EZRA POUND AND REMY DE GOURMONT:

A STUDY OF THE FRENCH SYMBOLIST'S INFLUENCE ON THE TECHNIQUE OF THE *CANTOS*

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Ezra Pound is usually considered to have transformed himself into a post-symbolist poet from a medievalist through the influence of Remy de Gourmont. Since no critic has ever discussed extensively the relationship of Ezra Pound and French Symbolism except for René Taupin's factual record[1] about the short poems published in 1926 in *Personae*, naturally we have no study of Pound as a post-symbolist. Scholars are yet to define the common qualities of post-symbolist poetry, which such diverse poets as Henri de Regnier, Remy de Gourmont, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound are supposed to share. Hence the purpose of this paper must be limited to discuss what kind of theoretical innovation Remy de Gourmont was offered to Pound for liberating his early poetry from the fin-de-siècle atmosphere, and how Pound availed himself of the opportunity to refine his poetry for his purpose of interpreting the world. Even this much study will help to place Pound on the background of that curious irrationalism represented by Remy de Gourmont in France right before the First World War, and to point out the source of the irrationalism underlying Pound's *Cantos*.

If Mallarmé pursues the music of language to its perfection until the music itself transforms the language into the ethereal state of the Platonic Idea,[2] and until both the language and the object the language represents completely disappear into the Idea,[3] Pound's pursuit of beauty is delicately different. Whereas the Platonic Idea is imageless, Pound found his predecessors, Dante and the troubadours, loved both the Idea and the appearance together. Pound suggested this in his youthful poem, "In Epitaphium Eius," published in 1908,

Servant and singer, Troubador
That for his loving, loved each fair face more
Than craven sluggard can his life's own love,

Dowered with love, "whereby the sun doth move
And all the stars."

They called him fickle that the lambent flame
Caught "Bicé" dreaming in each new-blown name,

And loved all fairness though its hidden guise
Lurked various in half an hundred eyes;

That loved the essence though each casement bore
A different semblance than the one before. [4]

A poem must be a "word kiss"[5] to a poet's object. The unnamed troubadour, apparently Pound's own mask in the epitaph above, loved the essence but always through loving its numerous appearances. "I don't count myself among Plato's disciples,"[6] says Pound in one of his dialogues in Fontenelle's manner.

Furthermore, in "The Serious Artist," an article Pound published in *The Egoist*, 1913, he placed himself even in alliance with realists. He classified literature into two kinds, the cult of beauty and the diagnosis of reality, and added a very significant remark, which reveals Pound's claim that any good art must include realism and idealism together, "The cult of beauty and the delineation of ugliness are not in mutual opposition."[7] This was his *credo* and the reason why he adored the detailed, exact images of Dante's *Vita Nuova* and *Commedia* in 1910,[8] when he wrote *The Spirit of Romance*. When Pound started Imagism in 1912, he placed the principle, "the direct treatment of things either subjective or objective,"[9] together with the principle of *vers libre*, "to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome."[10]

The difficulty of Pound's position, when he claimed that the cult of beauty and the delineation of ugliness are not in mutual opposition, and that both the Platonic essence and the appearance must exist together, will be best seen if placed on the historical background of French literature. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the

French idealist poets, collectively called by the vague name of Symbolists, rallied for one common aim of objecting to Taine and his realist followers. Taine in his *Philosophie de l'art* (1865) speculated that science and art were but two different ways to attain the same kind of knowledge, formed in accordance with the same law of cause and effect. [11] The symbolists, such as Ernest Hello, Peladan, Lazare, Morice and Gourmont, attacked Taine, [12] arguing on the contrary that a poet's knowledge was not the knowledge of empirical reality but what Baudelaire had called "rêve," or "une magie suggestive contenant à la fois l'objet et sujet, le monde extérieur et l'artiste lui-même." [13] Hence a poet's language was not for communication but for the idealization of the object, as Emile Hennequinn says, "Mais le verb a d'autres vertus encore que de décrire. Il idéalise, et c'est là son caractère propre." [14] One understands here that the symbolist's knowledge of reality is the ideal and essential one, to which the language of poetry exalts the empirical reality by virtue of music. If Pound wanted to unite the cult of beauty and the diagnosis of reality he had to find a solution for this polemic between Taine and the symbolists. Pound, the admirer of Dante and the troubadours, assigned himself a really formidable task, when he quoted from Edmund de Goncourt[15] that an artist must assume the precision of a scientist.

Pound was aware of his indebtedness to the symbolists together with his reserve from joining them when he wrote the essay, "Vorticism," in 1914:

> I said in the preface to my Guido Cavalcanti that I believed in an absolute rhythm. I believe that every emotion and every phrase of emotion has some toneless phrase, some rhythm phrase to express it.
>
> (This belief leads to *vers libre* and to experiments in quantitative verse.)
>
> To hold a like belief in a sort of permanent metaphor is, I understand it, "symbolism" in its profounder sense. It is not necessarily a belief in a permanent world, but it is a belief in

that direction.[16]

It is presumable that Pound, imitating symbolists' *vers libre* as early as 1909,[17] read this modern technique into Cavalcanti's poetry when he published the translation of sonnets and ballate of Guido Cavalcanti in 1912. Pound's term, "an absolute rhythm" recalls the celebrated argument of Mallarmé that both music and poetry evoke "L'Idée."[18] Mallarmé also believed that if a poet were absolutely precise in his use of language, he would construct the absolute metaphor corresponding to "L'Idée." Hence, ultimately there must be only one book, "L'Oeuvre"[19] to express the permanent world. Pound certainly refers to Mallarmé's "L'Oeuvre" by his term of "permanent metaphor." Which reality does Pound believe then, the empirical reality of Taine and the realists or the ideal reality of symbolists? Pound vaguely admitted in the quotation above that he believes at least in *a* permanent world, if not *the* permanent world of Mallarmé's. But believing to any degree in the ideal and insisting simultaneously that an object is an object and not a mere sign for the ideal leaves Pound in a hopeless contradiction. What he needed was a theoretician who would prove for him that idealism, materialism, realism and symbolism are one and the same.

Providentially, this impossible demand was met by Remy de Gourmont. What Gourmont did in unifying idealism and realism was just a philosophical stunt. As a polemic symbolist he had two personal impressions to theorize: one was a simple solipsism; the other, the sense of relativity in man's perception. Gourmont unified these two contradictory experiences into one rule. If, as Kant suggests, there must be a distinction between the phenomenon and the thing itself, then human intelligence necessarily steps in between the perceiving subject and the object to be perceived, forever deforming the image of reality.[20] From this truth Gourmont strikes an aphorism:

Une vérité nouvelle, il y en a une, pourtant qui est entrée récemment dans la littérature et dans l'art, c'est une vérité toute

métaphysique et toute d'*a priori* (en apparence), toute jeune ...
c'est ce que Schopenhauer a vulgarisé sous cette formule si simple
et si claire : Le monde est ma représentation. *Je ne vois pas ce
qui est; ce qui est, c'est ce que je vois.* [21]

The italicized sentence works in two drastically destructive functions.
First Gourmont denies the possibility of knowing the existence of the
matter, "Je ne vois pas ce qui est." Then he denies the innate idea, "...
ce qui est, c'est ce que je vois." Since intelligence forever tries to but
never arrests the real, one cannot see the thing itself. On the other
hand, there is no being except what this intelligence arrests as phe-
nomenon through experience. Consequently, being is never trans-
cendental. In one sentence, Gourmont subtly replaced both idealism
and materialism with relativism.

If a man cannot perceive a tree itself, but merely the image of a
tree, and if the image of a tree is not attested with the innate idea
as presumed by idealists, how can one know whether the tree exists
or not? In "Les racines de l' Idéalisme" Gourmont resorted to
Lamarck's theory that the milieu created the organ. "The senses,
whether differentiated, or spread over the entire surface of a living
form [as in the amoeba], are the creation of the environment which
light, sound, material exteriority, etc. —acts in accordance with
different discontinuous manifestations." [22] It is light that created the
eye with its discontinuous stimuli, and created it strictly to its size,
its form, its image. Even though one can never know whether a
tree exists or not, the environment including one particular tree has
created the sight originally. Even though the sight is unreliable for
its inevitable limitation in place and time, one has no other way for
knowing except relying on one's organs. Gourmont points out that man
has developed his knowledge of the environment not merely through
senses and thought but through assimilation, digestion, that is, the
experiences with all his internal organs. One transmitted the knowledge
also through inheritance. An example for such transmittance is man's
knowledge of medicinal herbs. Country folks as well as animals

distinguish poisonous fungi without any medium of thought. Thought grows from this unconscious knowledge, and forever works to deform the knowledge because of its being limited in its function when it is made conscious. Hence Gourmont's claim that idealism is based on matter, and is identical with materialism. [23]

This philosophical stunt of Remy de Gourmont, however dubious it may sound, worked an extended influence over Pound and his group, that is, Richard Aldington, T. E. Hulme and T. S. Eliot. In 1912, Aldington enthusiastically started his correspondence with Gourmont, which continued till the latter's death in 1916. [24] According to René Taupin, not only Hulme but Aldington, Amy Lowell and Eliot showed evidences that they had read Gourmont's *Problème du style*. [25] In the 1930's, after Gourmont's influence was gone, Aldington had to ask himself, "Why was the name of Remy de Gourmont so potent, so sure of respect?"[26]

The answer to Aldington's question is that Gourmont's curious synthesis of idealism and realism opened for his followers an opportunity to create a new language of poetry. Gourmont called the sum total of all perceptions of all organs by the term of "sensibility." If thought merely deforms what these organs absorb, sensibility is the sole faculty directly reflecting reality. This sensibility is ripened, or deviates into intelligence, which is a broad term including human intelligence, conscious or unconscious, and animal instinct together. According to Gourmont's theory of evolution, which Pound translated into English in 1922, the instinct of animals is a state of intelligence which became automatic for its being limited to immediate purpose of utility. [27] Intelligence, on the other hand, is inferior to sensibility because it is "especially unfitted for the perception of realities,"[28] being able to see only the image of itself, when it is limited by consciousness. One cannot emphasize too much, therefore, the importance of sensibility and the subconscious in the artistic creation. It is from the subconscious that an artist constantly takes refreshing power which will liberate him from the ordinariness of consciousness. An artistic genius can open "les écluses de

cerveau," only at the moment when "la conscience est devenue sub-consciente."[29] One can say Gourmont actually finds in the subconscious what the mystics called "grace," or the source of their mystically acquired knowledge. [30]

T. S. Eliot's celebrated essay, "The Metaphysical Poets," is the most famous or infamous evidence of the influence Gourmont's theory of "sensibility" had on the English poetry. "A thought to Donne was an experience ; it modified his sensibility,"[31] determined Eliot, as if the seventeenth-century poet were one of the Gourmontean symbolists. Unless one realizes that Eliot here uses the words, "thought" and "sensibility," exactly in the sense Remy de Gourmont used, one may suspect that Eliot committed unbelievable mistakes in logic. According to Remy de Gourmont, thought is nothing but an experience in sensations accompanied when sensibility is made conscious. Naturally thought as such will modify the sum total of all experiences when one contacts with the exterior milieu—the sum total which Gourmont calls by the name of "sensibility." Eliot claims here that in Gourmontean awareness of sensibility, a poet can liberate his consciousness from the dichotomy of thought and sensation. Thus he can use the complicated thoughts in modern society as the material of the emotional experiences one calls poetry. Thus Spinoza and the smell of cooking can be absorbed together on the same level of emotional experiences. T. E. Hulme also refers to Gourmont's physiological basis of artist's consciousness, [32] when he wrote, "All emotion depends on real, solid vision or sound. It is physical."[33] No theory of Gourmont's influenced modern poetry more extensively than his belief in the preeminence of the sensibility over intelligence, for it not only opened the way from symbolism to surrealism but also changed the whole language of poetry, especially in English, through its influence on Eliot, Hulme and Pound.

Gourmont's influence on Pound is farther-reaching and more subtly hidden than the former's influence on Hulme and Eliot. Pound just casually referred to Gourmont's theories, and integrated them into his poetical works. Pound was in the position to be able to assimilate

Gourmont's theories with facility, particularly because they shared a similar interest in medieval poetry. Gourmont joined the symbolist coterie, when he found the symbolist *vers libre* in the medieval Latin hymns just as Pound found the suggestion of absolute rhythm in the works of Guido Cavalcanti. [34] The obscure Latin hymnists whose works Gourmont studied in *Le latin mystique* (1889) wrote in the modern way that the length of syllables was no longer determined by the morphology of the syllable, but by the necessity of rhythmic pattern. [35] Like Pound again, Gourmont searched the Platonic origin of Dante's poetry in *Dante, Béatrice et la poésie amoureuse* (1908). Pound studied Gourmont's *Le latin mystique*, and particularly admired the translation from Goddeschalk's Latin poems. [36] As René Taupin points out, he imitated Gourmont's quantitative rhythm in "Apparuit" and "The Alchemist."[37] Thus studying Gourmont thoroughly, Pound absorbed Gourmont's inference, which neither Eliot nor Hulme absorbed, that all thoughts are irrational, unattestable and serve for no other purpose but aesthetic experiences.

Intelligence in Gourmont's theory, though inferior to sensibility in reflecting the milieu, monopolizes one important function. It supplies man's judgment with a form which is usually transmitted as idea. [38] Not reason but "l'ensemble de sensations que l'expérience vitale verse dans l'intelligence,"[39] fills this form. The content of an idea is thus made irrational, for "The idea is necessarily true."[40] Ideas are formed as such only when man feels them to be true. Ideas are usually born associated, through experience, passion and interest, and what is usually considered truth is the association of ideas universally accepted. The association of these ideas are formed predetermined by the environment because the content of man's psyche is pre-determined. Hence Darwin assumed the superiority of man in his evolutionary scale, being unable to go beyond the Biblical tradition. These pre-determined associations of ideas make history a pattern composed of a variety of different associations which are called civilizations. [41]

Yet the idea-forming function of intelligence can be used for an-

alytical purposes. Man can disassociate the pre-determinedly associated ideas, can separate, for example, the idea of death and that of immortality. [42] Disassociation, of course, means reassociation, for one cannot entertain ideas completely separated from the context of the system they belong to. Gourmont called the newly associated ideas "idées pures," meaning that they are free from a predetermined situation. In making "idées pures" intelligence works completely free from its physiological origin which limits it by circumstances. Here as Uitti points out, [43] Gourmont reflects in his two-fold structure of intelligence, pre-determined and free, the influence of Schopenhauer's dichotomy of will and idea.

Gourmont believes that a critic can create values[44] in such disassociation and reassociation of ideas. Such values, however, must be totally free from any utility or teleology, for Gourmont totally denies that knowing is the process of conforming judgment with object. One understands that if Gourmont finds a value in disassociating Darwin's evolution theory from the Biblical superiority of man to other animals, the value exists only in exciting the non-utilitarian, non-teleological interest of thinkers. In other words, thought is reduced to an emotional experience again. Like Walter Pater's "hard gemlike flame," Gourmontean thought may be "irresistibly real and attractive to us—for that moment only,"[45] perhaps to an artist, whose creation aims at its own perfection and nothing else. But thought reduced to an emotional experience can no longer serve as the power to support human life. This is why T. S. Eliot repeatedly asked himself whether poetry should reflect a personal belief or not. [46] Ultimately Eliot separated himself from Gourmont's uniquely destructive irrationalism, when he chose his personal belief of Anglo-Catholicism to be expressed in his poetry.

Pound, on the other hand, needed the help of Gourmont, particularly in his search of the method of interpreting the world through images. Pound in 1912 realized keenly that the interpretive faculty is the glory of poetry, such as Dante's *Commedia*, [47] whereas Pound's own Imagist poems are lovely but short pieces, far from being interpretive. Gour-

mont, on the other hand, succeeded in the experiment to enclose his theory in the condition of images in *Les chevaux de Diomède* (1897). Gourmont's method was to avoid the interference of intelligence by juxtaposing sensuous images only, trying to suggest to the readers his theme delicately. Pound says that Gourmont "embedded his philosophy in a luxurious mist of the senses."[48] With intelligence thus excluded, the artist's consciousness will exalt the sense experience to the mystery of art directly.

Take, for instance, the story of a lamb in *Les chevaux de Diomède*. Cyran, a priest-painter, violently rings Diomède's doorbell carrying a snow white lamb under his arm, a model for his portrait of St. John the Baptist, "Mon saint Jean est peint sur la porte de la sacristie, intérieurement. C'est lui qui ouvre la porte, du dedans au dehors, afin que de la vie secrète Jésus passe à la vie publique et au sacrifice."[49] The image of the rude priest-painter is, without any explication by the author, identified with the image of St. John and delicately contrasted with the frail lamb on his knee. Cyran begins to talk about the incompatibility of art and love, "Il faut que ma vie soit immatérielle, pour que mon art demeure spirituelle...."[50] Art must transform and deform, create the clouds and vapours, dreams and souls. For art he will keep his Cyrène, but will never marry her. Cyrène will be sacrificed for the sake of art, and because of her sacrifice the painter can portray the lamb in the mystic marriage with the golden light around his head. Diomède accepts this vision and says,

> —Elle [Cyrène] est prête à tous les renoncements, à un mariage mystique.
> —Où trouvera-t-elle la force de se renoncer?
> —En sa tendresse pour vous.
> —Peut-être. [51]

The image of Cyrène, whose "esprrit même semblait physique,"[52] is suddenly identified with the image of the lamb on the throne, the king and beast of sacrifice at one, to whom Cyran or St. John opened the

way. The amoral affair of a priest-painter is transformed to something exquisitely beautiful, into what Cyran called "des nuages, des vapeurs, des rêves, des âmes,"[53] in short, into art. Naturally this transformation suggests the author's theory that art grows out of its sensual, physical origin and transcends only at the expense of the senses. Yet the process remains mystery, just as the redemption by the lamb of God has remained a mystery.

Pound called Gourmont's peculiar technique of philosophizing through images, at once richly sensuous and yet leaving the reader many-fold opportunities of forming ideas on it, "resting the mind as it were by an aroma."[54] The discovery of "aroma," or the suggesting of thought through images and emotive experiences it evokes, changed the quality of Pound's art delicately. Pound realizes that Gourmont abolished the symbolists' dichotomy of the idea and the phenomenon. The polemic symbolist thus destroyed the metaphysical basis of symbolism, and reduced all materialism, idealism and relativism to mere states of consciousness. Those states of consciousness could be so richly suggestive that in *Les chevaux de Diomède* they evoked all subtle ideas concerning the relationship of love and the religion of art. Imitating Gourmont, Pound tried to create "a new state of consciousness,"[55] entirely separated from ordinary ones. A short poem called "Heather" was the result of such an experiment:

> The black panther treads at my side,
> And above my fingers
> There float the petal-like flames. [56]

Pound enthusiastically accepted as true a Russian correspondence's remark that Pound was not a symbolist who gave the reader something to see, but rather gave "new eyes."[57] These new eyes function to find poetical themes in the images taken from the subconscious or what Gourmont called sensibility, from the association of "the black panther" and the "petal-like flames." In "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" Pound succeeded in giving the reader new eyes to see the most subtle literary

criticism through a series of poems written in diverse styles.

By reducing intellectual and sensuous-emotive experiences to various states of consciousness, and by juxtaposing them together, Gourmont unified the thinking, criticizing faculty with the image-shaping faculty. This was an ideal achievement for Pound the Imagist, who would be a Dante-like interpreter by images. In "Remy de Gourmont, A Distinction," Pound compared Gourmont's work to those of the troubadours (Dante's precursors as interpretive poets in Pound's notion), quoting from the King of Navarre, "De fine amor vient science et beauté."[58] Just as Arnaut Daniel perpetually pursued wisdom through the love of beauty, Gourmont liberates his pure ideas directly through his passionate love of sense experiences. It was only on the basis of Gourmont's philosophy that Pound could realize his "ideogramic method,"[59] that is, the technique of evoking the themes of poetry by juxtaposing images. Pound admired in Ernest Fenollosa's essay on the Chinese written character the idea that in the language of poetry the process of thinking must go in parallel with the process of shaping images.[60] In practice, however, Pound realized this idea in writing the *Cantos* only after his careful study of Gourmont.

Before concluding this study of Gourmont and Pound, one should point out the two major influences of Gourmont in the technique of the *Cantos*. The state of consciousness covered by Gourmont's philosophy and literary works is extended through the whole scale from the preconscious state of physical digestion to the mystics' vision where consciousness ultimately evaporates. Gourmont achieved the stunt of linking Lamarck's theory of evolution with Christian mysticism in his search of the materialistic basis of idealism. Pound uses this achievement of Gourmont's, and parallels it with the three worlds of Dante's, the three evolutionary stages; of using bodily organs only, of using exterior materials, of attaining the complete freedom of creation without depending on exterior materials:

Three channels, hell, purgatory, heaven, if one wants to

follow yet another terminology: digestive excretion, incarnation, freedom in the imagination, i. e., cast into an exterior form-lessness, or into form material, or merely imaginative visually, or perhaps musically.... [61]

The enormous implication of this short paragraph in Pound's "Trans-lator's Postscript" for his translation from Gourmont's *La physique de l'amour* is wholly developed when he wrote *A Draft of the First XXX Cantos*. The "Malatesta Cantos" (VIII-XI) are an arid jumbling of formal material only, representing the purgatory. Thence the poet proceeds further down into the hell cantos (XIV-XV) in which the present-day images of London are overlapped with the images of purely physical activities, "Corruptio, foetor, fungus, / liquid animals, melted ossifica-tions" (XIV: 63). With the help of Plotinus, the poet climbs out of this hell into the radiant paradise of Dionysian dream in Canto XVII, where Greek deities appear as the freedom of imagination rules.

The second and more elusive influence of Gourmont in the *Cantos* is Gourmontean association and disassociation of ideas hidden in Pound's ideogramic method. So long as Pound juxtaposes images and evokes his themes, he cannot go beyond the Gourmontean evoking of pure ideas, which are ideas separated from the empirical, factual context. In Pound's study of history in the *Cantos*, the pure ideas appear when the poet disassociates historical facts from the context of the background and reassociates them together for suggesting the poet's criticism of history. In the first canto, for instance, Pound translated Homer from Andreas Devus's Renaissance Latin version in the strong-stress beat of Anglo-Saxon poetry, thus juxtaposing the ancient Greek world with the nordic, Anglo-Saxon world and the Renaissance. The theme evoked here is presumably the ideal language Dante searched and found nowhere, though existing everywhere. [62] Some other pure ideas are not so delight-ful as this. In the Chinese history cantos, Pound disassociated Con-fucianism from its historical background in the practical, non-theological Chinese mind, and reassociated it with Erigena's theology. The Confucian

emphasis on order, thereby, was transformed into the lovely image of Erigena's heavenly light constantly dividing itself for constructing a hierarchical order in the universe. [63] This latter reassociation evokes, at least to the present writer, a mild discomfort, for the Confucian, non-theistic, despotic order is too remote from the image of the hierarchical order of the universe the Medieval Christian Church held with the love of God as its all ruling power. In Canto LXI, Pound associated also the last great Emperor of China, Yong Tching, with John Adams, linking them with the year of 1735, the year of Yong Tching's death and the year of Adams's birth. Such association, of course, merely embarrasses the reader. Pound wilfully ignores John Adams's enthusiastic uplifting of political freedom. Here again one recalls how Gourmont's evoking pure ideas was just an analytical destructive procedure, though their genuinely unattestable qualities make any evaluation impossible.

Remy de Gourmont's influence represents the brilliant but sinister aspects of Pound's works. Gourmont had a passion to absorb all the intellectual activities into the material of his art. Neither Eliot nor Hulme could reach the depth of Gourmont's passion in following him as Pound could. On the other hand, one notices a thorough decadence in Gourmont's destructive reasoning in producing the irrational, unattestable pure ideas, free from any utility or teleology. Reason thus reduced to unreason by Gourmont seems to vindicate itself by depriving of Gourmont's pure ideas the warmth that should be attributable of truths. Unlike Gourmont, Pound had one moral passion in writing the *Cantos*, the demand for restoring beauty on the basis of economic justice. Unpropped by such passion for justice, the whole plot of the *Cantos* would be reduced to the most wilful distortion of history. Since the *Cantos* is not only a critical study of history but also poetry, how the reader can enjoy his pure ideas all depends on how good the poetry is. Pound's wilfulness grotesquely appears whenever his poetry fails to permeate into his materials, like the Chinese history cantos, for example. Gourmont's philosophy enabled Pound to write the *Cantos*, but did it not simultaneously set too serious a limitation to Pound's life

work? History, thus reduced to the material of pure ideas is deprived
of the very essential significance of history as facts and truths.

NOTES

1 Cf. *L'Influence du symbolisme français sur la poésie américaine (De 1910 à 1920)* (Paris, Honoré Champion, 1919).

2 Cf. "Parce que, péremptoirement—je l'infère de cette célébration de la Poésie, dont nous avons parlé, sans l'invoquer presqu'une heure en les attributs de Musique et de Lettres: appelez-la Mystère ou n'est-ce pas? le contexte évolutif de l'Idée...." Stéphane Mallarmé, *La Musique et les lettres* (Paris: Libraire Académique, 1895), p. 66.

3 Mallarmé believed that a poet's music of language must be so precise that, when he says a "flower" in his line, the real flower must disappear, and the idea of a flower must rise up at once. Cf. Wallace Fowlie's discussion of Mallarmé's preface for René Ghil's *Traité du verbe* (Paris, 1886). *Mallarmé* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 58.

4 *A Lume Spento and Other Poems*, Reprint of *A Lume Spento*, 1908 and *A Quinzane for This Yule*, 1909 (New York: New Directions, 1965), p. 20. The love "whereby the sun doth move / And all the stars" means the primal love, the first cause of the universe with which Dante finds himself turning in perfect accord in *Paradiso*, XXXIII, 142-45. "Bicé" is an abbreviated form of Beatrice.

5 "Na Audiart," *A Lume Spento* (1908), 1. 11.

6 "Aux Etuves de Wiesbaden," *Pavannes and Divisions* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1918), p. 31.

7 *Pavannes and Divisions*, p. 226.

8 Cf. "Dante's precision both in the *Vita Nuova* and in the *Commedia* comes from the attempt to reproduce exactly the thing which has been clearly seen." *The Spirit of Romance*, 1910. Reprint (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1953), p. 126.

9 *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p. 3.

10 *Ibid.*

11 Cf. "Pour y atteindre, il a deux voies: la première, qui est la science, par laquelle, dégageant ces causes et ces lois fondamentales, il les exprime en formules exactes et en termes abstraits; la seconde, qui est l'art, par laquelle il manifeste ces causes et ces lois fondamentales, non plus en définitions arides, inaccessibles à la foule et intelligibles seulement pour quelques hommes spéciaux, mais d'une façon sensible, et en s'adressant non-seulement à la raison, mais encore aux sens et au coeur de l'homme le plus ordinaire." Hyppolyte Taine, *Philosophie de l'art* (Paris: Germer Baillière, 1865), pp. 72-73.

12 Cf. A. G. Lehmann, *The Symbolist Aesthetics in France, 1885-1895* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1950), pp. 30-37.

13 "L'Art philosophique," *L'Art Romantique* (Paris: Louis Conard, 1915), p. 119.

14 *Revue indépendante*, VI (1888), pp. 19–20.

15 Cf. "Meditation," *The Egoist* (1916). *Pavannes and Divisions*, pp. 163–164.

16 *Fortnightly Review*, 1914. *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir*, 1916. Reprint (New York : New Directions, 1960), p. 84. Cf. also Pound's "Introduction," *The Sonnets and Ballate of Guido Cavalcanti, with Translation and Introduction by Ezra Pound* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1912), p. xxi.

17 Even though René Taupin's remarkably thorough study of the Symbolists' influence on English and American poetry does not include this, I believe Pound's "Night Litany" (1909) is an obvious imitation of Remy de Gourmont's *Litanies de la rose* (1892) in its rhythm. Cf.

> O God of silence,
>> Purifiez nos coeurs,
>> Purifiez nos coeurs,
> For we have seen
> The glory of the shadow of the
>> likeness of thine handmaid,

Personae: The Collected Poems of Ezra Pound (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1926), p. 26, with Gourmont's:

>> Fleur hypocrite,
>> Fleur du silence.
>> Rose couleur de cuivre, plus frauduleuse que nos joies, rose
> couleur de cuivre....

Quoted by Pound in "A Study in French Poets," *The Little Review* (1918). *Instigations* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1920), p. 36.

18 See Note 2 of this paper.

19 *L'Oeuvre* was much waited for in Mallarmé's coterie but never written. The poet wrote his Hérodiade as a prelude to *L'Oeuvre*. Cf. a letter to Cazalis, May 14, 1867, quoted by Guy Michaud, *Message poétique du symbolisme* (3 vols.; Paris: Libraire Nizet, 1951), I, 68.

20 Cf. Karl Uitti's discussion of Gourmont's *L'Idéalisme* (1893), *La passion littéraire de Remy de Gourmont* (Princeton University & Presses universaires de France, 1962), pp. 23–25.

21 "Préface" to the first *Livre des masques* (1896). *Le Livre des masques* (2 vols.; Paris: Mercure de France, 1917), I, 11–12.

22 "The Root of Idealism," *Decadence*, tr. William Aspenwall Bradley (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921), p. 223. The article is translated from *Promenade philosophique*, I (1905).

23 Cf. *Decadence*, p. 230.

24 Cf. Uitti, p. 35.

25 Cf. Taupin, p. 111.

26 Quoted by Glenn S. Burne, *Remy de Gourmont: His Ideas and Influence in England and America* (Carbondale, Ill.: University of South Illinois Press, 1963), p. 13.

27 *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, tr. from *La physique de l'amour* (New

York: Boni & Liveright, 1922), p. 193.

28 "Glory and Idea of Immortality," *Decadence*, p. 41.

29 "La création subconsciente," *La culture des idées* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1900), p. 66.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

31 *Selected Essays* (3d ed. rev.; London: Faber and Faber, 1951), p. 278.

32 Cf. "Le véritable problème du style est une question de physiologie," *Le problème du style* (3d ed.; Paris: Mercure de France, 1924), p. 9.

33 "Notes on Language and Style," ed. H. Read. Cf. Taupin, p. 111.

34 Pound states that he found the basic rhythm of his *vers libre* from Tuscan poetry, such as Dante's and Guido Cavalcanti's. Cf. "Cavalcanti," *Literary Essays*, p. 169.

35 Cf. "...il n'y a plus ni brèves ni longues; il n'y a que des brèves et des longues par position; la quantitité est déterminée non plus par la morphologie de la syllabe, mais par la nécessité du rhythm." *Le latin mystique: Les poètes de l'antiphonaire et la symbolique en moyen âge* (3d ed.; Paris: Mercure de France, 1930), p. 184.

36 "Remy de Gourmont," *Fortnightly Review*, CIV (Dec., 1915), 1164.

37 Cf. Taupin, pp. 141, 144. Taupin also points out the influence of other French symbolist poets on Pound's rhythm. Pound's "A Girl," "N. Y.," and "The Return" show the influence of Henri de Regnier's "Odelettes," "Ode III," and "Médailles" respectively. Taupin, pp. 140-143.

38 Cf. "The Root of Idealism," *Decadence*, p. 219.

39 Cf. Uitti, p. 85.

40 "The Disassociation of Ideas," *Decadence*, p. 20.

41 Cf. Uitti, pp. 87-88.

42 "The Disassociation of Ideas," *Decadence*, p. 35.

43 Uitti, p. 80.

44 Cf. "...les poètes, les artistes créent des fantômes qui parfois deviennent immortels...le critique, comme le philosophe, crée des valeurs." *Promenades philosophiques*, quoted by Uitti, p. 93.

45 Walter Pater, *The Renaissance in Art and Poetry* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1910), p. 236.

46 Cf. for instance, "Religion and Literature," *Selected Essays*, pp. 343-354.

47 Cf. "Psychology and Troubadour," *The Spirit of Romance*. The article was first printed in G. R. S. Meads' *The Quest* in 1912, according to Donald Gallup, *A Bibliography of Ezra Pound* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1963), p. 201.

48 "Remy de Gourmont," *Fortnightly Review*, CIV (Dec. 1915), 1160.

49 *Les chevaux de Diomède* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1897), pp. 152-153.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 156.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 157.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 160.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 156.

54 "Remy de Gourmont," *Fortnightly Review*, p. 1160.

55 "Vorticism," *Gaudier-Brzeska, A memoir*, p. 85.

56 *Personae*, p. 109.

57 Cf. "A Russian correspondent, after having called it ["Heather"] a symbolist poem, and having been convinced that it was not a symbolism, said slowly: 'I see, you wish to give people new eyes, not to make them see some new particular thing.'" "Vorticism," *Gaudier-Brzeska*, p. 85.

58 *Instigations: Together with an Essay on the Chinese Written Character by Ernest Fenollosa* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1920), p. 175.

59 Pound explained in 1937 in *Guide to Kulchur* that the ideogramic method presents "one facet and another until at some point one gets off the dead and de-sensitized surface of the reader's mind, onto a part that will register." *Guide to Kulchur* (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1938), p. 51.

60 Cf. "An Essay on the Chinese Written Character by the Late Ernest Fenollosa, Edited by Fzra Pound," *Instigations*, pp. 366–367.

61 *The Natural Philosophy of Love* (New York: Boni & Riveright, 1922), p. 217.

62 *Dante's Treatise*, "*De Vulgari Eloquentiâ*," tr. A. G. Ferrars Howell (London: Kegan Paul, 1890), p. 31.

63 Cf. *Ioannis Scotti Erivgenae Periphyseon (De Divisione Naturae Libre Primus)*, edited by I. P. Sheldon-Williams and Ludwig Bieler (Dublin, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1968), pp. 31–121. Cf. Also, Canto LV.