgin's womb appearing, Clothed in our mortality.
---	--

*Dulce lignum, &c.*

Vagit infans inter arcta	All within a lowly manger,
Cónditus præsepia:	Lo, a tender babe he lies:
Membra pannis involúta	See his tender Virgin-Mother
Virgo Mater álligat:	Lull to sleep his infant cries;
Et Dei manus pedésque	While the limbs of God Incarnate
Stricta cingit fáscia.	Round with swathing-bands she ties.

Crux fidelis, &c.

Lustra sex qui jam perégit	Thus did Christ to perfect manhood
Tempus implens cóporis,	In our mortal flesh attain;
Sponte líbera Redémptor	Then of his free choice he goeth
Passióni déditus,	To a death of bitter pain;
Agnus in Crucis levátur	And as a lamb upon the altar
Immolándus stípíte.	Of the Cross, for us is slain.

Dulce lignum, &c.

Felle potus ecce languet:	Lo, with gall his thirst he quenches:
Spina, clavi, láncea,	See the thorns upon his brow.
Mite corpus perforárunt:	Nails his tender flesh are rending:
Unda manat et cruor:	See, his side is opened now,
Terra, pontus, astra, mundus,	Whence to cleanse the whole creation,
Quo lavántur flúmine!	Streams of blood and water flow.

Crux fidelis, &c.

Flecte ramos, arbor alta,	Lofty Tree, bend down thy branches
Tensa laxa víscera,	To embrace thy sacred load;
Et rigor lentéscat ille,	Oh, relax the native tension
Quem dedit natívitás:	Of that all too rigid wood:
Et supérni membra Regis	Gently, gently bear the members
Tende miti stípíte.	Of thy dying King and God.

Dulce lignum, &c.

Sola digna tu fuísti	Tree which solely was found worthy
Ferre mundi víctimam;	Earth's great victim to sustain;
Atque portum præparáre	Harbour from the raging tempest,
Arca mundo naufrago,	Ark that saved the world again,
Quam sacer cruor perúnxit	Tree with sacred blood anointed,
Fusus Agni córpore.	Of the Lamb for sinners slain.

Crux fidelis, &c.

Sempitérna sit beátae	Honour, blessing everlasting
Trinitáti glória:	To the Immortal Deity:
Æqua Patri, Filióque,	To the Father, Son, and Spirit,
Par decus Paráclito:	Praise be paid coequally:
Uníus Trinique nomen	Glory through the earth and heaven
Laudet univérsitas.	To Trinity and Unity.

Dulce lignum, &c.

Amen.

Amen.

Taken from: Fernand Cabrol (ed.), *Holy Week: The Complete Offices in Latin and English*, 4th edn. (London: B. Herder, 1931), 264-67.

## II. *Vexilla Regis*, Venantius Fortunatus (569 AD)

Latin Version

English Translation

Vexilla regis pródeunt,  
Fulget crucis mysterium;  
Qua vita mortem pértulit,  
Et morte vitam prótulit.

Forth comes the standard of the King:  
All hail, thou mystery ador'd:  
Hail, Cross on which the Life himself  
Died, and by death our life restored.

Quae vulneráta lánceæ  
Mucróné diro, críminum  
Ut nos laváret sórdibus,  
Manávit unda et sánguine.

On which the Saviour's holy side,  
Rent open with a cruel spear,  
Its stream of blood and water pour'd.  
To wash us from defilement clear.

Impléta sunt, quae cóncinit  
David fidéli cármine,  
Dicéndo nationónibus:  
Regnávit a ligno Deus.

O sacred Wood fulfill'd in thee  
Was holy David's truthful lay;  
Which told the world, that from a Tree  
The Lord should all the nations sway.

Arbor decóra et fúlgida,  
Ornáta Regis púpura,  
Elécta digno stípíte  
Tam sancta membra tángere.

Most royally empurpled o'er,  
How beauteously thy stem doth shine,  
How glorious was its lot to touch  
Those limbs so holy and divine.

Béata cujus bráchiis  
Prétium pepéndit sæculi,  
Statéra facta córporis,  
Tulítque prædam tártari.

Thrice blest, upon whose arms outstretch'd  
The Saviour of the world reclin'd;  
Balance sublime upon whose beam  
Was weigh'd the ransom of mankind.

O Crux, ave, spes única,  
Hod Passiόνis témpore  
Piis adáuge grátiam  
Reisque dele crímina.

Hail, Cross thou only hope of man,  
Hail on this holy Passion day  
To saints increase the grace they have;  
From sinners purge their guilt away.

Te, fons salútis, Trínitas,  
Colláudet omnis spíritus:  
Quibus crucis victóriam  
Largíris, adde præmium.  
Amen.

Salvation's Fount, blest Trinity,  
Be praise to thee through earth and skies:  
Thou through the Cross the victory  
Dost give; oh give us too the prize.  
Amen.

Taken from: Fernand Cabrol (ed.), *Holy Week: The Complete Offices in Latin and English*, 4th edn. (London: B. Herder, 1931), 267-68.

**III. *Salutatur Crux, Vexillum Regis Splendidum*, John of Hoveden (13th c. British)**

230

O crux, ave, vexillum regium!  
In te rosae connubit lilium,  
Bini portas coloris pretium  
caeli rosae facta rosarium.

231

Fructu tuo letum obliteras,  
Fructu fructum fellitum superas;  
Fructu tuo fruentes liberas,  
Venenantes venenas viperas.

232

Crux est nidus, turtur ecclesia;  
In te pullos nos ponit gratia,  
Dum invenit passer palatia  
Ascendente Christo caelestia.

233

Scala Jacob caelis inniteris,  
Summi Regis sceptrum efficeris,  
Arca Noe dans genus posteris,  
Maris magni Syrtes transgrederis.

234

Leviathan tu fortis ferula,  
Hostes sternis lucens laguncula;  
Reflorescens tu vatis virgula,  
Nucem portas cibantem saecula.

235

Amor cerpsit in horto virginis  
Virginantis fructum dulcedinis,  
Quem crux sui ramo cacuminis  
Mutuavit obtentu germinis.

236

Mucro Regis ominopotentiae,  
Assis mihi mortis in acie,  
Ut te vibrem et vires bestiae  
In te vincam manu potentiae.

237

Crux gemmata membris lucentibus,  
Quae praesplendes caeli sideribus,  
Tuis, rogo, sacris splendoribus  
Cordis mei medere noctibus!

Taken from: *Hymnologische Beiträge: Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Lateinischen Hymnendichtung*, ed. Clemens Blume and Guido Maria Dreves (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1971), 21.

Mr. David Rodriguez BA, JD, has translated the first verse for me as follows:

230

Hail, O Cross, royal standard,  
Where lilies and roses wed,  
Valuable on double counts,  
For heaven's rose, too, a rose-bed.

#### IV. Prologue to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, 14th c. British

Whan that aprill with his shoures soote  
The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,  
And bathed every veyne in swich licour  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth  
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth  
Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne  
Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,  
And smale foweles maken melodye,  
That slepen al the nyght with open ye  
(so priketh hem nature in hir corages);  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,  
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,  
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;  
And specially from every shires ende  
Of engelond to caunterbury they wende,  
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.

Taken from: Geoffrey Chaucer, 'General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*', in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry Benson, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 23, lines 1-18.

#### V. *Quia Amore Languet (In a Valley of this Restless Mind)*, 15th c. British

In a valey of this restles mynde,  
I soughte in mounteyne and in mede,  
Trustynge a trelowe for to fynde,  
Upon an hil than Y took hede:  
A voice Y herde — and neer Y yede —  
In huge dolour complaynyng tho:  
"Se, dere Soule, how my sidis blede,  
*Quia amore languet.*"

5

Upon this hil Y fond a tree,  
Undir the tree a man sittynge, 10  
From heed to foot woundid was he,  
His herte blood Y sigh bleding:  
A semeli man to ben a king, he  
A graciouse face to loken unto;  
I askide whi he had peynynge, 15  
He seide, "*Quia amore languet*."

"I am Truelove that fals was nevere.  
My systyr, Mannis Soule, Y loved hir thus.  
Bicause we wolde in no wise discevere,  
I lefte my kyngdom glorious. 20  
I purveide for hir a paleis precious;  
Sche fleyth; Y folowe. Y soughte hir so,  
I suffride this peyne piteuous,  
*Quia amore languet*."

"My fair spouse and my love bright, 25  
I saved hir fro betynge, and sche hath me bet!  
I clothid hir in grace and hevenli light,  
This bloodi scherte sche hath on me sette!  
For longynge of love yit wolde Y not lette —  
Swete strokis are these, lo! 30  
I have loved hir evere, as Y hir het,  
*Quia amore languet*."

"I crowned hir with blis, and sche me with thorn;  
I ledde hir to chaumbir, and sche me to die;  
I broughte hir to worschipe, and sche me to scorn; 35  
I dide hir reverence, and she me vilonye.  
To love that loveth is no maistrie;  
Hir hate made nevere my love hir foo.  
Axe me no questioun whi —  
*Quia amore languet*. 40

"Loke unto myn hondis, Man:  
These gloves were yove me whan Y hir soughte —  
Thei ben not white, but rede and wan,  
Onbroudrid with blood. My spouse hem broughte.  
Thei wole not of; Y loose hem noughte. 45  
I wowe hir with hem whereever sche go —  
These hondis for hir so freendli foughte,  
*Quia amore languet*."

"Merveille noughte, Man, though Y sitte stille:  
Se, love hath schod me wondir streite, 50  
Boclid my feet, as was hir wille,  
With scharp naile, lo! Thou maiste waitenails;  
In my love was nevere desaitte —

- Alle myn humours Y have opened hir to —  
 There my bodi hath maad hir hertis baite,has 55  
*Quia amore languet.*
- "In my side Y have made hir neste.  
 Loke in: How weet a wounde is heere!  
 This is hir chaumbir. Heere schal sche reste,  
 That sche and Y may slepe in fere. 60  
 Heere may she waische if ony filthe were;  
 Heere is sete for al hir woo.  
 Come whanne sche wole, sche schal have chere,  
*Quia amore languet.*
- "I wole abide til sche be redy; 65  
 I wole hir sue if sche seie nay;  
 If sche be richilees, Y wole be gredi,  
 And if sche be daungerus, Y wole hir praie.  
 If sche wepe, than hide Y ne may —  
 Myn armes her highed to clippe hir me to: 70  
 Crie oonys! Y come. Now, Soule, asay!  
*Quia amore languet.*
- "I sitte on this hil for to se fer.  
 I loke into the valey my spouse to se.  
 Now renneth sche awayward, yit come sche me neer, 75  
 For out of my sighte may sche not be.  
 Summe wayte hir prai to make hir to flee,  
 I renne bifore and fleme hir foo.  
 Returne, my spouse, ayen to me!  
*Quia amore languet.* 80
- "Fair love, lete us go pleye —  
 Applis ben ripe in my gardayne;  
 I schal thee clothe in a newe aray;  
 Thi mete schal be mylk, hony, and wiyn.  
 Fair love, lete us go digne — 85  
 Thi sustynaunce is in my crippe, lo!  
 Tarie thou not, my fair spouse myne!  
*Quia amore languet.*
- "Iff thou be foul, Y schal thee make clene;  
 If thou be siik, Y schal thee hele; 90  
 If thou moorne ought, Y schal thee meene.  
 Whi wolt thou not, fair love, with me dele?  
 Foundist thou evere love so leel?  
 What woldist thou, spouse, that Y schulde do?  
 I may not unkyndeli thee appele, 95  
*Quia amore languet.*
- "What schal Y do with my fair spouse

But abide hir, of my gentilnes,  
 Til that sche loke out of hir house

Of fleischli affeccoun? Love myn sche is! 100  
 Hir bed is maade: hir bolstir is blis;  
 Hir chaumbir is chosen, is ther non moo.  
 Loke out on me at the wyndow of kyndenes,  
*Quia amore languet.*

"My love is in hir chaumbir. Holde youre pees! 105  
 Make ye no noise, but lete hir slepe.  
 My babe Y wolde not were in disese;  
 I may not heere my dere child wepe;  
 With my pap Y schal hir kepe.  
 Ne merveille ye not though Y tende hir to: 110  
 This hole in my side had nevere be so depe,  
 But *Quia amore languet.*

"Longe thou for love nevere so high,  
 My love is more than thin may be: 1  
 Thou wepist, thou gladist, Y sitte thee bi — 115  
 Yit woldist thou oonys, leef, loke unto me,  
 Schulde I alwey fede thee.  
 With children mete? Nay, love, not so! —  
 I wole preve thi love with adversitè,  
*Quia amore languet.* 120

"Wexe not wery, myn owne wiif.  
 What mede is it to lyve evere in coumfort?  
 In tribulacioun I regne moore riif,  
 Oftetymes, than in disport —  
 In wele and in woo Y am ay to supporte! 125  
 Than, dere Soule, go not me fro!  
 Thi meede is markid whan thou art mort,  
*Quia amore languet.*

Taken from: *Moral Love Songs and Laments*, ed. Susan Greer Fein (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1998), *TEAMS Middle English Texts Series*, Robbins Library Digital Projects, University of Rochester. Web.  
 <<http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/fein-moral-love-songs-and-laments-in-a-valley-of-this-restless-mind>>

Greer Fein's text based on: L MS Lambeth 853 and C MS Cambridge University Library Hh.4.12

**VI. *John Barleycorn*, 18th c. British**

There were three men came from the west  
Their fortune for to try,  
And these three men they did agree  
John Barleycorn should die.  
Fol the dol the didiay,  
Fol the dol the di-di-a-ge wo.

They ploughed him down a furrow deep  
The drags went over his head;  
They vowed and swore and did declare  
John Barleycorn was dead.  
Fol the dol, etc.

And there he lay for a full fortnight  
Till the dews from Heaven did fall,  
When Barleycorn sprung up again  
And that surprised them all.  
Fol the dol, etc.

And there he remained till midsummer day  
And looked so pale and wan,  
And then his beard began to grow  
And he soon became a man.  
Fol the dol, etc.

They sent men with scythes so sharp,  
To cut him off at knee,  
And then poor John Barleycorn  
They served him barbarously.  
Fol the dol, etc.

O Barleycorn is the choicest grain  
That ever was sown on land;  
It will do more than anything  
By the turning of your hand.  
Fol the dol, etc.

Taken from: Cecil Sharp, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, 4th edn. (London: Simpkin, 1911), 37-38.

**VII. *Sing a Song of Sixpence*, 18th c. British**

486

Sing a song of sixpence,  
A pocket full of rye;  
Four and twenty blackbirds,  
Baked in a pie.

When the pie was opened,  
The birds began to sing;  
Was not that a dainty dish,  
To set before the king?

The king was in his counting-house,  
Counting out his money;  
The queen was in the parlour,  
Eating bread and honey.

The maid was in the garden,  
Hanging out the clothes,  
There came a little blackbird,  
And snapped off her nose.

Taken from: *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*, ed. Iona and Peter Opie (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), 394.

**VIII. *Who Killed Cock Robin?*, 18th c. British**

110

Who killed Cock Robin?  
I, said the Sparrow,  
With my bow and arrow,  
I killed Cock Robin.

Who saw him die?  
I, said the Fly,  
With my little eye,  
I saw him die.

Who caught his blood?  
I, said the Fish,  
With my little dish  
I caught his blood.

Who'll make the shroud?  
I, said the Beetle,  
With my thread and needle  
I'll make the shroud.

Who'll dig his grave?  
I, said the Owl,  
With my pick and shovel,  
I'll dig his grave.

Who'll be the parson?  
I, said the Rook,  
With my little book,  
I'll be the parson.

Who'll be the clerk?  
I, said the Lark,  
If it's not in the dark,  
I'll be the clerk.

Who'll carry the link?  
I, said the Linnet,  
I'll fetch it in a minute,  
I'll carry the link.

Who'll be chief mourner?  
I, said the Dove,  
I'll mourn for my love,  
I'll be chief mourner.

Who'll carry to coffin?  
I, said the Kite,  
If it's not through the night,  
I'll carry the coffin.

Who'll bear the pall?  
We, said the Wren,  
Both the cock and the hen,  
We'll bear the pall.

Who'll sing a psalm?  
I, said the Thrush,  
As she sat on a bush,  
I'll sing a psalm.

Who'll toll the bell?  
I, said the Bull,  
Because I can pull,  
I'll toll the bell.

All the birds of the air  
Fell a-sighing and a-sobbing  
When they heard the bell toll  
For poor Cock Robin.

Taken from: *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*, ed. Iona and Peter Opie (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), 130-131.

**IX. *Tydi a Roddaist*, T. Rowland Hughes (1938) and *Thou Gavest*, Aneirin Talfan Davies (English translation)**

Tydi, a rod-daist liw i'r wawr,  
A hud i'r machlud mwyn;  
Tydi, a luniaist gerdd a sawr  
Y gwanwyn yn y llwyn;  
O! cadw ni rhag colli'r hud  
Sydd heddiw'n crwydro drwy'r holl fyd.

Tydi, a luniaist gân i'r nant,  
A'i si i'r goedwig werdd;  
Tydi, a roist i'r awel dant,  
Ac i'r ehedydd gerdd;  
O! cadw ni rhag dyfod dydd  
Na yrr ein calon gân yn rhydd.

Tydi, a glywaist lithriad traed  
Ar ffordd Calfaria gynt;  
Tydi, a welaist ddafnau gwaed  
Y Gŵr ar ddieithr hynt:  
O! cadw ni rhag dyfod oes  
Heb goron ddrain, na chur, na chroes.

Amen.

O Thou that gave the magic dawn  
And sunset, beauty bright;  
O Thou that didst the Spring adorn,  
And gave it song and light.  
Our wonder, Lord, each day restore,  
And at Thy feet let us adore.

O Thou who gave the brook his song  
And to the tree its sigh;  
O Thou that gave the lark, day long,  
To sing its song on high;  
O never let us know the days  
Our hearts no longer fill with praise.

Thou who didst hear the halting tread  
On Calvary's bitter way;  
Thou who didst see the bloody sweat  
Fall from his brow that day;  
O keep us from an age that's shorn  
Of sacrifice and crown of thorn. Amen.

Amen.

Taken from: T. Rowland Hughes and Arwel Hughes, *Tydi a Roddaist (Thou Gavest)*, (Cardiff: Hughes a'i Fab, 1952).

## Abbreviations

- AN* *The Anathemata: fragments of an attempted writing*. 1963 Impression. London: Faber, 2010; originally published 1952.
- DG* *The Dying Gaul and Other Writings*. Edited by Harman Grisewood. London: Faber, 1978.
- DGC* *Dai Greatcoat: A Self-Portrait of David Jones in His Letters*. Edited by René Hague. London: Faber, 1978.
- EA* *Epoch and Artist: Selected Writings by David Jones*. Edited by Harman Grisewood. London: Faber, 1959.
- GG* C.C. Martindale, *The Goddess of Ghosts*. London: Burns & Oates, 1915.
- IP* *In Parenthesis: seinnyessit e gledyfym penn mameu*, 1978 impression. London: Faber, 2010; originally published 1937.
- MF* Maurice de la Taille, *The Mystery of Faith and Human Opinion Contrasted and Defined*. Translated by J.B. Schimpf. London: Sheed & Ward, 1930.
- SL* *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments*. London: Faber, 1974.



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<sup>442</sup> Note: The 12 volumes of the third edition of *The Golden Bough*, published between 1906 and 1915, are titled as follows after this entry. The order listed here reflects their chronological publication, but note that the volume order that would eventually be assigned does not match the chronological order of publication. The titles of these individual volumes, furthermore, sometimes appear in earlier versions as ‘enlargements’ of the 2nd edition, such as the 1906 *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* that Jones acquired in the 1950s. They also appear in multiple impressions by multiple publishers, generally Macmillan and Cambridge University Press, from the early 1900s through the 1920s.

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### **Visual Art (Holdings)**

Antalya Museum. Antalya, Turkey.

Canadian War Museum. Ottawa, Canada.

Imperial War Museum. London, U.K.

Museo Civico, Sansepolcro, Italy.

Musée du Louvre. Paris, France.

Vatican Museums. Vatican City.

Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart, Germany.

### **Films and Recordings**

*David Jones Between the Wars: The Years of Achievement* (2012). Film by Derek Shiel and Adam Alive. 79 minutes. Web. <<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x13fk5l>>

*David Jones: Innovation and Consolidation* (2014). Film by Derek Shiel. 60 minutes. Web. <<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x61qixf>>

*In Search of David Jones: Artist, Soldier, Poet* (2008). Film by Derek Shiel. 49 minutes. Web. <<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xu9moy>>

### **Exhibitions and Performances**

*The Animals of David Jones*. Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft. Ditchling, Sussex, UK. 24 October 2015 - 6 March, 2016.

‘DAVID JONES: July, 1916, The Battle of Mametz Wood from *In Parenthesis*’. Opus Anglicanum. Directed by John Rowlands-Pritchard. St. Wilfrid’s Church, York, UK. 22 July 2016.

*David Jones: Vision and Memory*. Pallant House Gallery. Chichester, UK. 24 October 2015 - 21 February 2016.

*In Parenthesis* (Opera). Directed by David Poutney. Music by Iain Bell. Libretto by David Antrobus and Emma Jenkins. Royal Opera House, London. 1 July 2016.

*Paul Nash*. Tate Britain. London, UK. 26 October 2016 - 5 March 2017.

*Stanley Spencer: Of Angels and Dirt*. Hepworth Gallery. Wakefield, Yorkshire, UK. 25 June - 5 October 2016.

‘*War’s Hell!*’: *The Battle of Mametz Wood in Art*. National Museum of Wales. Cardiff, UK. 30 April - 4 September 2016.