Rereading W. B. Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" through the Gramscian and Foucauldian lenses of hegemony and power relations

Shajwan N. Fatah[*]

Abstract: This paper presents a re-examination of W.B. Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" (1927). The poem has been analyzed in various ways, mainly in terms of historical and biographical references. This study attempts to unravel the language through a close reading. With the focus on the semiotics of the "old men," "singing school," and "drowsy Emperor," in my invesgiation, I will decode the philosophical riddles in Yeats's work. Eventually, the analysis will show the concept of shifting power and its integration to space and history, which evokes the essence of theories related to cultural hegemony (Antonio Gramsci) and power relations (Michel Foucault) within historical context, but also throughout the act of reading the text.

Keywords: Yeats, Byzantium, Foucault, Gramsci, power, hegemony

Introduction

Historiography often raises questions about referentiality and the reliability of narrative, prompting a critical reading of historical accounts. In this context, Karl Popper's provocative question "has history any meaning?"[1] frames a broader theoretical challenge. One manifestation of this problem appears in William Butler Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium". A poem that interrogates the act of reading and misreading history through its rich rhetorical and symbolic language. The text was composed between 1926 and 1927 and was

[*] Shajwan N. Fatah (✉)
Department of Gender Studies, Charmo Center for Research, Training, and Consultancy, Charmo University, Kurdistan-Iraq
e-mail: shajwan.nariman@chu.edu.iq

AGATHOS, Volume 17, Issue 1 (32): 21-34, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.19909669
© www.agathos-international-review.com CC BY NC 2026

[1] A primary objective of *The Open Society and Its Enemie*s and *The Poverty of Historicism* was to examine the origins and characteristics of totalitarianism. In particular, the emergence of fascism, including in Popper's native Austria, and the outbreak of the W.W.II motivated Popper to write these works in the late 1930s and early 1940s (Popper 1962).

first published in the October 1927 issue of *Blast*. It later appeared as the opening poem in Yeats's poetry collection, *The Tower*, released in 1928 (Csirmaz 2009, 97). On a literal level, Yeats's selected text appears to present a series of contradictions between generations and the transient nature of individual's life. While historically, it seems to depict the decline of the Byzantine Empire[2], evoking a lost cultural and political order. However, when read closely and theoretically, the poem engages with deeper philosophical concerns, particularly those related to power structures and cultural hegemony. Critics have offered diverse interpretations of Yeats's verse; when discussing any journey, the questions: "where?" and "why?" naturally arise and are of central importance (Karamitev 2020, 84). Thus, the title of the poem provides an answer to the first: the destination is Byzantium, with the mode of travel being by sea. More specifically, the verse centers on "the holy city of Byzantium," which historically known as Constantinople and now called Istanbul. Strikingly, the speaker's use of the city's ancient name suggests a desire to belong to its historical and cultural past. Karamitev (2020, 85) then sheds light on Yeats's personal experience:

> Yeats's biographer mentions one of the poet's travels in 1907 when, on tour in Italy, he visited Ravenna which affected his Byzantium-related poems (Macrae 1995, 72). Ravenna had considerable importance in the Mediterranean world and "contains some of the most spectacular works of art and architecture to have survived from late antiquity" (Deliyannis 2010, 1). Among these is the basilica of S. Apollinare Nuova that the poet visited in 1907 (Yeats 1997, 503) and which boasts mosaics heavily influenced by Byzantine tradition as the links between Ravenna and Constantinople were not only political but extended to other areas such as art and architecture.

Bharadwaj (2018, 180), on the other hand, thinks that Yeats's reflections on the idea of life within death are vivid, emotionally rich, and grounded in personal experience, giving them a sense of warmth and immediacy. His contemporaries, such as D.H. Lawrence and T.S.

[2] The fall of Constantinople in 1453 marked not only the collapse of the Byzantine Empire but also the full establishment of Ottoman authority over its former heartlands and population. This dramatic power shift naturally triggered various ideological reactions and, more broadly, elicited a range of responses from individuals who identified with the now-vanished Byzantine state, regardless of whether they resided within Ottoman-controlled regions (Moustakas 2011). The decline and fall of the Roman Empire had a significant influence that extended well beyond historical scholarship, inspiring numerous major works of art within popular culture (Bamyacı 2023).

Eliot, deal with similar themes through a more intellectual and analytical lenses. Their poetry is shaped by internal conflict and takes on a tone of paradox and logical reasoning, effectively used for poetic expressions. Similarly, Smajli (2013, 224) focuses on the biographical references, claiming that Yeats presents a spiritual journey through the voyage.

When viewed through the lens of revelation, it becomes clear that these poems were written during a time in his life when he was reflecting deeply on mortality, essentially, a moment of personal revelation tied to the creative process. At the age of sixty-two to sixty-five, Yeats was increasingly concerned with aging, the passing of time, the state of the world, and the inevitable approach of life's end. Smajli goes further, pointing out that Yeats's journey/sailing is not a literal or earthly one, rather, it is imagined and takes place on a different plane of perception. It is not grounded in reality but aspires to the realm of art, that is elevated and spiritual. As such, it functions symbolically, representing a voyage to another world. This departure, even from Ireland (a relatively new national concept at the time), becomes a mythical, visionary journey, reminiscent of Dante's passage from hell to heaven (Ibid, 225).

Besides these scholars, Iseni (2022, 122) sheds light on the rhetoric of the text, asserting that "Sailing to Byzantium" is undoubtedly rich in symbolism, its more literal foundations, though acknowledged, may not have received the attention they truly deserve.

Most interpretations of the poem fall into two main symbolic readings: one sees it as a reflection on the soul's journey around the time of death, and the other views it as a meditation on the artistic process and creative achievement. The distinction between these interpretations largely hinges on how one defines the concept of the "ideal". Put differently, the key question becomes: does Byzantium represent the highest form of aesthetic beauty within this world? Or does it stand for a transcendent and spiritual perfection beyond the earthly realm? Although Yeats's poem has been offered various interpretations, this paper aims to provide a reflective analysis within a close reading of the expressions. My focus is to show the philosophical hidden side of the text as it is intertwined within history.

Theoretical framework

This study follows a semiotic approach[3] to unravel the expressions in Yeats's poem by examining the arbitrary relationship between signifiers and signifieds, as well as the etymological meanings of the expressions. That is to say, this paper sheds light merely on the language of the verse; setting aside external factors such as the historical or biographical contexts in which it was composed. In doing so, the analysis focuses on the essence of text rather than the life or intentions of the poet.

Power, hegemony, and the critical rereading of history

Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" is often understood as a depiction of historical narratives associated with the Byzantine Empire. In this context, I do not aim to recount the historical events surrounding the decline of the Eastern Roman Empire and the rise of the Ottoman Empire, but rather to critically read these transitions through theoretical frameworks. This re-reading is not grounded in chronology but in the rhetorical and symbolic functions of language, which allow for an interpretive space where history, power, and discourse intersect. The thread of the analysis explores concepts related to cultural hegemony and shifting power. To begin with, 'cultural hegemony'[4] describes a form of dominance sustained through cultural and ideological mechanisms. It is typically enforced by means of social institutions, enabling those in positions of authority to significantly shape the values, norms, beliefs, expectations, perspectives, and behaviors of the broader population. The Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, expanded upon Karl Marx's idea that a society's dominant

[3] Semiotics is the discipline concerned with signs and the ways they are used in communication. The Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, one of its pioneers, described it as the study of "the life of signs within society." Although the term had appeared earlier, used in the 17th century by English philosopher John Locke in a similar context, semiotics did not develop as a distinct interdisciplinary field until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, through the separate but complementary contributions of Saussure and American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (Saussure 1972).

[4] The term 'hegemony' denotes the predominance of a particular group, state, or institution over others, typically exercised through political, cultural, or economic influence. The concept originates from the Greek term *hegemon*, referring to a leader who held sway over neighboring city-states. Throughout history, hegemonic structures have emerged in diverse settings, from classical Greece and Renaissance Italy to the British Empire during its colonial expansion (Ungvarsky 2024).

ideology reflects the interests of the ruling class by developing the concept of cultural hegemony.[5] Gramsci contended that the dominant group's authority is maintained not only through force, but through the dissemination of ideologies, such as values, and assumptions, through institutions like schools, religious organizations, legal systems, and the media. These establishments play a key role in shaping individuals' understanding of acceptable norms and values, thereby ensuring the population's consent to the existing social order. Consequently, control over these institutions equates to control over society as a whole (Cole 2025).

Scholars have frequently interpreted Gramsci's work as an attempt to challenge the rigidity of traditional Marxist doctrine. While this interpretation is valid, it tends to suggest that his ideas are primarily relevant to those who identify as Marxist thinkers. In reality, Gramsci's insights hold value for historians from diverse intellectual backgrounds. Moreover, his notion of cultural hegemony, which clarifies the shifting power and the political role of cultural symbols, offers a useful framework for intellectual historians examining how ideas can support or destabilize existing social structures, as well as for social historians grappling with apparent contradictions in historical contexts (Lears 1985, 568). According to Gramsci, the dominance of a social class or group is expressed in two principal forms: through coercive control, or what he terms "domination," and through "intellectual and moral leadership," known as 'hegemony'. While domination functions through the use of force and is enforced by the apparatus of political society, hegemony operates within civil society and relies on the consent of the governed. In this framework, the state imposes domination through its institutional power. In contrast, hegemony emerges from the various mechanisms of civil society that shape individuals' cognitive and emotional perceptions, thereby

[5] In his *Prison Notebooks* (1947), Gramsci engaged in a series of historical and theoretical inquiries into the conditions that make revolution possible within modern states, such as Italy, where a certain level of popular consent had already been established. He used the term "hegemony" to characterize a form of intellectual and moral leadership through which the ruling class becomes embedded throughout society. Rejecting the economic determinism central to classical Marxism, Gramsci presented a more nuanced political analysis that took into account the variability of historical contexts. He integrated Marxist thought with neo-idealist perspectives on practical subjectivity, outlining a revolutionary strategy that focused on cultivating a new collective identity (Bottici 2023).

influencing how they understand and respond to complex social realities (El Aidi & Yechouti 2017, 5).

Gramsci's insights seem to evoke Foucauldian notions of power/knowledge in which he argues that, beginning with Descartes, Western philosophy has been primarily concerned with uncovering the nature or essence of truth and knowledge. Philosophers have traditionally posed questions such as: "What is knowledge? Or what constitutes truth?" However, Foucault (1980, 66), following Nietzsche, shifts this inquiry; he contends that the central philosophical concern is no longer the identification of a reliable path to truth, but rather an investigation into the complex and contingent history of truth itself. This includes examining the origins and consequences of the "will to truth" and exploring how truth is entangled with power relations and their historical manifestations (Haugaard 2022).

Foucault approaches "power" not as a fixed object awaiting theoretical definition, but as a methodological tool he employs to critique and move beyond conventional understandings of power, which he thought were no longer adequate for interpreting the historical conditions they aimed to explain. At the same time, however, he offers various conceptual frameworks, such as sovereign power, disciplinary power, biopower, pastoral power, and governmentality, which all seem to track the historical and modern formations of power (Keser 2024). Foucault traces the mechanisms of power employed by the modern Western state back to the institutional power structures of the Christian church. He identifies four key aspects of pastoral power that focus on individuals: the promise of salvation after death, a readiness to sacrifice for the community, continuous care for both the community and each individual, and intimate access to and influence over individuals' minds. This salvation-oriented form of power laid the foundation for the modern state's protection-oriented model. In its secular transformation, pastoral power was reconfigured into political terms: offering security and well-being in this life, expanding public institutions to serve the populace, and advancing knowledge about human beings both collectively and individually (Foucault 1980, 67-70).

Reading "Sailing to Byzantium"

Yeats's poem presents itself to readers through the title, "Sailing to Byzantium," a phrase that, grammatically, denotes "setting out on a sea voyage, leaving port" (OED) toward Byzantium. The title has often

been interpreted symbolically, primarily from historical and biographical perspectives (Karamitev 2020; Sharma 2021). However, in this analysis, my focus is on the concepts of power relations and cultural hegemony. The verse introduces readers to a heterotopic space, once occupied by a group of men depicted as old, who are gradually supplanted by the young:

> That is no country for old men. The young
> In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
> —Those dying generations—at their song,
> The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
> Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
> Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
> Caught in that sensual music all neglect
> Monuments of unageing intellect.

The opening lines of the stanza depict an image of a "country," a conceptual and symbolic space where "old men" no longer belong to it and replaced by the presence of the "young," who are evocatively likened to "birds in the trees". These figures of youth, part of the "dying generations," are entangled in a temporal cycle devoid of transcendence. Metaphorically, the contradictions of "youth and old" seem to evoke the Gramscian notion (1971, 57) of cultural hegemony and shifting power from one group of intellectuals to another:

> The supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as 'domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership.' A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to 'liquidate,' or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups.

Moreover, their "song," which politically seems to be a symbol of vitality and meaning, eventually becomes a residue of repetition rather than a marker of the poetic expressions. Semiotically, this shows the systems of power and how they operate. The subsequent lines: "the salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas / Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long," offer an ekphrastic evocation of nature in its fullness. The juxtaposition of "salmon-falls" and "mackerel-crowded seas" creates a nexus between vertical and horizontal movement: the salmon's struggle upstream suggests aspiration, endurance, or perhaps an upward trajectory of life's meaning, while the mackerel crowding the horizontal sea implies mass movement, abundance, and lateral expansion without direction. These contrasting movements metaphorically reflect two different groups of intellectuals,

the elderly (the former ruling class) and the young (the current dominant group), each subject to the same system of mortality: "begotten, born, and dies". From a semiotic standpoint, this dual movement encodes shaping society and the power relations among the individuals. The linguistic pairing of water, fish, and seasonality establishes a system of signs which shows the class structure in terms of power. This aligns with a Gramscian reading of cultural hegemony, in which dominant values, sensuality, youth, productivity, marginalize other ways of being, such as contemplation, memory, and spiritual permanence. The significations of "song" and "music" invite readers to explore the cultural hegemony and power relations in the text as they operate as metaphors for *language* and its hegemonic function. Thus, language plays a central role in political discourse, serving as a means of persuasion and manipulation even within the dialectic relation between the text and the reader. As Rolan Barthes (1977, 148) explains:

> A text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation; but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader.

Through carefully chosen words, political leaders communicate their ideas, influence public opinion, and rally support for their goals. Tools, such as rhetoric, speeches, and propaganda illustrate the ways language is employed in politics to shape and influence audiences (Rahmani & Saeed 2024, 2063). From this perspective, "song" is not merely an expression but a distraction, part of the sensual music that seduces the body and silences the intellect. Language, then, is reduced to a chain of signifiers, inert like the "monuments of unageing intellect," dislocated from authentic meaning, reduced to spectacle, and embedded in the cultural machinery of power:

> An aged man is but a paltry thing,
> A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
> Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
> For every tatter in its mortal dress,
> Nor is there singing school but studying
> Monuments of its own magnificence;
> And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
> To the holy city of Byzantium.

The verse reflects the integration of cultural hegemony and heterotopia through the depiction of the "aged man" as a "paltry thing," likened to a "tattered coat upon a stick". This image critiques the hegemonic social order that marginalizes the elderly, valuing physical vitality and sensuality over intellectual or spiritual worth. Such expressions elevate the reader's thoughts to a level where they begin to perceive both temporal and spatial shifts across generations. Drawing on Gramsci, one might consider how the intellectual class, particularly aging or dissenting intellectuals, is often excluded from dominant culture unless they conform to its common norms. Yet, despite this cultural marginalization, the text offers a counterforce: the soul of the aged man is urged to "clap its hands and sing," even louder, in response to the disintegration of the body, its "mortal dress". Here, Foucauldian power becomes crucial in understanding how individuals are shaped by discourse and institutions. The term "mortal dress" holds layered semiotic meaning. On the surface, it signifies the decaying physical body within the natural cycle of life and death. However, from a deeper layer, it can be read as a kind of institutional costume; a marker of the roles imposed by political, religious, or cultural authorities. These evocations seem to be linked to the "singing school," which depict ideological institutions, analogous to what Louis Althusser describes as Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs), such as schools, churches, and other cultural systems that reproduce dominant ideology.[6] This interplay between power and knowledge, central to Foucault's philosophy, which is evident in the lines that follow: "studying," "mortal dress," and "monuments". Each carries connotative weight, suggesting that beneath the literal meaning lies a system of signs tied to historical authority, sacred tradition, and institutional memory. Together, these expressions reveal a semiotic network that exposes the philosophical link between aging, cultural erasure, and the resistance, which seems possible through spiritual or intellectual transcendence. Therefore, the narrative "I" declares that "[he/she has] sailed the seas and come [to] the holy city of Byzantium". At this point, the voice within the text becomes problematic, as it semiotically introduces ambiguity regarding the identity of the 'I'. It may represent a shifting voice oscillating between

[6] From Louis Althusser, "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation)." In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp. 142–7, 166–76. Translated by Ben Brewster. New York and London: Monthly Review Press.

the unknown speaker and the reader.[7] This flow invites a post-structuralist reading in which subjectivity is destabilized, and the speaker's identity becomes a site of interpretive negotiation. From this perspective, "the holy city of Byzantium" may be read not only as a symbolic space of spiritual and artistic transcendence but also as a metaphor for the text itself. The poem, like Byzantium, becomes a heterotopic space, another space, where power, time, and identity are reorganized. In this sense, the act of reading becomes an investigation into how cultural power shifts across generations and how intellectual authority is both constructed and challenged within literary discourse. The narrative voice presents a series of religious images in the verse:

> O sages standing in God's holy fire
> As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
> Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
> And be the singing-masters of my soul.
> Consume my heart away; sick with desire
> And fastened to a dying animal
> It knows not what it is; and gather me
> Into the artifice of eternity.

The religious imagery here invites readers to interpret history as a metaphor and to engage with broader philosophical questions: for instance, the expressions "God," "holy fire," and "gold mosaic" may show actual historical transitions, particularly the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire and the rise of the Ottoman Empire. However, these images can also be read theoretically as representations of hegemonic power, particularly the role of both traditional and organic intellectuals, who are symbolically portrayed as the "singing-masters" of the soul. At this point, the poem seems to ask the fundamental question of historiography: does history have inherent meaning? In this context, as one reads a literary text, a historiographical paradox emerges in the intersection of history and fiction; however, the narrative often appears to transcend the actual historical events it invokes (Pillai 1997, 836). Thus, the narrative voice seeks not only wisdom but also a synthesis of power and knowledge, as seen in the merging of the sacred ("holy fire") with the authoritative ("singing-masters"). This integration reflects the inseparable and evolving

[7] In his 1967 essay "The Death of the Author," Roland Barthes challenges the idea of the author's dominance over a text, asserting that the voice emerging from the text itself undermines the concept of a single, original creator (Barthes 1977).

relationship between religious and political ideologies. This unresolved riddle, the search for truth and transcendence, has made the speaker's "heart...sick with desire". The terms "soul" and "desire" can be examined through Hegelian recognition (Kojeve 1969), where the soul's longing is shaped by its encounter with otherness and by the dialectical structure of self-consciousness.[8] In this light, the dialectic relation between "old men" and the "young generation," and between "God's holy fire" and the "singing-masters," presents a paradox of authority: integrated yet contradictory modes of power. Ultimately, the speaker relates cultural hegemony to the evolution of human consciousness, particularly in the line: "...and fastened to a dying animal / it knows not what it is". These expressions not only reflect temporal and spatial shifts but also show the Hegelian notion of self-recognition and the analogy between animals and human being.[9] In doing so, the verse reveals an "artifice of eternity," a constructed, ever-shifting system that reflects both mortality and the illusion of permanence. Eventually, the language of the text depicts the intersection of art, history, and the dominance of political ideology:

> Once out of nature I shall never take
> My bodily form from any natural thing,
> But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
> Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
> To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
> Or set upon a golden bough to sing
> To lords and ladies of Byzantium
> Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

The narrative voice continues to reflect on shifting power in human civilization by turning away from primitive life, as expressed in the lines, "once out of nature I shall never take / my bodily form from any natural thing". These phrases suggest an ideological apparatus through

[8] Alexandre Kojève played a key role in bringing Hegel's ideas to 20th-century French philosophy, profoundly impacting numerous prominent French thinkers who participated in his 1930s seminar on *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in Paris. He concentrated on Hegel's philosophy of history and is particularly recognized for developing the concept of the "end of history" and for laying the groundwork for what became known as "existential Marxism" (*Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, n.d.).

[9] According to Hegel, humans resemble animals at the level of natural existence; however, what distinguishes human beings is their capacity to achieve self-consciousness through social, historical, and cultural developments (Schuringa 2022).

which dominant religious and political doctrines shape individuals' identity. Moreover, the language evokes the notion of Cartesian dualism,[10] which distinguishes between the mind, a thinking, non-material substance, and the body, an extended, non-thinking material substance. As Byzantium symbolizes civilization, art, and historical continuity, the ideological dimension becomes central, highlighting how cultural values and hegemonic ideas shape the reader's vision of transcendence and the privileging of the ideological over the natural. Consequently, the speaker aspires to take a form "wrought" from gold, as crafted by "Grecian goldsmiths," a reference to the skilled artisans of ancient Greece, renowned for their mastery in goldwork and intricate enameling. This transformation symbolizes the influence of high civilization and aesthetic permanence. The image of keeping the "drowsy Emperor awake" points to the political function of art and intellect across historical epochs. At this point, the text evokes the intersection of political and religious shifts over time and can be read through the lens of Gramscian cultural hegemony, where artistic creation becomes a means of both reflecting and resisting dominant ideologies. The expression "golden bough" metaphorically elicits an ekphrastic vision of Byzantium, with its rich architecture and historical civilization, now subject to shifting political and religious powers that "sing[s]" to its lords and ladies. The narrative voice concludes with the expressions "of what is past, or passing, or to come," which evoke the constant flux of power and cultural hegemony. Political and religious ideologies continually shape individuals' thoughts, creating a dialectical relation between the eternal values of art and the temporal authority of emperors.

Conclusion

W. B. Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" (1927) engages with deep issues related to cultural hegemony, heterotopia, and shifting power within human civilization, rather than merely historical or biographical narratives. In this essay, I approached the poem through a semiotic lens and theoretical frameworks grounded in Foucault's notion of power

[10] In dualism, the mind is distinguished from the body, though different periods have focused on different aspects of the mind. During classical and medieval times, the intellect was seen as the aspect least explainable by materialist accounts. From Descartes onward, however, the primary challenge to materialist monism became consciousness itself, with phenomenal consciousness or sensory experience often treated as its most typical example (Robinson 2020).

relations and Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony. The expressions invited me, as a lector, to decode the philosophical and cultural riddles embedded in the text and to explore their hidden meanings. Understanding these theories enables readers to add another layer of interpretation to Yeats's work, revealing the complex interplay of culture, power, and artistic transcendence.

References:

Althusser, Louis. 1971. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)." In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp.142–147; 166–176. Translated by Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Bamyacı, H. N. 2023. Edward Gibbon's The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire and the Byzantine Studies. *Uludağ University Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Social Sciences*, 24 (44): 97–108. https://doi.org/10.21550/sosbilder.1123231

Barthes, Roland. 1977. "The Death of the Author." In *Image-Music-Text*, pp. 142–148. Translated by Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang.

Bottici, Chiara. 2023. "Antonio Gramsci." In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/gramsci/ [accessed July 24, 2025].

Cole, N. L. 2025. What Is Cultural Hegemony? *ThoughtCo*. https://www.thoughtco.com/cultural-hegemony-3026121 [accessed July 23, 2025].

Csirmaz, E. P. 2009. 'Sailing' to 'Byzantium': A Voyage into Symbolism. *The AnaChronisT* 14. https://doi.org/10.53720/FTVL8790

Deliyannis, D. 2010. *Ravenna in Late Antiquity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

El Aidi, Abdellatif, and Yassine Yechouti. 2017. Antonio Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony in Edward Said's Orientalism. *Galaxy International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 6 (5): 1–10. https://www.galaxyimrj.com/V6/n5/Abdellatif.pdf.

Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*. Edited by Colin Gordon. Brighton: Harvester Press.

Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. "State and Civil Society." In *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, pp. 52–120. Edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers.

Harper, Douglas. n.d. "Etymology of Byzantium." *Online Etymology Dictionary*. https://www.etymonline.com/word/Byzantium [accessed August 27, 2025].

Haugaard, Mark. 2022. Foucault and Power: A Critique and Retheorization. *Critical Review: A Journal of Politics and Society*, 34 (3–4): 341–371. https://doi.org/10.1080/08913811.2022.2133803

Iseni, Agron. 2022. Language and Style in William Butler Yeats's Selected Poems: 'Adam's Curse,' 'Easter, 1916,' 'The Second Coming' and 'Sailing to Byzantium.' *Anglisticum: Journal of the Association–Institute for English*

Language and American Studies, 11 (7): 109–126. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7125593

Karamitev, Dimitar. 2020. *Boats Against the Current—W. B. Yeats (Sailing to Byzantium and Beyond)*. Plovdiv: Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

Keser, Erdem. 2024. Foucault: Power. *Critical Legal Thinking*. https://criticallegalthinking.com/2024/08/27/foucault-power/ [accessed July 23, 2025].

Kojève, Alexandre. [1947] 1969. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*. Edited by Allan Bloom. Translated by James H. Nichols Jr. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Lears, T. J. J. 1985. The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities. *American Historical Review*, 90 (3): 567–593. https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/90.3.567

Macrae, Al. 1995. *W. B. Yeats: A Literary Life*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Moustakas, Konstantinos. 2011. "Byzantine 'Visions' of the Ottoman Empire: Theories of Ottoman Legitimacy by Byzantine Scholars after the Fall of Constantinople." https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/34037399/Byzantine_Visions_of_the_Ottoman_Empire.-libre.PDF [accessed July 23, 2025].

Pillai, Johann. 1997. Death and Its Moments: The End of the Reader in History. *MLN*, 112 (5): 836–875.

Popper, Karl R. 1962. "Has History Any Meaning?" In *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rahmani, H., and A. R. Saeed. 2024. The Power of Language: Exploring the Role of Language in Politics. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, IX (II): 2063–2073. https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8080152

Robinson, Howard. 2020. "Dualism." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Edited by Edward N. Zalta. https://plato.s.tanford.edu/entries/dualism/ [accessed August 28, 2025].

Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1972. *Course in General Linguistics*. Translated by Roy Harris. https://english.hku.hk/staff/kjohnson/PDF/SaussureFerdinandGENERAL197

Schuringa, Christoph. 2022. Hegel on Spirited Animals. Philosophy, 97 (4): 485–508. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0031819122000274

Smajli, Blerim. 2012. Sailing to Byzantium and Byzantium of W. B. Yeats – A Symbolical Viewpoint According to the Creation of Primal Elements. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2 (4): 223–227. https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2012.v2n4p223

Ungvarsky, Jacob. 2024. Hegemony. *EBSCO Research Starters*. https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/social-sciences-and-humanities/hegemony [accessed August 28, 2025].

Yar, Majid. n.d. "Alexandre Kojève (1902–1968)." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://iep.utm.edu/kojeve/ [accessed August 31, 2025].

Yeats, W. B. 1997. *W. B. Yeats: The Major Works*. Edited by Edward Larrissy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yeats, W. B. n.d. "Sailing to Byzantium." *Poetry Foundation*. https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43291/sailing-to-byzantium [accessed July 24, 2025].