

Ezra Pound and French Symbolists

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Walter Baumann, who published an excellent study of Canto 4 in *The Rose in the Steel Dust* as early as 1967, told me once that his theme was to interpret Pound's poems in his realism. Even with Pound's cult of Isis and his use of Greek-Egyptian mysteries revealed today, Pound's realism is still valid, if we can clearly outline it. Pound himself declares in 1913, "The cult of beauty and the delineation of ugliness are not in mutual opposition,"¹ and considers it to be an artist's duty never to falsify his report even as scientists should not.² Yet one important problem is left unstudied before we confidently trust Pound's "realism," that is, how much Pound committed himself to Symbolism whose immediate enemy was the literary realism in the nineteenth century. Hugh Kenner's most reliable book, *The Pound Era*, mentions Mallarmé fifteen times for no particular reasons at all. Mallarmé is somehow in Pound's background, though the representative French Symbolist is never discussed in reference to Pound. With the rose in the steel dust, Baumann finds a marvellous image to exemplify how Pound unified the cult of beauty and the faithfulness to ugly reality.

Hast 'ou seen the rose in the steel dust
(or swansdown ever?)
so light is the urging, so ordered the dark petals of iron
we who have passed over Lethe (74/449),³

wrote Pound at the end of Canto 74, while watching out of his cage in Pisa. The pathetic beauty that this ruined man's imagination cuts out on the waste heap in the Military Detention Camp is really moving. Nevertheless the problem of exegesis remains here: whether Pound's rose is just a rose or it represents some further idea in the whole context of *The Cantos*. Eliot mercifully confided that his "Rose" in *Four Quartets* can be "the sensuous rose, the socio-political Rose and the spiritual rose,"⁴ signifying beauty, England and divine grace. Does Pound's poetry allow any such symbolic meanings, or should we stay in the strictly nominalistic interpretation following Hugh Kenner? Since the answer depends on how much of Symbolism Pound inherited, my present paper will investigate first any possible relationship of Pound and Mallarmé, and further work on the three more Symbolists closer to Pound; Gourmont, Rimbaud and Laforgue.⁵

Whoever enjoys Pound and Mallarmé together can not miss the latter's unexpected allusion in "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" to Mallarmé's "Prose pour des Esseintes." Witness first the corresponding passages of the two poets:

He had passed, inconscient, full gaze,
The wide-banded irides
And botticellian sprays implied
In their diastasis;

Which anaesthesia, noted a year late,
And weighed, revealed his great affect,
(Orchid), mandate
Of Eros, a retrospect.

. . . .
Mouths biting empty air,
The still stone dogs,
Caught in metamorphosis, were
Left him as epilogues.⁶

L'ère d'autorité se trouble
Lorsque, sans nul motif, on dit
De ce midi que notre double
Inconscience approfondit

Que, sol des cent iris, son site,
Ils savent s'il a bien été,
Ne porte pas de nom que cite
L'or de la trompette d'Été.

. . . .
Gloire du long désir, Idées
Tout en moi s'exaltait de voir
La famille des iridées
Surgir à ce nouveau devoir . . .

. . . .
L'enfant abdique son extase
Et docte déjà par chemins
Elle dit le mot: Anastase!
Né pur d'éternels parchemins,

Avant qu'un sépulcre ne rie
Sous aucun climat, son aïeul,
De porter ce nom: Pulchérie!
Caché par le trop grand glaïeul.⁷

At one glance the similarity of the themes is clear. Both poets present here the process of creation, successful in Mallarmé's case and unsuccessful in Pound's. Whereas

Mallarmé sees hundreds of irises, Pound's fictitious poet meets the irides of his lady ("irides" being the plural of "iris" for the pun of the flower and the round, pigmented membrane surrounding the pupil of the eye). The concluding images resemble Pound's also. Mallarmé rescues poetry from a "sépulcre," while Pound's Mauberley lets it bitten by "The still stone dogs." We can believe that Pound wrote these lines deliberately on the basis of Mallarmé's "Prose," as he invents in "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" a unique literary pastiche and criticism in poetry. Notice also that Pound uses the French word, "inconscient" like Mallarmé's "Inconscience," and "anaesthesia" which makes a significant difference from Mallarmé's "Anastase" as explained later.

The most important is that Mallarmé's "Prose pour des Esseintes" makes the core of his Symbolist theory in poetic creation. "Je dis: une fleur! et, hors de l'oubli où ma voix relègue aucun contour, en tant que quelque chose d'autre que les calices sus, musicalement se lève, idée même et suave, l'absente de tous bouquets,"⁸ wrote Mallarmé in "Crise de Vers." The moment that language is transmuted into the Ideal is a magic moment that "les mille éléments de beauté pressés d'accourir et de s'ordonner dans leur valeur essentielle."⁹ In the poem Mallarmé is walking with a woman called "the child." Whether she is Méry Laurent or a Muse,¹⁰ their double Unconscious deepens (notre double / Inconscience approfondit). In the southern place which is released from time, space and the authority of realism (L'ère d'autorité se trouble) only the numerous irises know if such purified place has existed. The poet is completely carried away into this miraculous feast of flowers, when the child fixes the etherized flower of the Ideal, absent from any bouquet, into poetry by saying the magic word, "Resurrection! (Anastase!)"¹¹ Otherwise the Ideal itself (son aïeul)¹² will swallow the poetry into the abstraction of "Pulchérie" or beauty, somewhat grotesquely visualized in the image of the too great gladiolus. The magical process that a sense experience is extracted and transmuted into the Ideal beyond for retaining the visual form and transcendence miraculously together is portrayed here in the most exquisite tension of the possible and the impossible. Rightly Mallarmé called such magic of poetry, "alchemy," a mystical process not to create a precious stone but an etherized image called a symbol.¹³

Superimposed on this poetics of Mallarmé, Pound's pastiche evokes elaborate meanings. The passage quoted is preceded by the epigraph emphasizing in Pound's own French the important function of love in the creation of art works. "De fine amor vient science et beauté" (Out of fine love come knowledge and beauty) quotes Pound a line of the King of Navarre,¹⁴ together with Goddeschalk's "Amas ut facias pulchram"¹⁵ (Thou lovest that thou mayst make beauty) in 1919. Aided by the love of his lady or of poetry, Mallarmé is successful in metamorphosing the plants of irises into the immortal Ideal. Pound's Mauberley, on the contrary, passed "inconscient, full gaze" (*Personae*, p. 200) the "irides" of the eyes of his lady, though the birth of Venus (botticellian sprays) was implied in the distance between the two eyes (diastasis).¹⁶ In Pound's work the eyes of a woman can signify poetry like Mallarmé's "child." "The eyes of this dead lady speak to me," wrote Pound for *Venus Reclining*, by Jacopo del Sellaio ("The Picture," *Personae*, p. 73). The poem suggests more than anything else Dante's *Vita Nuova*, and

the violent power of ladies' eyes there¹⁷ is claimed by Remy de Gourmont to be a symbol of poetry or beauty, for Gourmont argues in *Dante, Beatrice et la Poésie Amoureuse* that Beatrice can not have lived in Florence except as such a symbol.¹⁸ Pound's Mauberley is not refined in love nor talented enough to cooperate with his Muse, though both Mauberley and Mallarmé meet beauty in the depth of their unconscious. Mauberley renewed his acquaintance with his Muse a year later, but the re-encounter does not mean the resurrection or the "Anastase" of Mallarmé's magic word. Pound's neologism of anaesthesia suggests three words: „ἀνάστασις" or "setting up in public," "ana" (again or up) plus "thesis" meaning to return to the theme, and "anesthesia" or senselessness. Here Mauberley returns to his love openly without being much enlightened or awakened to the process of writing poetry as it should be. Mauberley is a poet of hard images Hulme once instigated. His passion is "to convey the relation / Of eye-lid and cheek-bone" ("Mauberley," *Personae*, p. 200). Hence instead of being swallowed into a sepulchre as Mallarmé's poetry might have been, Mauberley's is petrified like Aurora's dogs in their pursuit snapping at the air.¹⁹

Reading Pound's lines corresponding "Prose pour des Esseintes," we are amazed that Pound actually pays his tribute to Mallarmé. We know that Pound was no admirer of Mallarmé's theory of poetry. "Symbole?? Je n'ai jamais lu 'les idées des symbolistes' sur ce sujet,"²⁰ answered Pound in 1928, pretending a surprise at René Taupin's question. Yet here by using Mallarmé's "Prose," Pound definitely points out what is lacking in Mauberley's medal-like, hard images. According to Pound's Imagist Manifesto, an image must be a "sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits."²¹ In other words an image must be idealized, must be wrapped in the ethereal, the Ideal which Mallarmé sought after. I do not suggest that Pound's Imagism is just a heritage of Mallarmé's Symbolism, but I do claim that Mallarmé's achievement was accepted by Pound, though criticized and corrected.

"Imagisme is not symbolism. The symbolists dealt in 'association,' that is, in a sort of allusion, almost of allegory. They degraded the symbol to the status of a word . . . One can be grossly 'symbolic,' for example, by using the term 'cross' to mean 'trial,'"²² is the protest of Pound against Symbolists. Trusting Pound's testimony that he learned Symbolism "via T. E. Hulme, via Yeats<Symons<Mallarmé,"²⁴ the protest against "association" certainly refers to T. E. Hulme's and Yeats' understanding of Symbolism. Hulme rather mechanically assumed only one image behind each word, and a simultaneous presentation of two images for making thought.²⁵ Literature is on the contrary "a deliberate choosing and working-up of analogies. The continued, close, compressed thought,"²⁶ where any demand for clear, logical expression is impossible. Hulme's idea of "analogies" can be traced for its source to Mallarmé's prose poem, "Le Démon de l'Analogie." Though Mallarmé and Hulme's concept of analogy is not mechanical at all, Hulme's concept of language can lead poetry to the direction of mechanical allusion or association. Yeats recreated into his own vision Arthur Symons' understanding of Mallarmé by assuming a universal mind or what Yeats called *Anima Mundi* later:

Whatever the passions of man have gathered about, becomes a symbol in the Great Memory . . . The symbols are of all kinds, for everything in heaven or earth has its *association*, momentous or trivial in the Great Memory . . . :²⁷

Even in his unique occultism, Yeats understands Mallarmé's sense of symbols right, as a system of signs to recreate the Ideal world.²⁸ If working through his vision, Yeats believed associations should be able to avoid allegorization.²⁹ Pound, as his tribute to Mallarmé in "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" proves, agrees to Mallarmé's process of creation. Yet symbols can fall into allegory and can be petrified like the stone dogs, without evoking anything ideal. Pound felt neither Yeats nor Hulme nor other symbolists had done enough to rescue poetry from such degrading petrification.

Pound, I positively believe, enjoyed reading Mallarmé's poetry. One thorough inspection of the table of contents in Mallarmé's *Oeuvres Complètes* makes us realize how Pound followed Mallarmé in titling his own works, as if the American poet were deliberately acting Mallarmé's heir. Conscious of Mallarmé's *Divigations*, Pound named his collected essays, *Pavanne and Divigations*. For Mallarmé's "Salut," Pound wrote three "Salutations." For the French poet's "Quelques Medaillons et Portraits au Pied," Pound called the last section of "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" "Medallion." Mallarmé wrote short notes to his friends with addresses in verse and titled "Amis" and "Amies," while Pound wrote epigrams addressed to friends in "Amities." Mallarmé's "Billet à Whistler" finds Pound's equivalent in "To Whistler, American," and Mallarmé's "Hommages et Tombeaux" is succeeded by Pound's "Homage to Sextus Propertius."

Not only in titles, but in the poetic visions Pound shared Mallarmé's aspiration towards the Platonic radiance. Mallarmé's celestial blue in "L'Azur" is responded in Pound's "The Flame,"

Nature herself's turned metaphysical,
Who can look on that blue and not believe?
(*Personae*, p. 50)

and elaborated into Pound's image of paradise, "triune azures, the impalpable" ("Blandula, Tenella, Vagula," *Personae*, p. 39). The limpid mirror ("miroir à lui / Limpide")³⁰ in Mallarmé's "Evantail de Madame Mallarmé" flashes with the motion of verse like the motion of a fan, suggesting the universal consciousness of Neo-Platonic *νοῦς*. It is this *νοῦς* that haunts Pound's poetry almost obsessively. *The Cantos* is his voyage to the "NOUS, the ineffable crystal" (40/201). The gasping cry of the poet in "A Song of the Degrees" echoes something of Mallarmé's derangement under the insufferable presence of the Ideal in "L'Azur,"

I have known the golden disc,
I have seen it melting above me.

I have known the stone-bright place,
The hall of clear colours (*Personae*, p. 95).

Evoking their visions, both poets were attracted to Greek-Egyptian Mysteries. As Mallarmé was initiated into the “traditions secrètes de la Grèce et surtout de l’Égypte,”³¹ by Lefébure, one of Pound’s themes in *The Cantos*³² was to construct his own Eleusinian Mysteries and Isis Mysteries.

Last of all, Mallarmé and Pound share the belief that the value of poetry should be equal to that of the whole universe itself. A poet is to reflect the development and the structure of the whole universe, as Mallarmé believed. Then only one book is possible in the world for “Une ordonnance du livre de vers point innée ou partout, élimine le hasard”³³ The contrast of a great sphere of mist in Canto 29/141 and “the great ball of crystal” near the end of his last fragmentary Cantos (116/795) symbolically suggests that Pound in the course of writing the poem altered the whole matter of the universe into the crystal consciousness of poetry. He has started the poem with the aim of Mallarmé’s and worked it out. When *Igitur*, a fragment Mallarmé possibly intended for part of *The Work* (L’Oeuvre) was published in 1925, Pound had already written the first sixteen Cantos. Yet we are amazed to see in the opening scene of *Igitur*, Pound’s golden mirror (“A Song of the Degrees”). Especially Poundian descent into the depth of time and into race memory characteristic of these early Cantos is suggested in such passages as, “. . . j’aimerais rentrer en mon Ombre incréée et antérieure, et dépouiller par la pensée le travestissement que m’a imposé la nécessité, d’habiter le coeur de cette race (que j’entends battre ici) seul reste d’ambiguïté.”³⁴ Sharing his ambition with Mallarmé to reflect the whole universe in poetry, we realize that Pound was seriously interested in Mallarmé’s “doctrine of chance.” Among many inadequacies of Mauberley, Pound especially points out his ignoring the difficulty of Mallarmé’s in this doctrine:

A Minoan undulation,
Seen, we admit, amid ambrosial circumstances
Strengthened him against
The discouraging doctrine of chances . . . (“The Age Demanded,”
“Mauberley 1920,” *Personae*, p. 202).

“The discouraging doctrine of chances” means the posthumous publication of Mallarmé’s last poem, “Un Coup de Dés jammais n’ablira le Hasard” (A Throw of Dice Will Never Abolish Chance) in 1914. Even though a poet empties himself “*afin de permettre au mystère immanent à l’Univers de s’y révéler dans toute sa pureté*,”³⁵ he must work in arranging words with chances which necessarily impede the poet to reflect the Absolute. Mallarmé’s confession of his ultimate failure in realizing his poetics should be studied by any modern poet, whereas Mauberley enjoyed himself instead in the loveliest scene of the South Pacific and died merely “a hedonist” (“Mauberley 1920,” IV, *Personae*, p. 203).

One reason that Pound refrained from discussing about Mallarmé despite such carefully suggested concerns is that Pound had already absorbed the principles of Mallarmé's Symbolism from other sources, particularly in the music of language and in the evocation of the Ideal through images. The other reason is the problem of Mallarmé's technique which Pound corrected. Instead of learning the idealization through the music of language from French Symbolists, Pound acquired the most elaborate rhythm through troubadours. Instead of learning the symbols or images to suggest the Ideal with fading and wavering figures, "Instituer une relation entre les images exacte, et que s'en détache un tiers aspect fusible et clair présenté à la divination . . .,"³⁶ Pound had discovered all by himself the same technique in metamorphic wavering of images. How etherially the dance figure is melted into a nature scene, which oscillates in brightness in its turn,

Thine arms are as a young sapling under the bark;
Thy face as a river with lights ("Dance Figure," *Personae*, p. 91).

The only poem of Mallarmé's Pound quoted is "Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx," whose images very much resemble those of Pound's favorite sestina of Arnaut Daniel, and which Pound adored with one word, "exquisite."³⁷

Mallarmé presented Pound problems of the immediate past, too recent for him to resurrect as tradition, and too difficult to find a ready answer, even though he acknowledges the heritage. Pound had to struggle with the problems and discovered answers all through his life not only in Gourmont-inspired Imagism but also through the whole *Cantos*. Being asked by Taupin presumably what Imagists' "Image" owes to Symbolists' "Symbol," Pound answered most clearly, "Comme le pain doit quelque chose au vanneur de blé . . ." (As bread owes something to one who winnowed grain).³⁸

Naturally Pound's understanding of Symbolism is precise, and his suggestions for correcting its weakness are shrewd. In "Vorticism," 1914, Pound makes it clear what he would inherit from Symbolism:

I said in the preface to my *Guido Cavalcanti* that I believed in an absolute rhythm. I believe that every emotions and every phase 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, as 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.³⁹

Mallarmé's concept of *vers libre*, "modulation . . . individuelle, parce que toute âme est un noeud rhthmique,"⁴⁰ is given a far more exact definition here. Yet both music of language and images are freed from the obligation of representing the permanent

world of the Ideal all the time. Mallarmé's belief in *the* permanent world leads him to the rigid pursuit of the Work. Yeats had long searched the permanent world until he was awakened to a Nietzschesque necessity to create a permanent world of his mythology.⁴¹ Pound would not take either way, but work merely for the idealization of sound and image until the exalted emotion points to the direction of the Ideal.

Whether Pound's way was more successful or not, for the immediate purpose he could free himself from the blind alley of Mallarmé's too complicated technique of constantly revealing the unreality of the Ideal and his too limited aim of transforming images into symbols only. Mallarmé's swan under the ice, under "Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui!"⁴² is lovely unreal but elusive and ambiguous. Yet Pound's image must stay clear even though "the four square walls of standing time" ("The House of Splendour," *Personae*, p. 49) should be collapsed around it. When Pound states in his "Credo,"

I believe that the proper and perfect symbol is the natural object, that if a man use 'symbols' he must so use them that their symbolic function does not obtrude; so that a sense, and the poetic quality of the passage, is not lost to those who do not understand the symbol as such, to whom, for instance, a hawk is a hawk,⁴³

he assigned himself the task of overcoming what he considered the major weakness of Symbolism. "Moreover, one does not want to be called a symbolist, because symbolism has usually been associated with mushy technique,"⁴⁴ added Pound. With all Symbolists' heritage of idealization, both language and image must be as natural and clear as in prose, hence his admiration of Flaubert.⁴⁵

Compare for instance Mallarmé's "Apparition" and Pound's "Apparuit." The titles and the common theme of the miraculous revelation of a girl at night suggests Pound's awareness of Mallarmé's poem.⁴⁶ The difficulty here is how to present the unreality of the epiphany in the dark. Mallarmé's abrupt image of the bright sun is dissolved in the memory of childhood and returns fading with the fragrant stars which metamorphoses into white flowers,

Quand avec du soleil aux cheveux, dans la rue
Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant apparue
Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de clarté
Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils d'enfant gâté
Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains mal fermées
Neiger de blancs bouquets d'étoiles parfumées.⁴⁷

The beauty in the poem is in the elusiveness of the bright sun of her hair which flashes and disappears as abruptly as it appears. Pound on the contrary presents with incredible boldness the very moments of the revelation continuously in six stanzas. His

quantitative verse,

Swift at courage thou in the shell of gold, cast-
ing a-loose the cloak of the body, camest
straight, then shone thine oriel and the stunned light
faded about thee (*Personae*, p. 68),

caught a sudden glittering figure which stays, stuns and swiftly departs with no elusive shifting of scenes. The rhythm of language itself breathes the overwhelming but delicate vision. "Apparuit" proves the advancement of technique since Symlobsin by Gourmont's quantitative verse⁴⁸ and by Pound's study of Greek rhythm or Sapphic stanzas in this case.⁴⁹

If a hawk must be a hawk and evoke the Ideal, the meaning of an image is necessarily multiple. This will keep images constantly radiating active suggestions of meaning's without being allegorized:

The symbolist's *symbols* have a fixed value, like numbers in arithmetic, like 1, 2 and 7. The imagiste's images have a variable significance, like the signs *a*, *b*, and *x* in algebra.⁵⁰

"On His Own Face in a Glass" is an étude (1908) which both Hugh Witemeyer⁵¹ and K. K. Ruthven interpreted to be "a poem on the relationship between the poet and his personae."⁵² Yet Pound certainly did not write an allegory, but in a jestful dismay confided the mystery of metamorphosis in poetry even as Mallarmé did when he wrote the too famous "Les Fenêtres:"

O Strange face there in the glass!
O ribald company, O saintly host,
O sorrow-swept my fool,
What answer? O ye myriad
That strive and play and pass,
Jest, challenge, counterlie!
I? I? I?

And ye? (*Personae*, p. 35)

Mallarmé's window pane on which the narrator's figure is transmuted into an angel,

Dans leur verre, lavé d'éternelles rosées,
Que dore le matin chaste de l'Infini

Je me mire et me vois ange!⁵³

signifies art and mystery as the poet himself interprets a few lines under, "—Que la vitre soit l'art, soit la mysticité—."⁵⁴ Pound's glass means of course poetry and mystery of

metamorphoses, too. Yet it is a glass still, whether or not it be a glass of Dionysian Mysteries. Dionysus representing the perfection of soul is tempted to look into a mirror or an illusory shadow of his own image. Immediately the god was torn into pieces and scattered with all phenomena.⁵⁵ This Platonic allegory haunted Pound early in his career. The constant awareness that his own essence is scattered behind every image of the world drives him to collect such "luminous details"⁵⁶ in the literature of East and West, and to continue *The Cantos* all his life by collecting fragments. Knowing this Dionysian glass, the reader will enjoy the comic gesture of the astonished soul when it recognizes itself in myriad of things, saintly or ridiculous, while he appreciates the marvellous sense of transcendence, imagining the first flash of the phenomena in the pristine pureness. Not knowing the Dionysian Mysteries, still the reader will be delighted at the witty gesture of a vain man. A sick man's envisioning himself an angel in Mallarmé's poem on the contrary can be ludicrous if the reader fails to appreciate the transcendence as the poet intended. Even in 1908, in his pre-Imagist, pre-Vorticist days, Pound's image includes different ideas into "a radiant node or cluster" which Pound the Vorticist called "Vortex" in 1914.

A brief summary is possible here about Pound's heritage from Mallarmé's before proceeding to Gourmont. Though no critics ever cared this much, Pound's works paralleled with Mallarmé's so far as the absolute rhythm and the absolute metaphor are concerned. To cultivate exact rhythm and metaphor for each delicate, elaborate emotion in exalting the physical world into the Ideal, Mallarmé's ground-breaking toil had been done already for Pound. What the latter refused to inherit was Mallarmé's futile effort to charge images with one duty of transcendence and with that one duty only. Images must be free with the radio-activity of varied meanings. If Pound practiced this already before he read Gourmont's *Le Problème du Style*, he was assured of his rightness by this last polemic Symbolist.⁵⁷

Pound read his most learned⁵⁸ and most sophisticated mentor early in 1912,⁵⁹ while grinding Symbolists' grain, kneading and baking it into Imagists' bread. Today we have the excellent book of Richard Sieburth to study the heritage of Gourmont Pound received. Nevertheless, so versatile and so rich a thinker was Gourmont that we can glean a surprisingly lot in the fields even after Sieburth's harvest. As the last generation of Symbolists Gourmont has cultivated the keen awareness that language can represent all the content of psyche if handled by an expert of the *métier*, even though it takes a writer skilled enough to present Pound's absolute rhythm and absolute metaphor. When Gourmont wrote, "Un écrivain ne doit songer, quand il écrit, ni à ses maîtres, ni même à son style. S'il voit, s'il sent, il dira quelque chose . . . Le style, c'est de sentir, de voir, de penser, et rien de plus,"⁶⁰ we realize he meant the highest consummation of Symbolists' effort to cultivate all the possible resources of language. Understandably very few writers can incorporate into their style all their sensibility which is the sum total of human perceptions. "L'écrivain artiste n'est presque jamais un sentimental, et très rarement un sensitif; c'est-à-dire qu'il incorpore à son style toute sa sensibilité,"⁶¹ wrote Gourmont. His "style" for this reason is a rare case of specialization, when a

writer pours his total life into his language.⁶² For this extraordinary purpose a writer must use the most accurate part of his experience of the exterior world, and avoid the most falsifying and unreliable part. The former is image and the latter is idea.

Since Sieburth curiously omitted Gourmont's philosophical background, inseparable from his peculiar distrust of idea, we should begin with his Schopenhauerian awareness, "Le monde est ma représentation"⁶³ (The world is my representation), and then proceed to discuss his total irrationality. If this representation is the sole thing we can see consciously, we can never reach what really exists beyond the representation. Hence the sole entity, so far as our reason is concerned, is the representation: "Je ne vois pas ce qui est; ce qui est, c'est ce que je vois,"⁶⁴ wrote Gourmont in "Preface" to the first *Livre des Masques* (1896). One must start with his awareness of the total inability to experience the exterior world, the world of matter. Nor can one prove the truth of one's representation. Even though neither materialism nor idealism is verified, materialism and idealism are identical⁶⁵ because in either case one calls the same representation idea or matter. On the other hand the exterior world does exist and sends its enormous energy through man's physical body, as Schopenhauer depicted, in the activity of his "Will"⁶⁶ or the irrational impulse of life forever trying to objectify itself.

Thus vaguely but impenetrably wrapped up with consciousness, man can keep his contact with the reality of the world only through his physical activity, through his sense organs and sensations, for it was his circumstances that created these organs. If he can live out his total of such physical experiences called sensibility without any conscious knowledge of it, he will be blessed with the richest and truest experience of life, as Gourmont presumes, "Les observations les plus fructueuses sont celles que l'on a faites sans le savoir; vivre sans penser à la vie est souvent le meilleur moyen d'apprendre à connaître la vie."⁶⁷ A genius artist can work only when he breaks open his consciousness and plunges into the vaste flow of life, when he "laisse se précipiter vers le monde les flots rénovés des sensations qu'ils doivent au monde."⁶⁸ Intelligence, on the other hand, merely limits the vital power of the world to fit itself into its own narrow and peculiar shape, and proves itself to be a blind alley of human evolution, and a sort of derogation.⁶⁹ Worse than intelligence are the ideas which are shaped always associated out of experience, passion and interest, because of some irrational necessity. For instance, the idea of immortality is born associated with the idea of death for the irrational demand to avoid the fear of death. No ideas can be true or false ("Il n'y a pas des idées vraies et des idées fausses"⁷⁰), for ideas are born because we want them to be true. Reason can only dissociate such irrational complexes of judgment into pure ideas. Darwin's evolutionism should be dissociated from the Biblical notion of man's sovereignty, for instance, because in the arterial system birds are far advanced in the stage of evolution.⁷¹

Only when we understand Gourmontian conceptions of sensibility and ideas, we can comprehend Gourmont's exaltation of sense images and his warning against ideas. Gourmont classifies artists into two kinds, realists and idealists. A realist works on the reality of the exterior world, penetrates into and absorbes from the vaste flood of life

there for sense images, since only sense takes into mind whatever is life, “les sens sont la porte unique par où est entré tout ce qui vit dans l’esprit.”⁷² An idealist works with his ideomotions which are directed away from the exterior world. Yet Gourmont’s classification of these two kinds of artists rather applies to the two aspects of one artist, for it is possible, though rare, that “la mémoire visuelle et la mémoire l’émotive règnent équilibrées dans le même cerveau.”⁷³ Flaubert is a rare case of such perfect proportion. Nevertheless, “l’idéo-émotion” is “toujours hallucinatoire, ne donne du monde extérieur qu’une image fantastique, vaine et inapte à réagir franchement sur la physiologie.”⁷⁴ Thence first of all a poet must practice Gourmont’s “Realism,” which merely means a vital, original art in which sense images present his sense experience with all the miracles of techniques.

How well Pound absorbed the Gourmontian aesthetics when he started his Imagism by presenting an image which is “an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time”!⁷⁵ In the sense experience intelligence and emotion are stirred up fresh in their vital condition before they are directed away into hallucinatory ideas. “*Nihil in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*”⁷⁶ (Nothing is in intellect that was not first in sense), wrote Gourmont. Moreover, the intellectual and emotional activities in the image must be “complex.” Modern images, especially those of Symbolists, are characterized for their synthesis, as Gourmont says, “Il nous est impossible de dissocier les images doubles ou triples qui naissent simultanément, à idée d’un fait, en nos cerveaux troublés par des sensations tumultueuses”⁷⁷ Here Pound’s word, “complex,” is another evidence to prove the Symbolist lineage in Imagism. For shaping the life of the reality (the exterior world), synthesis and complexity must be grasped “in an instant of time.” Otherwise the sparkling immediateness of experience will be faded into discolored ideas.

Owing the major principles of Imagism to Gourmont, Pound by no means merely followed him. Sieburth reports one important marginalia of Pound’s on his copy of *Le Problème du Style*. Gourmont’s argument is that man cannot imagine beyond his memory, for sensibility is the product of circumstances, “Imaginer, c’est associer des images; cela n’est jamais créer.”⁷⁸ At this sentence Pound raised a determined objection, “. . . it is quite possible, nevertheless, that the imagination does create”⁷⁹ Pound with his early passion for Richard of St. Victor⁸⁰ had to assert an anti-empirical, even Coleridgean transcendental faculty of imagination. Richard was a Medieval, Christian mystic who left two treatises on contemplation: *Benjamin Minor* and *Benjamin Major*. Contemplations means a Medieval study of the Bible through visions. Richard argues in *Benjamin Minor* that when imagination is still tied to bodily senses only, one imagines the material existence of the spiritual like the flame of Gehenna. Yet once imagination works with reason, one creates what one can never experience, such as the golden walls of the new Jerusalem.⁸¹ Richard called such picture of the invisible, “imago.”⁸² When we compare Pound’s correction of Gourmont and Richard’s theory of imagination, we realize that Pound vindicated his intense love of the Platonic vision, of “the colorless and formless and intangible essence”⁸³ in Plato’s *Phaedrus* and in Dante’s

*Paradiso*⁸⁴ against Gourmont's empiricism. Gourmont himself never actually renounced the transcendental faculty of reason. How otherwise can reason dissociate ideas, pre-determined by the milieu? Knowing Richard's reason working with imagination, Pound could declare that imagination can work beyond experience.

By adding Richard's anti-empirical power of imagination to Gourmont's *Le Problème du Style*, Pound's first principle of Imagism is completed: "Direct treatment of the thing whether subjective or objective."⁸⁵ Concerning the function of transcendental reason in art, Gourmont just vaguely suggests that merely to accumulate facts will never do, but that one must particularize one's experience with ideas; ". . . particulariser, c'est mettre une idée dans ce qui, réel, n'était qu'une anecdote."⁸⁶ This is why a realist must work together with an idealist within himself. Yet what is the difference between the mistaken, hallucinatory idea and this idea to individualize an artist's experience? Deep down in Gourmont's argument is hidden an anti-idealistic skepticism. Richard of St. Victor filled up the void and supplied the Ideal necessary for Pound. "Semper autem contemplatio est in rebus, vel per sui naturam manifestis, vel per studium familiariter notis, vel ex divina revelatione perspicuis"⁸⁷ wrote Richard, the uniquely sensuous Christian visionary, explaining that however remote the beatific vision is from reality it never detaches itself from sense experiences. Pound's word, "things," accords with Richard's "rebus," indicating how the American poet supplemented Gourmont's "Realism" with the daring antithesis of the Platonic, Medieval vision.

Pound's relying on Gourmont's sense images freed Mallarmé's symbols over the vast flux of the sea of sense experiences. Pound never separated himself from the Platonic pursuit of Mallarmé's when he accepted Gourmont's "Realism." Given the miraculous fluidity of meanings, Pound's images are made alive, can be associated with any other images all over the field of consciousness, while still evoking Mallarmé's Ideal. Just as Gourmont dissociates and reassociates the empirical idea into non-empirical "pure ideas," Pound dissociates images from any literary and historical context and reassociates them into some idealized, radiating complexes. Helen of Troy in *The Cantos*, for instance, is dissociated from Homer's epics, reassociated with Aeschylus' "ἑλένας and ἑλεπολις!" (2/6),⁸⁸ the city-destroying, ship-destroying woman in *Agamemnon*, Eleanor d'Aquitaine, who divorced her French King, caused quarrels between the father and the sons when she married her English king (7/24). Parisina's tragic love with her husband's son is associated with Helen of Troy again with the line, "così Elena vedi" (20/92).⁸⁹ These images are so subtle and delicate in evoking the senses, for their meanings are arrested just one step before being caught into ideas. How ridiculous it seems, if one knows Gourmontian sensorial art and its infinite possibility, to misunderstand Pound's Imagism for an imitation of T. E. Hulme's "School of Images," which may or may not have existed"⁹⁰ (*Personae*, p. 251), or for a result of reading Fenollosa's "Essay on the Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry"⁹¹ Hulme's images have no such fluidity of meanings as Gourmont and Pound's, nor does Fenollosa's concepts of Chinese characters include Symbolists' ideali-

zation by language.

Besides the beginning of Imagism, Gourmont led Pound in his "chivalric contemplation,"⁹² which is a kind of magic or mystery of art. Words and images are merely material while poetry must transform them into the Ideal as Mallarmé's. Such arcane process of poetry is compared to a magic or alchemy as we discussed before. In "Psychology and Troubadours" Pound wonders about such process of magic. If "the monk"⁹³ or Richard of St. Victor could evoke the divine vision through his infinite love of God, can a poet's adoration of a woman effect the same result? Unlike the ascetic contemplation of Richard's, here in Pound's "chivalric contemplation" the object of love is only physical, and a poet must work out an alchemical magic of hatching the spiritual out of the material. Pound's thought lingers on "whether or no the thing has not become a function of the intellect"⁹⁴ in poetry, and leads in 1916 to how Simon Magus discovered Helen of Troy in a brothel at Tyre!⁹⁵ This Greek legend definitely points out to "Hermes Trismegistus," and the Greek-Egyptian meditations on which basis alchemy has been developed. The cosmic mind of man called Anthropos looks down on the water and sees his own image of beauty, gives in to the temptation of disire and embraces Physis or nature.⁹⁶ Thus νοῦς or mind is inseparably caught in matter, yet possible to be separated and saved.⁹⁷ Thus the liberation of mind from matter is the liberation of beauty simultaneously from such destructive function of arresting mind within matter.⁹⁸ Whoever the direct source of Pound's, John Heydon, Ficino, *Corpus Hermeticum* or G. R. S. Mead, Pound certainly knows "Trismegistus" in 1915.⁹⁹ Simon Magus' discovering Helen of Tyre makes for him "a clearer prototype of 'chivalric love.'"¹⁰⁰ No wonder the poet repeats in the early Cantos the varied episodes of the adoration of beauty rescuing ladies, who on their own part free other people. For just one instance, Cunizza da Romano fled with Sordello in her youth and liberated her slaves in later life (6/22) among many of Pound's mythical liberation of beauty and mind together. It was again Remy de Gourmont that already experimented in *Les Chevaux de Diomède* whether a profane love can work out "a mediamistic function"¹⁰¹ for Mallarmé's alchemy of art.

Les Chevaux de Diomède, which Pound warmly admired as Gourmont's having "embedded his philosophy in a luxurious mist of the senses,"¹⁰² is a beautiful and subtle study of Symbolists' alchemical magic of art. Prof. Hans-Joachim Zimmermann's brilliant paper on "A Song of the Degrees"¹⁰³ presented to Poundians for the first time that the poem can be interpreted in alchemical terms. Gourmont also meditates the relationship of love and art in the terms of Rosicrucianism. Diomède, waiting for his Christine, reading a book about early Christian anchorites, imagines a monastery in the valley covered with black fir trees, a wooden cross and a rose:

. . . un pèlerin qui allait s'agenouiller dans la solitude des devastations nouvelles, planter entre Rome et les barbares le rempart d'une croix de bois. L'un partait, ivre encore d'une rose trop passionnément respirée . . .¹⁰⁴

Christine, who can not approach Diomède in the dusk being frightened by the great black trees, symbolizes the rose of pleasure for Diomède. The black firs stout with the vigor of generation represents the inevitable conflicts in matter and generative life with the image of the Cross, which impede Christine's virginal heart. At the first glance, the reader believes that Diomède will somehow conquer the anchorites' sacred asceticism in the resistance of Christine's soul and enjoy the rose of pleasure, particularly because Gourmont writes serenely, "l'âme est corporelle et le corps est spirituel . . ." (The soul is corporeal and the body is spiritual . . .).¹⁰⁵ As any argument of Gourmont is counterbalanced with some inevitable antithesis, such spiritualization of body is counterbalanced with the solid reality of body, for Diomède's ideal virgin, Christine, turns out to be an imaginative creature in the later half of the novel.

Fanette, a little prostitute girl means art for Diomède's hedonism. Embracing her naked, he thinks, "L'Art désire que les femmes nues soient ornées d'une ceinture,"¹⁰⁶ for art is the pleasure of body and soul together. She is the very rose tree which one breathes in, and never afraid of the black forest which Christine dreads. If she is ruined in the violent process of generative desire, then she will be, ". . . s'il vient des bêtes, je grimpe à un arbre; et si je suis mangée, dame! que veux-tu, Diomède, est-ce que toutes mes méchantes petites soeurs ne seront pas mangées aussi, un jour ou l'autre?"¹⁰⁷ How far away she lives from the anchorites' shacks, and how tenderly she gives Diomède the magic unity of body and soul! "De ces voluptés naît l'ivresse spirituelle,"¹⁰⁸ reads she out proudly, and Diomède overcomes the inevitable cross of the conflicts sustained by the infinitely gentle and infinitely simple, pure heart of Fanette.

On the contrary, Cyran forces his love, Cyrène, to renounce him, for he treats Cyrène only as a necessary medium for his art. Painting a fresco of the mystic marriage of the Lamb, the monk artist explains to Diomède: "Moi, je transforme. J'allège les corps de toute leur matérialité; j'en fais des nuages, des vapeurs, des rêves, des âmes . . . [*sic.*] Alléger et allonger, obtenir des êtres frêles et transparentes . . . [*sic.*]"¹⁰⁹ Diomède realizes that Cyrène is sacrificed for the mystery of art like the sacrificial cross in order to bring out the mystic marriage of the spiritual and the material in art work. The white lamb Cyran uses for the model indicates Cyrène's pristine innocence, hidden deep under her long career of love-making. "—Où trouvera-t-elle la force de se renoncer?" asks Cyran. "En sa tendress pour vous,"¹¹⁰ answers Diomède recalling Fanette. Both Cyran and Diomède believe in the magic of art in which love evaporates the physical into the ethereal.

Women, however, had different views of such magic of art. Discarded by Cyran, Cyrène extends her arm and takes her fan like "un cygne qui du fond de l'eau ramène et secoue son col flexible et blanc."¹¹¹ She is suffering with dignity. Freed from the water of man's desire, which is matter, the swan evoking the sense of the hidden Ideal floats lightly now. "Quelle créature d'amour! Tout un peuple d'hommes et de femmes s'agenouillerait sur son passage,"¹¹² whisper her guests. Disdaining Cyran's home-made mystery of art, Cyrène can stay above the heavy matter of progenerative instinct, symbolized with water, having herself supported by it. Néobelle,

a gorgeous, healthy daughter of Cyrène by an aristocratic father, tempts Diomède with her virginal innocence which is her cross.¹¹³ Diomède embraces her in the park and chooses to be young trees of vigorous generation with her when “Le buisson de roses fut secoué comme par une tempête et toutes les petites roses rouges s’effeuillèrent sur le sable en une pluie de sang.”¹¹⁴ Néobelle allows herself to be taken to England for her aristocratic marriage then. She loved Diomède just to reach her own rose of self-realization by conquering her cross of innocence.

All too unexpected incidents take place one after another in the latter half of the novel and ruthlessly destroy Diomède’s serene dream of the mystical unity of body and soul. Fanette dies in Diomède’s arms, for matter and reality must assert their own right and prerogative. Néobelle’s letter reporting her marriage disgusts Diomède. Once the sophisticated lover preaches to his friend with a confident smile, “. . . le corps n’est que la manifestation visible de l’âme, ainsi extériorisée selon son pouvoir de créer la matière . . .”¹¹⁵ Diomède was not mistaken, except that his proposition can be reversed and that soul is only part of body. Now he has to bury Fanette with all the pleasures she could give, has to confess to his friend that Christine is merely a product of his imagination, and has to listen to an abbot at Christine’s grave, “Le peuple, c’est-à-dire tous les hommes, croit éternellement à la magie . . . Il y a une magie papale, une magie d’Etat et une magie populaire . . . elles ne sont qu’un seul et même caméléon varié de couleurs, unique de nom: la Foi.”¹¹⁶ Thus his magic of art first upset by Fanette’s death is ironically confirmed to his dismay. The most horrible revenge of matter so lightly evaporated by the alchemy of art, however, falls on Cyran. Diomède has to read in a paper that he is found dead with a painting brush, and the white lamb of his is standing as if awakening him,

Cyran meurt d’avoir voulu écrire des idées sur les murs d’une église:
les murs ont refusé l’écriture; repoussées par la pierre, les idées comme
des lances ont percé le coeur de Cyran,¹¹⁷

thinks Diomède at the end of the novel.

Pound was at first completely charmed by Gourmont’s intelligence and what he considered Gourmont’s “osmosis of body and soul.”¹¹⁸ together with the qualities of Gourmont’s intelligence, “Limpidity and fairness and graciousness, and irony . . .”¹¹⁹ *Les Chevaux de Diomède* is a powerful novel and certainly frightens any sensitive reader with his gentle but thorough skepticism. Yet Pound tries to absorb all he can from Gourmont’s techniques and ideas. Taking only *Les Chevaux de Diomède*, we can point out at once some crucial themes used in *The Cantos*. Christine, the virginal soul yet to be incorporated is reflected in Koré in the air, the soul before her descending to matter (3/11). The swimmers she looks down (3/11) are both the souls which have embraced matter and women who know the honey of generation, for the virginal Néobelle tells herself that she will not be frightened by the swimmers.¹²⁰ We understand “the cat of the wood” (2/8) is the dangerous power of flesh that victimizes Fanette. The animal

is made harmless by being initiated into Dionysian Mysteries proclaimed in Canto 2. So is the lynx guarding the orchard in Canto 79, where the power of physical nature in body is made useful under the firm control of initiates. The water of desire for flesh out of which Cyrène arises is hallowed into the power of divine creators in Canto 2/6 when Poseidon embraces Tyro, but treated in Gourmont's sense when Arnaut (T. S. Eliot)¹²¹ claims that "She is submarine, she is an octopus, she is / A biological process" (29/145). Néobelle wants to become "un gros bourdon, tout de velours, qui s'enfoncé et disparaît dans une clochette de digitale."¹²² The flower indicates Diomède's intelligence, which gives to her grotesque bumblebee of velvet a pretty little form. Pound's too unique concept that both brain and spermatozoide make forms and images¹²³ is certainly suggested by some such images of Gourmont, together with more blunt argument in *Physique de l'Amour*,¹²⁴ and Aristotelian idea of male form and female matter.¹²⁵ Pound imagines man's "spermatozoide charging, head on the female chaos,"¹²⁶ referring to the *logos* descending on matter in "Trismegistus,"

The watery substance, having received the Word, was fashioned into an ordered world, the elements being separated out from it; and from the elements came forth the brood of living creatures. Fire unmixed leapt forth from the watery substance, and rose up aloft; the fire was light and keen, and active. And therewith the air too, being light, followed the fire, and mounted up till it reached the fire, parting from earth and water; so that it seemed that the air was suspended from the fire.¹²⁷

The descent of the *logos* in "Trismegistus" is remarkably shortened in Canto 5/17, " 'Et omniformis': Air, fire, the pale soft light."¹²⁸

Of Gourmont's influences, Pound was attracted to his different, even contradictory aspects at once: on one hand to the magic of art, Hermetic, Rosicrucian or otherwise; and on the other hand to Gourmont's critical intelligence which in the case of *Les Chevaux de Diomède* entirely refuted the alchemy of art. Pound in "Vorticism" wrote that the meanings of images should be varied just like the algebraic signs of x, y, z.¹²⁹ How ironically the images in *Les Chevaux de Diomède* vary in their senses as the story develops! The image of the cross, for instance, changes its meaning with each character: the ascetic life of anchorites in the opening scene, the material process of conflict and generation with Christine, the sad purity of Fanette's selfless heart, the sacrifice Cyran assigned on Cyrène for art, the burden of innocence with Néobelle. How marvellously the variation criticizes each character! Pound, who began to admire Gourmont in 1912, had to take time for creating poetry of critical intelligence, whose transitory consummation was "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" in 1920. Gourmont's table was too great a feast for Pound to digest at once.

Pound uses another of Gourmont's magical, Hermetic images in the "Yeux Glauques" ("Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," *Personae*, p. 192)¹³⁰ with his "Helen-of-Tyre"

theme. The narrator of a story, “Les Yeux d’Eau” in Gourmont’s *Histoires Magiques*, meets a woman whose eyes are “mi-glaucques et mi-violets, aigues-marines fondues en de pâles améthystes”¹³¹ Souls must have drowned themselves, believing that they are plunging into heaven, wrote Gourmont (“où que d’âmes avaient dû se noyer en croyant tomber dans le ciel!”).¹³² The quotation from Gourmont indicates precisely the source in “Trismegistus:”

And Nature, seeing the beauty of the form of God, smiled with insatiate love of Man, showing the reflection of that most beautiful form in the water, and its shadow on the earth. And he, seeing this form, a form like to his own, in earth and water, loved it, and willed to dwell there. And the deed followed close on the design. and he took up his abode in matter devoid of reason. And Nature, when she had got him with whom she was in love, wrapped him in her clasp, and they were mingled in one; for they were in love with one another.¹³³

She gives the impression of being a faded, care-worn woman, though still supple in body. Her mother had the same watery eyes, which dissolved into tears like two particles of ice when she died.¹³⁴ The woman is certainly the fallen beauty of the universal mind, being captivated by her own beauty reflected on the water of matter. Pound’s “Yeux Glaucques” clearly points out Gourmont’s passage, “mi-glaucques et mi-violets” for its source. Our poet meditated already in 1912 about such fallen beauty and wrote “Portrait d’une Femme.” The fallen *νοῦς* lives in the water of generation and matter with all the Idea active and intact though dispersed into phenomena, so that the poet addresses himself to her,

Your mind and you are our Sargasso Sea,
London has swept about you this score years . . . (*Persoane*, p. 61).

The empty life of a society woman is like the fallen *νοῦς* filled with “Ideas, old gossip, oddments of all things” (ibid.). People just fish up from there “Idols and ambergris and rare inlays” (ibid.), though she patiently and helplessly waits for her freedom without knowing herself waiting.

The eyes staring with the colour of water signifies not only the piteous appeal of the fallen beauty but also the more powerful appeal of the *νοῦς* for being rescued out of matter into the immortal state of images in art. Such was the violent power of Beatrice’s eyes for Dante that she “carries love with her eyes,”¹³⁵ awakening love where it does not exist, together with the power for art creation. For these eyes drove the Italian poet to his life-long pursuit of Beatrice, which image Gourmont interpreted to be the pursuit of beauty in poetry.¹³⁶ When Pound writes his encounter with Glaucus also,

. . . strange gleams shot through the grey-deep eyes
As though he saw beyond and saw not me.¹³⁷

Since *νοῦς* is male and female together,¹³⁸ we can count Pound's Glaucus a sort of *νοῦς*, arrested in the water and waiting for a poet's salvation. Pound must have known Keats' Glaucus rejoiced at the arrival of Endymion, a true poet who will resurrect poetry.¹³⁹

Pound's vortex, "Yeux Glauques," collects numerous ideas. "Thin like brook-water, / With a vacant gaze" (*Personae*, p. 192) they are waiting patiently. Reflecting the socio-political, literary and art scenes of the contemporary, Gladstone, Rossetti, Ruskin, Swinburne, Burne-Jones, Rubaiyat, these are particularly the eyes of "poor Jenny's" or of some such fallen beauties.¹⁴⁰ She has no artist-hero to save her with Pound's "chivalric love," being

Bewildered that a world
Shows no surprise
At her last maquero's
Adulteries (*Personae*, *ibid.*).

Yet is hidden in her eyes poetry in potentiality, for

The thin, clear gaze, the same
Still darts out faun-like from the half-ruined face (*ibid.*),

as if Pound's Glaucus or Rimbaud's faun¹⁴¹ were watching with their eternally fresh power of primary beings.

Did Pound accept entirely Gourmont's study of magic and alchemy of art? Although we cannot exaggerate Gourmont's influence on Pound, the answer is certainly no, for Gourmont's alchemy of art entirely depends on his identification of soul and body. Pound distorts this identification into his "osmosis of soul and body."¹⁴² "Osmosis" sounds as if soul and body were each autonomous and would retain their own essential qualities respectively even though they interpenetrate each other. This is not true. When Gourmont writes, "L'âme est un mode et le corps est un mode, mais indistincts et fondus,"¹⁴³ he means that both body and soul are Schopenhauer's representation as part of man's knowledge. Since in Gourmont's terms nothing can be proved as entity, representation can be called ideal, though body and soul belong together to the manifestation of "l'activité vitale . . . toutes nées d'une volonté unique, qui a des mystères, mais aussi des évidences."¹⁴⁴ Like Schopenhauer's will,¹⁴⁵ Gourmont's "volonté unique" defies any attempt of man's knowing, works through nature and body with its irrational, autonomous power, and attests at crucial moments that soul also is nothing but the activity of the mysterious will. While Cyran and Diomède have cooked up their mistaken idea of alchemy that out of the pleasure of body can be evaporated the arcane pleasure of soul, the will kills Fanette and Cyran in order to assert its own power. The mystery exists in Diomède's and Cyran's ideas and the evidence exists in the facts of deaths. Hence Gourmont's alchemy of art is forever treacherous. Learning that

Cyran is found dead with his painting brush at his fresco, Diomède justly understands that the stone of the wall has rejected the idea Cyran tried to inject in it. Because he could not hatch the philosopher's stone out of the cold, obstinate resistance of matter, Cyran's alchemy of art completely failed. Diomède's thought that soul is only the extension of matter is double-edged. It magically spiritualizes body, but materializes soul and deprives it of the immortality.

"My words are the unspoken words of my body,"¹⁴⁶ is the idea of Gourmont Pound treasured, for it helps the American poet to absorb all vital power of senses into images. Yet he just wonders whether all his visions are projections of his body:

Let us say quite simply that light is a projection from the luminous fluid, from the energy that is in the brain, down along the nerve cords which receive certain vibrations in the eye. Let us suppose man capable of exteriorizing a new organ, horn, halo, Eye of Horus. Given a brain of this power, comes the question, what organ, and to what purpose?¹⁴⁷

"Eye of Horus" means not only the soul of Osiris, for the resurrection of which the Egyptian god of the sun fought with Set the Destroyer,¹⁴⁸ but also the phenomenon in the sky that the sun and the moon make a certain straight line.¹⁴⁹ For Gourmont, these fantasies belong to illusory ideas forever to be corrected. Just as Pound protested Gourmont's empirical epistemology by claiming the creative faculty of imagination,¹⁵⁰ the American poet again saved such products of imagination by the wild hypothesis that all fantasies are arcane transfigurations of body, and by leaving vaguely the possibility for soul to go beyond the "osmosis." At the end of "The Translator's Postscript" to *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, Pound assumed three basic human activities: "digestive excretion, incarnation"¹⁵¹ (that is to shape the material into the forms of man's intellect) and the last one, the "merely imaginative."¹⁵²

Once in 1913 Pound was really alarmed and scared at the alchemy of art in Gourmontian terms when he wrote "A Song of the Degrees." I say Gourmontian alchemy, because the image of Mercury¹⁵³ he met at Soho in the original form of the poem,

an ugly little man
Carrying beautiful flowers,¹⁵⁴

resembles better than anyone else Gourmont, who enjoyed himself nightly with women, though suffering from leprosy, and who handles the image of delicate flowers with such "cool fingers of science."¹⁵⁵ This slippery Mercury can never be tamed, can never be subjected to Pound's demand of the alchemy of art, so that he screams:

Rest me with Chinese colours,
For I think the glass is evil (*Personae*, p. 95).

The glass means the alchemical glass as Hans-Joachim Zimmermann brightly interpreted.¹⁵⁶ Chinese colours are Chinese images Pound has just inherited from Fenollosa, for in 1914 he compared such good works of Homer, Sappho, Ibycus, Theocritus to the pure colours arranged on an Impressionist's palette and added "Undoubtedly pure color is to be found in Chinese poetry."¹⁵⁷ Pound dreams then,

The wind moves above the wheat—
With a silver crashing,
A thin war of metal (ibid.).

These images are prototypal, suggesting fertility, and Chinese as Zimmermann believes, though they are Hellenic,¹⁵⁸ too, because almost immediately after Pound read Fenollosa's MSS., he discovered in the Chinese images there his idea of Greece as the archetypally Western. "It is possible that this century may find a new Greece in China,"¹⁵⁹ wrote Pound in 1914. Actually Pound discovered the two kinds of the Prototypals for man's civilization and paralleled the Greek fertility rites and Chinese ones as "Kung and Eleusis" (53/272) in *The Cantos*.

Unlike the transparent Chinese images, the whirlpools in a Gourmontian alchemical glass are beautifully treacherous:

O glass subtly evil, O confusion of colours!
O light bound and bent in, O soul of the captive,
Why am I warned? Why am I sent away?
Why is your glitter full of curious mistrust?
O glass subtle and cunning, O powdery gold!
O filaments of amber, two-faced iridescence! (*Personae*, p. 95)

Gourmont's alchemy of art refuses both the release of *νοῦς* from matter and its rejection, balancing one with the other in a strictly equal proportion. The captive soul, *νοῦς*, and its light are caught again and bent into water. The "filament of amber," the deceptive catalyst meaning "two together,"¹⁶⁰ recalls the ambergris cast out of the whirlpool of the sea in "Portrait d'une Femme." "Two-faced iridescence" of course suggests the alchemical change which may happen to progress into the philosopher's stone or regress into putrefaction,¹⁶¹ but also suggests Gourmont's evasive argument in which neither the reality of body nor the ideality of the soul can be preserved.

Having exhausted Gourmont's help to complete his technique for *The Cantos*, in order to create the ideogramic method with "both Fenollosa on 'The Chinese Written Character,' and the paragraphs in *Le Problème du Style*,"¹⁶² Pound quietly left Gourmont after the translation of *The Natural Philosophy of Love* in 1922. Unlike the scientific and cool mentor who refused to believe in the philosopher's stone, Pound hatched it in Canto 17, with the gorgeous vision of Greek deities:

B. C. the figure of Hercules on the night sea journey in the vessel of the sun.¹⁶⁹ Lastly, a heroic soul honored by Osiris can be welcomed to the island of Elyseum in the sun. The elaborate motif, rich with the mythical associations, develops in rapidly shifting and sparkling images of Pound as if elements and forms were mixed in a glittering glass:

Midonz [my lady], with the gold of the sun, the leaf
of the poplar, by the light of the amber,
Midonz, daughter of the sun, shaft of the tree,
silver of the leaf, light of the yellow of the amber,
Midonz, gift of the God, gift of the light, gift of
the amber of the sun,

Give light to the metal

(*Personae*, p. 75).

Although Rimbaud's images are as well dispersed, intermixed as Pound's, even added with lyrical cries and sighs, the reader cannot miss how the poet dreams of the bright pasture of the idyllic peace like the Elyseum, "des oiseaux, des troupeaux, des villageoises,"¹⁷⁰ while he laments over the dark water of the Oise,

Au soir

L'eau des bois se perdait sur les sables vierges,
Le vent de Dieu jetait des glaçons aux mares;

Pleurant, je voyais de l'or—et ne pus boire.—¹⁷¹

Instead of Pound's voyage, Rimbaud's charming craftsmen build a ship, for the French poet is preparing for his voyage, "Je dus voyager, distraire les enchantements assemblés sur mon cerveau."¹⁷² As Pound prays to Venus, "Queen of Cypress" (*Personae*, p. 76) in "The Alchemist," Rimbaud offers his supplication to Venus to bless the workers,

O Reine des Bergers,
Porte aux travailleurs l'eau-de-vie,
Que leurs forces soient en paix
En attendant le bain dans la mer à midi.¹⁷³

Like Pound the alchemist, Rimbaud aspires towards the gold of the sun. Standing on the highest tower he calls for the time of ecstasy, "Le temps dont on s'éprenne,"¹⁷⁴ seeks to explode the material world and to burn the pieces with the fire of his *logos* into his internal sparkling gold of reason,

Enfin, ô bonheur, ô raison, j'écartai du ciel l'azur, qui est du noir, et
je vécus, étincelle d'or de la lumière *nature*.¹⁷⁵

Despite the themes of the two works so similar, it is hard to establish any direct

“influence” of Rimbaud’s on Pound here, except with a strange whirling of images which is unique in Pound’s pre-Vorticist poetry. The reader can hardly recognize the theme of “The Alchemist” in the poet’s swiftly turning of images, as if Pound literally followed the too celebrated advice of Rimbaud’s, “Le Poete se fait *voyant* par un long, immense et raisonné *dérèglement de tous les sens.*”¹⁷⁶ The “seer’s letter” was first published in *Nouvelle Revue Française* in 1912,¹⁷⁷ while Pound dated “The Alchemist” for the same year.¹⁷⁸ It is possible that Rimbaud’s “Alchimie du Verbe” worked for a catalyst when Pound wrote his most important theme in “The Alchemist,” because the theme of the poem is definitely the major theme of *The Cantos*, “Live man goes down into world of Dead.”¹⁷⁹

For Pound-Odysseus descends under the waves of the world of the Dead “unpierced ever / With glitter of sun-rays” (1/3), taking the “swart ship” of Osiris,¹⁸⁰ though the figure of the Egyptian sun’s boat  appears for the first time in Canto 91/612. The soul caught in the underworld parallels here with the *νοῦς* retained in the matter of water, from which the alchemist should deliver it with his skill. A hero’s voyage underworld also makes a fertility magic, for the dead is identified with Osiris the Egyptian grain god, resurrected by the hero’s devotion and adventure.¹⁸¹ Pound-Odysseus reaches the Elyseum in Canto 16, where they hear the voices of the dead in wars, where Pound-Odysseus, poet, hero and alchemist, conjures the glorious light of the internal sun,

The light now, not of the sun.
Chrysophrase,
And the water green clear, and blue clear . . . (17/76).

The green-clear water in the colour of Chrysophrase, “a semi-precious stone used in making jewelry,”¹⁸² is being hatched, not only with “Marble trunks of stillness” (ibid.) but also with “Bronze gold, the blaze over the silver” (17/78), because the green stone “Chrysophrase” includes within its womb gold (*Χρόσιτο*).¹⁸³

Out of Erebus, out of the flat waste of air, lying beneath the world;
Out of the brown leaf-brown colourless (*Personae*, p. 76),

Pound in “The Alchemist” prays to be rescued into “the imperceptible cool” (ibid.) of the air of Elyseum. Thirty-three years later in Canto 90/606, the same prayer is heard still, appealing to Isis-Kuanon,

out of Erebus, the deep-lying
from the wind under the earth,
M’elevasti [elevate me],

while “the blue serpent,” the physis (nature) of Trismegistus,¹⁸⁴ “glides from the rock pool” (90/607) for catching the soul again unless the grace of Isis helps. The alchemical, fertility-ritualistic and hero-mythical theme works constantly throughout *The Cantos*.

How Pound and Rimbaud enjoy together the same vision of freeing the radiant

intelligence out of the water of matter! Rimbaud's cry of joy rings in triumph at a successful resurrection,

Elle est retrouvée!
Quoi? l'éternité.
C'est la mer mêlée
Au soleil.¹⁸⁵

The sun shining over the morning waters constitutes not only the emblem of the freed $\nu\omicron\delta\varsigma$ but also Pound's picture of paradise,

What hast thou, O my soul, with paradise?

Will not our cult be founded on the waves,
Clear sapphire, cobalt, cyanine,
On triune azures, the impalpable
Mirrors unstill of the eternal change?
(“*Blandula, Tenella, Vagula,*” *Personae*, p. 39)

The three kinds of blues (triune azures), the sky, the air and the water in the sun, are forever freeing the radiant $\nu\omicron\delta\varsigma$ into the ineffable brightness just as the ancient Egyptians imagined they would on the morning of the resurrection of the dead. The two poets actually shared the acute joy of the bright moment that the Platonic essence seizes matter into form or separates itself from matter, and hence their common delight in metamorphoses. Rimbaud embraces the dawn metamorphosed into a goddess, and feels an ever slight touch of her immense body, “je l'ai entourée avec ses voiles amassés, et j'ai senti un peu son immense corps,”¹⁸⁶ in “Aube.” Pound under the mask of Malrin, who adored the reflection of dawn on the water as his lady, wrote “Aube of the West Dawn,” and embraces her “tremulous against her faint-flushed breast”¹⁸⁷ Both poets point out the Neo-Platonic intelligence, $\nu\omicron\delta\varsigma$, continuously descending into our material world. Pound meditates over Plotinus' divine fire of *logos* giving form to $\tilde{\nu}\lambda\eta$,¹⁸⁸ “Et omniformis,” Psellos, ‘omnis / ‘Intellectus est.’ God’s fire” (Canto 23/107),¹⁸⁹ recalling how M. Curie was burnt in his research of radiation (ibid.). Rimbaud envisions to himself how the universal intelligence, $\nu\omicron\delta\varsigma$, projects its ideas to man’s consciousness and how mankind collected part of them for knowledge, “L’intelligence universelle a toujours jeté ses idées, naturellement; les hommes ramassaient une partie de ces fruits du cerveau”¹⁹⁰

Like any really significant influence, Pound was slow and deliberate in accepting the impact of Rimbaud’s. *A Quinzaine for This Yule*, 1908, is dedicated “To the Aube of the West Dawn.”¹⁹¹ The theme of the poem is the very reflection of Rimbaud’s “Aube.” When he wrote “The Approach to Paris” (1913), Rimbaud was for Pound a difficult poet, whose charm glitters like a chemical, spattering light, “the oxidation of silver crystals.”¹⁹² The eulogic phrase itself suggests that Pound was

acutely aware of Rimbaud's alchemy of art. The enigmatic praise of "Villes" seen in the same article, that "a knowledge of them [works such as "Villes"] enables one to take the wind of many later sails,"¹⁹³ startles the reader, for in the prose poem there appears a series of revelations of Greek and Dionysian mythical figures, centaures, the birth of Venus, Diana's deer and Bacchic dancers in the midst of urban images rapidly moving, "Des chalets de cristal et de bois qui se meuvent sur des rails et des poulies invisibles."¹⁹⁴ We cannot miss here a source of Pound's Hellenic epiphanies in Canto 17. Rimbaud's systematic derangement of all senses reduces the world to the Dionysian melting pot from which a vision of mystical unity is born, emerged out of the helplessly torn and dispersed fragments of phenomena, just as Nietzsche experienced, "als ob der Schleier der Maja zerrissen wäre und nur noch in Fetzen vor dem geheimnisvollen Ur-Einen herumflattere."¹⁹⁵

Car il [a poet and seer] arrive à l'inconnu! Puisqu'il a cultivé son
 âme, déjà riche, plus qu'aucun! Il arrive à l'inconnu, et quand,
 affolé, il finirait par perdre l'intelligence de ses visions, il les a vues!¹⁹⁶

wrote Rimbaud in his seer's letter. Even though Rimbaud does not make clear what his visions are about, Pound interpreted these visions to be the epiphany of Greek, Dionysian deities, Pound's "eternal state of mind."¹⁹⁷ In Canto 2, when the American poet develops the images of metamorphoses all over the vast surface of the sea, when Acoetes, the priest of Bacchus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, III, worships Dionysus, Pound repeats Rimbaud's "il les a vues," almost literally,

And I worship.

I have seen what I have seen (2/9).

It is the Dionysian mysteries of metamorphoses, the creative power of Plotinus' and Trismegistus' *logos* that Pound believed Rimbaud had seen.

Since our American poet created his concept of *phanopoeia* on the basis of such power of *logos* while working through *A Draft of the First XXX Cantos*, his admiration of Rimbaud continued far beyond his Imagist and Vorticist period. In 1918, Pound counted Rimbaud among the "three chief and admirable poets,"¹⁹⁸ together with Corbière and Laforgue. For him Rimbaud was "a vivid and indubitable genius."¹⁹⁹ It was in 1929, when Pound wrote "How to Read," that he surprises us by declaring Rimbaud's works to be "*phanopoeia*"²⁰⁰ unique with "its clarity and directness."²⁰¹ Here for the first time Pound's "imagism" has achieved the metamorphosis into "*phanopoeia*" or poetry of light. Actually when Pound first classified poetry into three kinds in 1918, they were *melopoeia*, "imagism"²⁰² and *logopoeia*. Pound's Vorticism is associated with Plotinus and Trismegistus' divine fire which sparkles as the *logos* seizes and releases matter with its form, "For it is not fire which has to come to matter in order that it may become fire, but a forming principle,"²⁰³ wrote Plotinus. The listener of Trismegistus

observes the very moment that the male form covers the female matter, “. . . from the Light there came forth a holy Word [λόγος], which took its stand upon the watery substance; and methought this Word was the voice of the Light.”²⁰⁴ Pound the Vorticist saw the λόγος send down form into matter in the falling sunshine, and in the spatter of fire over the ripples as he whirls the images in his Vorticist poem of “Three Cantos,” 1917,

Lo Soleils plovil [the sun rains],
As Arnaut had it in th' inextricable song.
The very sun rains and a spatter of fire
Darts from the “Lydian” ripples; “locus undae,” as Catullus,
“Lydiae”²⁰⁵

Here is “The ‘magic moment’ or moment of metamorphosis,”²⁰⁶ which Pound declares to be one of the three major themes of *The Cantos* in 1927. *Phanopoeia* means the poetry to shape this magic moment sharp-cut, radiant and clear. Here is the very core of Pound’s poetry and the very core of his magic of art. It was a sincere tribute that Pound defined Rimbaud as a poet of *phanopoeia*: “In Rimbaud the image stands clean, unencumbered by non-functioning word; to get anything like this directness of presentation one must go back to Catullus”²⁰⁷ Rimbaud’s “Prince”²⁰⁸ cuts any image clear and sharp-edged, and his derangement of senses shows the mystical unity of *logos* burning transparent.

Pound was particularly eloquent in acknowledging his indebtedness to Jules Laforgue, probably because Laforgue struck him with just one quality which Pound himself lacked and which is not essential for his poetry. In 1917, Pound discovered in Laforgue a rare unity of poet and critic without Gourmont’s thorough skepticism,

He [Laforgue] is an incomparable artist. He is, nine-tenths of him, critic—dealing for the most part with literary poses and *clichés*, taking them as his subject matter; and—and this is the important thing when we think of him as a poet—he makes them a vehicle for the expression of his own very personal emotions, of his own unperturbed sincerity.²⁰⁹

Pound had not read Laforgue when he wrote “The Approach to Paris” in 1913.²¹⁰ Charmed by this unique minor Symbolist when he was still struggling with the beginning of *The Cantos*, he was not interested at all in Laforgue’s subject. The cosmic sorrow with the fin-de-siècle mood of conventional symbolism belongs to an immediate past unworthy to take up for Pound’s sense of history. Unlike Eliot, Pound never shared Laforgue’s irresistible sense that the world had treacherously succumbed to utter meaninglessness. As Pound ignored Gourmont’s Schopenhauerian metaphysics, so he ignored Laforgue’s fundamental idea of Hartmann’s “L’Inconscient,” a metaphysical,

irrational power that blindly objectifies itself mechanically.²¹¹ Laforgue created a favorite image of Pierrot for a ridiculous, laughable human existence, being toyed with by the Unconscious, the metaphysical evil that will never release man free. Frightened and in despair, the pierrots choose to sing and dance in the moonlight, which transparency brightens the blank senselessness of the Unconscious,

Blancs enfants de coeur de la Lune,
Et lunologues éminents,
Leur Eglise ouvre à tout venant,
Claire d'ailleurs comme pas une.²¹²

If we are moved at such magnificent jest to laugh at the unique, metaphysical despair, Pound's understanding that Laforgue deals for the most part with literary poses sounds very curious. Yet he read Laforgue entirely for filling his own lack of critical intelligence and irony in poetry.

If we read Laforgue to find literary *clichés* everywhere, we can not but enjoy his superb poses to play literary gestures with ever so slight an exaggeration for criticizing them. Take for example the scene a lonely man is listening to the piano from a young ladies' boarding school, which Pound quoted in "French Poets," 1918. The poem ends with an imitation of the piano rhythm and the supposed sigh of a young lady playing,

«Tu t'en vas et tu nous laisses,
Tu nous laiss's et tu t'en vas.
Que ne suis-je morte à la messe!
O mois, ô linges, ô repas!»²¹³

The last line will evoke laughters even among non-French speakers, though they understand well enough the entirely irresistible domination of ennui is the motif here, so trivial and therefore adamantly invincible. Sometimes Laforgue could write a whole poem suggesting with perfect irony that he means exactly the reversal of what he states. Pound quotes from "Complainte de Bon Ménage," sighing with honest wonder, "What in heaven's name is the man in the street to make of this . . . !" ²¹⁴

L'Art sans poitrine m'a trop longtemps bercé dupe.
Si ses labours sont fiers, que ses blés décevants!
Tiens, laisse-moi bêler tout aux plis de ta jupe
Qui fleure le couvent.

Le Génie avec moi, serf, a fait des manières;
Toi, jupe, fais frou-frou, sans t'inquiéter pourquoi,
Sous l'oeillet bleu de ciel de l'unique théière,
Sois toi-même, à part moi.²¹⁵

The sustained irony balances so skilfully between the two claims: of the faithfully at-

tracting wife who symbolizes the triteness of commercial designs flooding our daily life, and of the vaguely dissatisfied husband who symbolizes art. Stifled underneath with the empty charm the husband can not separate himself from the comfort, while the wife's sweeping frilled skirts and ingenious teapot reveal him just a bit of the sky (oeillet) which is metamorphosed into a flower of carnation for a pun. The wavering emotion makes each line delicately ironical, as the narrator's sympathy tilts to one way or the other.

Pound had no such skill in irony whatever when he translated Laforgue's "Pierrots" in 1917. Compare the first stanza of the original poem with Pound's translation,

Il me faut, vos yeux! Dès que je perds leur étoile,
 Le mal des calmes plats s'engouffre dans ma voile,
 Le frisson du *Vae soli*! gargouille en mes moelles . . . [sic.],²¹⁶

Your eyes! Since I lost their incandescence
 Flat calm engulphs my jibs,
 The shudder of *Vae soli* gurgles beneath my ribs (*Personae*, p. 247).

Since the whole theme of the poem is a lovers' quarrel and reconciliation, "Le mal des calmes plats" is an irony which Pound missed completely. The storm of the quarrel makes one evil, but the calm is only another. The motif of the eye as the divine *νοῦς* is used even here, yet Pound's change of the star of the eye (étoile) into the electric bulb of incandescence is just too intense, and upsets the delicate proportion between the two evils of her presence and her absence. Not only Pound lost the image of voyage in the first stanza but also killed Laforgue's marvellous joke, "Oui, divins, ces yeux! mais rien n'existe / Derrière! Son âme est affaire d'oculiste."²¹⁷ The glittering "incandescence" can not be properly balanced with Laforgue's soft anti-climax. Pound in 1917 was still puzzled at "the mystery why such force should reside in so fragile a book, why such power should coincide with so great a nonchalance of manner."²¹⁸

"Laforgue is an angel with whom our modern poetic Jacob must struggle,"²¹⁹ wrote Pound in 1918. "Homage to Sextus Propertius" (1919) reveals how successfully the struggle ended. In contrast with Pound's earlier translation from Propertius' *Elegiae*, III, 26 (1911), "Homage," IX, 2, certainly impresses us with each line evoking diverse tastes of implied and reversed meanings,

Persephone and Dis, Dis, have mercy upon her,
 There are enough women in hell,
 quite enough beautiful women,
 Iope, and Tyro, and Pasiphae, and the formal girls of Achaia,
 And out of Troad, and from the Campania,
 Death has his tooth in the lot,
 Avernus lusts for the lot of them,

Beauty is not eternal, no man has perennial fortune,
Slow foot, or swift foot, death delays but for a season (*Personae*, p. 223).

Pound's earlier translation, "Prayer for His Lady's Life," is an honest supplication for the poet's lady sick in bed,

Here let thy clemency, Persephone, hold firm,
Do thou, Pluto, bring here no greater harshness.
So many thousand beauties are gone down to Avernus,
Ye might let one remain above with us.

With you is Iope, with you the white-gleaming Tyro,
With you is Europa and the shameless Paiphae,
And all the fair from Troy and all from Achaia . . . (*Personae*, p. 38).²²⁰

How is this simple prayer transformed into the ironic satire of the later version? The metamorphosis comes when Pound juxtaposed "Persephone and Dis" together in the very beginning. Like so many beauties in the underworld now, Persephone herself is now married to Pluto (Dis), appearing treacherous and unworthy to trust the life on the earth. Other beautiful ladies in Avernus (the underworld) look equally unreliable because they are merely shadows of Persephone, now the Queen of the Dead. The supplication, "You might let one remain above with us," is gone in the later version, for the translator realizes the ridiculousness of asking Persephone such a mercy. Naturally Propertius' lady is implied to be as treacherous as Persephone or other beauties in hell, and the whole passage is made a satire on the ephemerality of beauty and woman's frailty. For a few years' struggle Pound could be proud of his achievement.

Pound called Laforgue's kind of poetry in irony and critical intelligence "*logopoeia*" and defined it to be "the dance of the intellect among words."²²¹ Sullivan wrote a more elaborate definition. "I suggest then that *logopoeia* is a refined mode of irony which shows itself in a certain linguistic ways . . . magniloquence can be deployed *against* magniloquence, vulgarity *against* vulgarity, and poeticism *against* poeticizing."²²² "Mauberley, 1920" includes the greatest achievement of Pound's *logopoeia*, where images merely hard without evoking Vorticist multiple meanings, ideal and otherwise, are deployed for the purpose of criticizing them. Particularly the last section, "Medallion," puzzles the reader with gently ridiculous images as a parody of Laforgue's moon and piano poems.

Luini in porcelain!
The great piano
Utters a profane
Protest with her clear soprano.
. . . .
The face-oval beneath the glaze,

Bright in its suave bounding-line, as,
Beneath half-watt rays,
The eyes turn topaz (*Personae*, p. 204).

The literary poses at each line sound witty and enjoyable, but collected, they present no theme whatever. "Medallion" is a unique masterpiece to show in poetry how not to write poetry. The standard of sophistication is rare in addition to the uniqueness of the genre of poetry for literary criticism which Pound invented under the influence of Gourmont and Laforgue.

I hope this paper has proved that Pound's poetry is an heir of Symbolism even as Valéry's or Paul Claudel's works are, especially in the period of its growth. Early in the career, he shared with Mallarmé his vision of the Ideal, his hermetic magic of art, his idealization with the music of language and even his interest in Egyptian Mysteries, though he acquired these qualities from sources other than Mallarmé. Not being directly under Mallarmé's influence, Pound shrewdly realized Mallarmé's symbols are caught in the blind alley, that they tend to be mere signs when communicating their meanings, even though they indicate the unreality of the Ideal. Under the aegis of Gourmont's identifying body and soul, Pound created images which can simultaneously communicate sense experiences and evoke the complicated suggestions of meanings, Ideal, emotional and even critical. Thus he released Mallarmé's symbols over the infinite flux of consciousness. On the other hand, Pound had to rescue his evocation of the Ideal from Gourmont's utter destructive skepticism. Correcting the defects of Mallarmé, Pound created the three kinds of poetry, *melopoeia*, *phanopoeia* and *logopoeia*, which reveal Symbolists' major heritage: their cultivation of the resources of language even to the exquisiteness in sound and image, their Platonic vision and their acute intelligence.

Closer to Pound than any other Symbolist, however, was Rimbaud, whereas Laforgue influenced the American poet precisely because he stood farthest away from him. Essentially Pound's poetry seizes in images the very moment that Plotinus' *νοῦς* or Trismegistus' *λόγος* sends down form on to matter. The rational form is simultaneously rescued out of matter in the Vorticist's reducing the phenomena to the whirl of rudimentary energy and mystical unity of all existence. Rimbaud practiced this kind of poetry with his fragmentation and clear-cut image so that Pound could trace it up to the original magic of Trismegistus for creating *phanopoeia*. Lastly Pound discovered that Laforgue's irony is the ideal resource for him to absorb Gourmont's critical intelligence in poetry. When Pound met Eliot in 1914, he reported to Harriet Monroe that Eliot had "actually trained himself *and* modernized himself *on his own*."²²³ To modernize himself means for Pound to study the achievements of French Symbolists together with other important works in the West, *and* modernize them. Eliot started with Laforgue, absorbed his influence into his own irony and the loose blank verse of the late Elizabethan dramatic poetry. Pound's modernization of poetry demanded such Herculean labour of advancing Symbolists' works and no less.

NOTES

1. "The Serious Artist," 1913, rpt. *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p. 45.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
3. *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1971), p. 449. Subsequent quotations from *The Cantos* refer to this text.
4. When Bonamy Dobrée asked Eliot the significance of the rose in his poems, Eliot replied, "There are really three roses in the set of poems; the sensuous rose, the socio-political Rose (always appearing with a capital letter) and the spiritual rose: and the three have got to be in some way identified as one." Eliot is reported to have worn a white rose on the anniversary of Bosworth in memory of "the last English king," Richard III. Helen Gardner, *The Composition of Four Quartets* (London & Boston: Faber and Faber, 1978), p. 137 and p. 209.
5. It is simply for the limitation of time that I have to spare the rest of the interesting poets that Pound discussed in "The Approach to Paris" (1913), Jules Romains, Charles Vildrac, Francis Jammes, Henri de Regnier, Tristan Corbière and Laurent Tailhade. In 1980, when Prof. Junnosuke Sawazaki invited me to speak in the Symposium of "French Symbolism and America," given at the 52nd National Meeting of English Literature Society in Japan, I enjoyed very stimulating discussions with the other speakers. Since this paper is based on my presentation then, I sincerely acknowledge, besides Prof. Sawazaki, Profs. Hisao Kanazeki, Kōshi Kawamoto and other discussers for challenging me with very interesting ideas and questions.
6. "Mauberley 1920," II, "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," *Personae: The Collected Shorter Poems of Ezra Pound*, 1926, rpt. (New York: New Directions, 1971), p. 200. Subsequent quotations will refer to this book with *Personae* and pagination in parentheses.
7. "Prose pour des Esseintes," *Oeuvres Complètes*, textualized by Henri Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry (Paris: La Pleiade, 1974), pp. 56-57. Abbreviated as *O. C.* hereafter. [The era of authority is troubled when without any motif one says about this south where our double Unconscious deepens, when one says that the sun of the hundred irises (the irises know if the site has well existed) does not bear the name that the gold of the trumpet of Summer cites . . . Glory of my long desire, Ideas, everything in me exulted to see the family of irises arise to this new duty . . . The child quits her ecstasy, and learned already in the course, she utters the word: Resurrection! born for some eternal parchment. Before a sepulchre hidden by the too great gladiolus laughs in some climate which is its ancestor and bears this name of Beauty!]
8. *O. C.*, p. 368. "When I say: 'a flower!' then from that forgetfulness to which my voice consigns all floral form, something different from the usual calyces arises, something all music, essence, and softness: the flower which is absent from all bouquets." *Selected Prose Poems, Essays and Letters*, tr. Bradford Cook. *The Modern Tradition*, eds. Richard Ellmann & Charles Feidelson, Jr. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 112.
9. "Solennité," *O. C.*, p. 333. [thousand elements of beauty pressed to run up and to order themselves in their essential value.]
10. Guy Michaud collected various interpretations of this woman, Méry Laurent or personifications of some ideas, the conscious, the unconscious, patience, poetic expression, the Muse, the poet's child soul, the poet's image or his double. See Michaud, *Mallarmé*, rev. ed. (Paris: Hatier, 1971), pp. 126-127.
11. Michaud' interpretation is, "Lève-toi! dit-elle au poète en semblant, non sans quelque humour, l'appeler par son nom. Ressuscite, fais surgir, de cette absence de tout le monde idéal par la seule vertu de la création poétique. Fixe-le dans le grimoire, en d'éternels parchemins." *Ibid.*, p. 129.

12. Jean-Pierre Richard's interpretation. See Richard, *L'Univers Imaginaire de Mallarmé* (Paris, Seuil, 1961), p. 401.
13. See "Magie," *O. C.*, pp. 399-400 and "Sur L'Évolution Littéraire," *O. C.*, p. 870. The editors of *Oeuvres Complètes* calls "Prose pour des Esseintes" Mallarmé's *Ars Poetica*, the very process of making his symbols. See *O. C.*, p. 1473.
14. "Remy de Gourmont: A Distinction," *Make It New* (London: Faber and Faber, 1934), p. 314.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 310. Richard Sieburth spent one whole chapter on the function of love for poetic creation in his study of Pound and Gourmont, *Instigations*, 1978.
16. John Espey points out the source of this word, "diastasis" in Poliziano's "La Giostra." See *Ezra Pound's Mauberley: A Study in Composition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955), pp. 71-72.
17. "... e passando per una via, volse li occhi verso quella parte ov' io era molto pauroso . . ." *Opere Minori, Dante Alighieri*, ed. Alberto del Monte (Milano, Rizzoli, 1960), p. 155. "And passing through a street, she turned her eyes thither where I stood sorely abashed . . ." *La Vita Nuova*, translated and illustrated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London: George Routledge & Sons, [n.d.]), p. 12.
18. See *Dante, Beatrice et la Poésie Amoureuse* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1908), p. 19. Though Pound did not mention this book in "Remy de Gourmont: A Distinction," the poet's voyage to Paradise in *The Cantos* parallels Gourmont's interpretation of *Commedia*, that is, a Platonic ascent to the heavenly beauty, symbolized in Dante's case by Beatrice, and by Isis in Pound's. See Gourmont, p. 67.
19. See *Metamorphoses*, VII, 782-799. Pound quotes the corresponding line for the epigraph of "Mauberley 1920," I, "Vacuos exercet in aera morsus." *Personae*, p. 198.
20. Vienna, May 1928. *The Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907-1941*, ed. D. D. Paige (London: Faber and Faber, 1951), p. 294. Hence Taupin inferred that Pound "n'a pas lu la lourde littérature symboliste." *L'Influence du Symbolisme Français sur la Poésie Américaine* (de 1910 à 1920) (1929; rpt.; Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1975), p. 140. [Symbol? I have never read "the ideas of symbolists" on this subject.]
21. "A Few Don'ts," 1912. *Literary Essays*, p. 4.
22. "Vorticism," *Fortnightly Review*, XCVI (1 Sept. 1914), p. 463.
23. *Ibid.*
24. To René Taupin, *Letters*, p. 295.
25. See "Notes on Language and Style," *The Criterion*, III, no. 12 (July 1925), 487-90.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 490.
27. "Magic," 1901. rpt. *Essays and Introductions* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 50. See also A. G. Lehmann, *The Symbolist Aesthetic in France, 1885-1895* (2d. ed.; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968) pp. 281-282. The present writer's underscore.
28. Mallarmé's definition of symbols reads: "Signe! au gouffre central d'une spirituelle impossibilité que rien soit exclusivement à tout, le numérateur divin de notre apothéose . . ." "Solennité," *O. C.*, p. 333. If the poet's genius is the denominator, which works on everything arounds him, it will create a system of signs to evoke the Ideal World of the numerator. See Paula Gilbert Lewis, *The Aesthetics of Stéphane Mallarmé in Relation to His Public* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; Lonson: Associated University Press, 1976), p. 112.
29. See "Symbolism in Painting," 1898, prt. *Essays and Introductions*, pp. 146-147.
30. *O. C.*, p. 57.
31. Michaud, p. 77.
32. See Leon Surette, *A Light from Eleusis* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1979) and Akiko Miyake, "The Greek-Egyptian Mysteries in Pound's 'The Little Review Calendar' and in Cantos 1-7," *Paideuma*, VII, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring & Fall 1978), 73-111.

33. "Crise de Vers," *O. C.*, p. 366. "The inner structure of a book of verse must be inborn; in this way, chance will be totally eliminated . . ." *The Modern Tradition*, p. 111.
34. *O. C.*, p. 438. [I would love to re-enter in my shadow uncreated and prior, and to strip by the thought the disguise which the necessity has imposed me, by occupying the heart of this race (which I hear beating now), the only remainder of ambiguity.] Concerning the descent into the race memory, see Michaud, pp. 91 ff.
35. Michaud, p. 62.
36. "Crise de Vers." *O. C.*, p. 365. "The poet must establish a careful relationship between two images, from which a third element, clear and fusible, will be distilled and caught by our imagination." *The Modern Tradition*, p. 110.
37. "French Poets," 1918. *Make It New*, p. 231.
38. *Letters*, p. 295.
39. "Vorticism," p. 463.
40. "La Musique et les Lettres," *O. C.*, p. 644. [modulation . . . individual, for all soul is a rhythmic node.]
41. The change comes in *The Unicorn from the Stars* (1908), when Yeats realizes the vacuity where God should be. Martin after seeing a vision speaks, "We must put out the light of the stars and the light of the sun and the light of the moon, till we have brought everything to nothing once again . . . Where there is nothing, where there is nothing—there is God!" *The Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats* (2d. ed.; London: Macmillan, 1952), pp. 381–382.
42. "Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui," *O. C.*, p. 67. [the transparent freezing of flights which have not escaped.]
43. "Credo" in "A Retrospect" (1918). *Literary Essays*, p. 9.
44. "Vorticism," p. 463.
45. "His true Penelope was Flaubert . . ." "E. P. Ode pour l'Élection de Son Sepulchre," "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," *Personae*, p. 187.
46. K. K. Ruthven finds the title in the *Vita Nuova*, at Dante's first sight of Beatrice, "Apparuit jam beatitudo vestra." *Vita Nuova, Opere Minori*, p. 154. Ruthven, *A Guide to Ezra Pound's Personae* (1926) (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 38. Rossetti's translation of the Latin sentence is "Your beatitude hath now been made manifest unto you." Rossetti, p. 10. Though Pound's poem alludes to *Vita Nuova*, Mallarmé should be considered as one of many sources, for Beatrice's appearance does not take place at night. W. G. Regier refers to late night visitation of Isis in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. See Regier, "The Allusive Fabric of 'Apparuit,'" *Paideuma*, IX, no. 2 (Fall 1980), p. 320.
47. *O. C.*, p. 30. [When with the sun on the hair, on the street and in the evening, you have appeared laughing to me, and I have believed to see the fairy wearing a hat of light which once passed in my lovely slumber of spoiled childhood, out of her hands loosely closed dropping white bouquets of perfumed stars continuously, like snow.]
48. René Taupin found the influence of Gourmont's "Litanies" in the rhythm of this poem. See Taupin, p. 142.
49. Regier found "Apparuit" has virtually perfect, Sapphic form. See Regier, p. 322.
50. "Vorticism," p. 463.
51. See Hugh Witemeyer, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal, 1908–1920* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 83.
52. Ruthven, p. 187.
53. *O. C.*, p. 33. [In their glass, washed by eternal dews, which the pure morning of eternity taints with gold I reflect myself and see me an angel!]
54. *Ibid.* [—How the glass would be the art, would be mysteriousness—]
55. See Thomas Taylor, *The Eleusian and Bacchic Mysteries: A Dissertation* (4th ed.; New York: J. W. Bouton, 1891), p. 191. Though Carroll F. Terrell and myself agree that Pound used this book, it is hard to prove that Pound knows about this Dionysian mirror

- as early as 1908. Yet Dionysian Mysteries already aroused Pound's interest in 1908. Witness Pound's "Salve O Pontifex!" collected in *A Lume Spento*, 1908. *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, ed. Michael John King (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p. 40. There Pound called Swinburne "High Priest of Iacchus."
56. See "Note Precedent to 'La Fraisine,'" where the poet quoted from *The Book of the Dead*, "I, lo I, am the assembler of souls." *A Lume Spento*. King, p. 8. "Luminous detail" is discussed in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," *New Age*, 7 December 1911. *Ezra Pound: Selected Prose, 1909-1965*, ed. William Cookson (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), p. 21.
 57. Pound told N. Christoph de Nagy that Gourmont was his "literary influence" which liberated him from "what has been a 'traditional symbolism' with fixed values attached to symbols." *Ezra Pound's Poetics and Literary Tradition* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1966), p. 76.
 58. Karl-D. Uitti wrote that Gourmont was the most learned man in Paris of his day. See *La Passion Littéraire de Remy de Gourmont* (Princeton, N. J.: Department of Romance Language, Princeton University; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), p. 56.
 59. Nagy, p. 72 and p. 118. The author confirmed the date in communication with Pound himself and H. D.
 60. *Le Problème du Style* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1924), pp. 31-32. Pound quotes the last sentence in "French Poets," 1918. See *Make It New*, p. 328. [A writer has to care, when he writes, neither his masters nor even his style. If he sees, if he senses, he will say something . . . The style is to sense, to see, to think and nothing more.]
 61. *Le Problème du Style*, p. 40.
 62. "Le style est une spécialisation de la sensibilité." *Ibid.*, p. 41.
 63. *Le Liore des Masques* (10th ed.; Paris: Mercure de France, 1917), I, 11-12.
 64. *Ibid.* [I do not see what exists; what exists is what I see.]
 65. Remy de Gourmont, *Decadence*, tr. William Aspenwall Bradley (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1921), p. 230.
 66. "In der That gehört Abwesenheit alles Zieles, aller Grenzen, zum Wesen des Willens an sich, der ein endloses Streben ist." *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, II, 29 (Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1961), p. 195.
 67. *La Culture des Idées* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1916), p. 63. [The most fruitful observations are those which one has made without knowing it; to live without thinking of life is often the best means to learn to know the life.]
 68. *Ibid.*, p. 66. [. . . let the waves rush toward the world, renovated by the sensations which they owe to the world.]
 69. *Le Chemin de Velours* (Paris: Société de Mercure de France, 1902), p. 13.
 70. *La Culture des Idées*, p. 89.
 71. *Le Chemin de Velours*, pp. 10-11.
 72. *Le Problème du Style*, p. 69. [The senses are the unique gate by which has entered all that which lives in the spirit.]
 73. *Ibid.*, p. 34. [The visual memory and the emotive memory reign balanced in the same brain.] If Gourmont meant merely "sensoriel" or "idéo-émotif" writers can exist, certainly the classification is "overly reductionist and remain the weakest aspect of Gourmont's theory of style," as Richard Sieburth believes. *Instigations: Ezra Pound and de Gourmont* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 60. The real difficulty of understanding Gourmont is that he always counterbalances one brilliant idea with another.
 74. *Ibid.*, p. 54. The idea-emotion is always hallucinatory, given from the exterior world only an image fantastic, vain and inapt for reacting frankly on the physiology. As a student of the technique of poetry, Pound was really moved by reading, "Une idée n'est qu'une sensation défraîchie, une image effacée; raisonner avec des idées, c'est assembler et combiner, en une laborieuse mosaïque, des cubes décolorés, devenus presque indiscernables . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 69. Sieburth notes that Pound heavily marked this passage of his copy. See

- Sieburth, p. 62.
75. "A Few Don'ts," 1913. *Literary Essays*, p. 4.
 76. *Le Problème du Style*, p. 69.
 77. Ibid., p. 91. [It is impossible for us to dissociate the double and triple images which are born simultaneously into the idea of a fact within our brains troubled by the tumultuous sensations]
 78. Ibid., p. 125. [To imagine is to associate images and fragments of image; it is never to create.] Sieburth called this epistemology of Gourmont, "Lockean sensualism" (p. 64). Yet the name of Locke and Sieburth's general association of Gourmont and eighteenth-century philosophers are misleading. The eighteenth-century empiricism and Gourmont differ definitely, for the former assumed the possibility of understanding the object intellectually while Gourmont certainly does not. Schopenhauer's influence on French Symbolists (Lehmann, pp. 55 ff) and on Gourmont (Uitti, pp. 66 ff) is curiously ignored by Sieburth.
 79. Sieburth, p. 63.
 80. "Dans ma jeunesse j'avais peut-être quelqu'idée reçue du moyen âge. Dante, St. Victor, dieu sait qui, des modifications via Yeats" Letter to René Taupin, *Letters*, p. 294.
 81. *Richardi a Sancto Victore: Opera Omnia*, Patrologia Latina, CICVI, ed. U.-P. Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1880), pp. 10-11. See also Clare Kirchberger, tr. *Richard of Saint-Victor: Selected Writing on Contemplation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p. 95.
 82. Joseph Ebner, *Die Erkenntnislehre Richards von St. Viktor* (Münster: Verlag der Aschendorfschen Buchhandlung, 1917), p. 62.
 83. *The Spirit of Romance*, 1910. rpt. (New York: New Directions, 1968), p. 140.
 84. See *ibid.*
 85. "A Few Don'ts," 1930. *Literary Essays*, p. 3.
 86. *Le Problème du Style*, p. 129. [To particularize means to take an idea in what was real and only an anecdote.]
 87. *Benjamin Major, Opera Omnia*, p. 67. "But nevertheless contemplation always deals with things, either manifested according to their nature or known intimately by study or made clear by revelation." Kirchberger, p. 137.
 88. "ship-destroying and city-destroying," Aeschylus' puns on the name of Helen in *Agamemnon*. *A Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, Carroll F. Terrell (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), p. 5.
 89. "Thus I saw Helen." *Inferno*, V, 64. *A Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, p. 83.
 90. Pound's "Prefatory Note" to "The Complete Poetical Works of T. E. Hulme," *Repostes*, 1912. *Personae*, p. 251. As it is well known, S. F. Flint wrote "The History of Imagism" (*The Egoist*, II, no. 5, 1915) and ascribed the source of Imagism to Hulme's theory.
 91. At the First National Meeting of Fenollosa Society in Japan, September 1980, I was amazed that such alleged "contribution" of Fenollosa to Imagism was accepted by some Japanese scholars. One took pains to prove that Fenollosa's MSS. were given to Pound as early as 1911, which is however impossible to decide at the present stage. Unfortunately the diary of Mrs. Fenollosa preserved in the City Museum of Mobile, Alabama, has a hiatus in these particular years.
 92. *The Spirit of Romance*, p. 94.
 93. Though Pound does not mention Richard of St. Victor in this passage the present writer interpreted the definite article in "the monk" to indicate Pound's favorite contemplator he treasured all his life.
 94. *The Spirit of Romance*, p. 91.
 95. Pound added in 1916 a note about G. R. S. Mead's lecture on Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre to the passage quoted above. See *The Spirit of Romance*, *ibid.* Concerning Simon Magus, Leon Surette discusses in his excellent book, *A. Light from Eleusis*, pp. 60-61.

96. See *Hermetica: The Ancient Greek and Latin Writings Which Contain Religious or Philosophical Teachings Ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus*, ed. Walter Scott (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924), pp. 121–123. The passage in question is quoted in p. 48 of this paper.
97. See Carl G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, tr. R. F. C. Hull (2d. ed.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), II, 317–339.
98. See *Hermetica*, pp. 121–123.
99. “Ficino was seized in his youth by Cosimo dei Medici and set to work translating a Greek that was in spirit anything but ‘classic.’ That is to say, you had, ultimately, a ‘Platonic’ academy messing up Christian and Pagan mysticism, allegory, occultism, demonology, Trismegistus, Psellus, Porphyry, into a most eloquent and exciting and exhilarating hotch-potch, which ‘did for’ the mediaeval fear of the *dies irae* and for human abasement generally. Ficino himself writes of Hermes Trismegistus in a New Testament Latin, and arranges his chronology by co-dating Hermes’ great-grandfather with Moses.” “Affirmations,” *New Age*, February 11th, 1915. *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir*, 1916, rpt. (New York: New Directions, 1970), p. 112.
100. Pound’s note in 1916 to *The Spirit of Romance*, p. 91.
101. *The Spirit of Romance*, p. 94.
102. “Remy de Gourmont,” *Fortnightly Review*, XCVIII (Dec. 1 1915), 1160.
103. The Sixth International Pound Conference, August 21–24, 1980, The University of Maine at Orono. Though I had already discussed Pound’s use of alchemy in “The Alchemist” in reference to Rimbaud’ “Alchimie du Verbe,” in May, 1980, at the National Meeting of English Literature Association in Japan, I had been troubled for many years with “A Song of the Degrees,” unable to find any possible clue for interpretation. Prof. Zimmermann’s work, so amazingly clear, enabled me to work out this present study of various Symbolists and Pound particularly in the aspect of the alchemy of art.
104. *Les Chevaux de Diomède* (7th ed.; Paris: Mercure de France, [n.d.]), pp. 13–14. [. . . a pilgrim who went to kneel in the solitude of the new devastations, to plant between Rome and the barbarians the rampart of a wooden cross. One departed, inebriated still with a rose too passionately breathed.]
105. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 39. [The art desires that the naked women should be ornate with a belt.]
107. *Ibid.*, p. 41. [If beasts come, I climb a tree, and if I am eaten, why, what do you want, Diomède? Are all my malicious little sisters not eaten, too, one day or another?]
108. *Ibid.*, p. 43. [Out of these delights is born the spiritual rapture.]
109. *Ibid.*, p. 156. [I transform. I make the bodies light out of all their materiality; I make of them clouds, vapour, dreams, souls . . . To make light and extend and obtain frail and transparent beings.]
110. *Ibid.*, p. 157. [Where will she find the force of self-renunciation? In her tenderness for you.]
111. *Ibid.*, p. 107. [. . . a swan which out of the depth of water comes back and shakes its flexible and white neck.]
112. *Ibid.*, pp. 116–117. [What a creature of love! All nation, men and women, would kneel at her passing.]
113. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 176. [The bush of roses was shaken as by a tempest and all the red little roses fell on the sand in a rain of blood.]
115. *Ibid.*, p. 61. [The body is only the visible manifestation of the soul, thus exteriorized according to its possibility of creating the matter . . .]
116. *Ibid.*, pp. 223–224. [The people, that is, all men, believe eternally in the magic . . . There is a magic of the Pope, a magic of State and a popular magic . . . they are only one and the same cameleon varied in colours, unique in name: the Faith.]

117. *Diomède*, p. 249.
118. "Remy de Gourmont: A Distinction," 1918, rpt. *Make It New*, p. 311.
119. "Remy de Gourmont," *Fortnightly Review*, p. 1160.
120. *Diomède*, p. 65.
121. See Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), p. 336.
122. *Diomède*, p. 63. [a large humblebee all in velvet, which forces itself and disappears in a little bell of digitalis.]
123. See "Translator's Postscript" to *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, tr. Ezra Pound from Gourmont's *Physique de l'Amour* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922), pp. 206-207.
124. See Gourmont's argument about copulation and the development of the brain in *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, p. 75.
125. "'The male,' says Aristotle, in his Treatise on Generation, 'represents the specific form, the female, the matter.'" *Ibid.*, p. 85.
126. "Translator's Postscript," p. 207.
127. *Hermetica*, pp. 117-119.
128. Ficino's interpretation of Porphyry's *De Occasionibus*. See *A Companion to The Cantos*, p. 17.
129. See "Vorticism," *Fortnightly Review*, p. 463.
130. John Espy writes, "the central portrait here, as noted by Frier, is based on Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal, a popular model for the pre-Raphaelite painters," suggesting that the eyes are Elizabeth Siddal's. Espy, p. 90. This interpretation fits in my theme here that the eyes are those of fallen beauty, for she "died by her own hand." Espy, *ibid.*
131. *Histoires Magiques, Oeuvres de Remy de Gourmont* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1927), p. 113. [half-sea-green and half-violet, sharp-marine dissolved in some pale amethyst]
132. *Ibid.* [where how many of souls must have drowned themselves, believing to fall in the heaven!]
133. *Hermetica*, pp. 121-123.
134. See *ibid.*, p. 115.
135. "Ne li occhi porta la mia donna Amore," *Vita Nuova, Opere Minori*, p. 191. Rossetti, p. 48.
136. *Dante, Beatrice*, p. 62.
137. "An Idyl for Glaucus," *Personae*, 1909. *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, p. 84.
138. *Hermetica*, p. 123. The mysterious gaze of these eyes returns in *The Pisan Cantos*. Pound wrote in Canto 81/520 about the eyes that appear in his tent, "whether of spirit or hypostasis," suggesting that they belong to the Neo-Platonic trinity. Flory's interpretation that they are *nous* seems to me proper. Wendy Flory, *Ezra Pound and The Cantos: A Record of Struggle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 216-217.
139. *Endymion*, III, 234-255.
140. Flory identified those eyes in his tent to belong to Dorothy Pound, Olga Rudge and Bride Scratton. See Flory, p. 217. Yet if my theme works, the eye can belong to any suffering woman.
141. "Un faune effaré montre ses deux yeux / Et mord les fleurs rouges de ses dents blanches." "Tête de Faune," *Oeuvres* (Paris: Garnier Frère, 1960), p. 85. Also see Ruthven, p. 134.
142. See Note 118.
143. *Diomède*, p. 7. [The soul is a mode and the body is a mode, but indistinct and dissolved.]
144. *Ibid.*, p. 8. [the activity vital . . . all born out of a unique will, which has mysteries yet also evidences.]
145. "Die Wille, welcher rein an sich betrachtet, erkenntnissloss und nur ein blinder, unaufhalt-samer Drang ist . . ." *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, IV, 54, p. 323.
146. "Remy de Gourmont: A Distinction," *Make It New*, p. 311.
147. "Translator's Postscript," *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, p. 214.
148. See E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1911), I, 88.

149. See *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, tr. J. Gwyn Griffiths (Swansea: University of Wales Press, 1970), p. 201.
150. See p. 21 and Note 79.
151. "Translator's Postscript," *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, p. 217.
152. *Ibid.*
153. I owe this interpretation to Hans-Joachim Zimmermann's paper. See Note 103.
154. Ruthven, p. 224. Section I of this poem when printed in *Poetry* (Nov. 1913), 58–59.
155. *Ibid.*, Section II.
156. See Note 103.
157. "The Renaissance," 1914. *Literary Essays*, p. 218. Ruthven's reference to "Further Instructions" for "Chinese colours" is certainly irrelevant. See Ruthven, p. 224.
158. Compare "The wind moves above the wheat" and "Apeliota/for the gold light of wheat surging upward" (Canto 106/752–753). Pound's use of ἀπὸ ἀπὸ πύργου or the east wind to bring harvest is seen in "The Little Review Calendar," 1922 and in "The Faun," *Lustra*, 1916.
159. "Renaissance," *Literary Essays*, p. 215.
160. "two-faced: A pun an 'amber' and the Latin ambo ('two together')." Ruthven, p. 225.
161. At the present stage I cannot check exactly how much Pound knew about various stages of alchemy which Carl Jung explains: nigredo, coniugium, coitus, putrefactio, omnes colores, cauda pavonis and so many more. See *Psychologie and Alchemy*, II, 228–232. Pound used "petrification of putrefaction" in a Hell Canto, as if for suggesting a failure of alchemy in hell (Canto 15/64). "Coitus" is used also to depict the influence of the warm spring air on "The gilded phaloi of the crocuses." *Personae*, p. 110.
162. "Translator's Postscript," *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, p. 219.
163. "Sur le plan physique, l'unité s'appelle pierre philosophale et panacée; sur le plan animique, on la nomme amour; sur le plan esthétique qui est médian entre l'esprit et la matière, on la nomme beauté." Sar Péladan, *L'Art Idéaliste et Mystique* (Paris: Chamuel, 1894), p. 171. Pound reviewed Péladan's *Le Secret des Troubadours* in 1906. See Surette, p. 34.
164. *O. C.*, p. 33.
165. René Taupin wrote that Pound imitated in this poem Gourmont's *Litanies* and composed a chant "presque de la façon dont opère un parodiste." Taupin, p. 144. Yet Pound merely borrowed the chant-like rhythm, repetition and a parade of numerous ladies from "Litanies de la Rose," which he quoted in "French Poets," 1918. See *Make It New*, pp. 188–194. The theme of "The Alchemist" is Pound's very own.
166. See the prayers, for instance, from the "Papyrus of Nu," *The Book of the Dead*, ed. & tr. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge (2d. ed. rev.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), pp. 305–308.
167. When the listener of Trismegistus saw within himself the archetypal form, Trismegistus pointed out "Fire unmixed leapt forth from the watery substance" to show how matter receives the Word. See *Hermetica*, p. 117.
168. "Pagan and Magic Elements in Ezra Pound's Works," *New Approaches to Ezra Pound*, ed. Eva Hesse (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), p. 184.
169. Jung, II, 334. Illustration, 171.
170. Arthur Rimbaud, *Oeuvres*, p. 228. "birds, flocks, country girls . . ." *Arthur Rimbaud: A Season in Hell, The Illuminations*, tr. Enid Rhodes Peschel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 77.
171. *Oeuvres*, p. 229. "At night / The forest water drained itself in virgin / Sands, God's wind cast drift ice on the ponds; / Weeping, I saw gold—and could not drink." Peschel, p. 79.
172. *Oeuvres*, p. 233. [I had to voyage, to divert the enchantments gathered on my brain.]
173. *Oeuvres*, p. 229. "O Queen of Shepherds, / Bear brandy to the labourers, / So that their strength may be at peace / Until the dip at midday in the sea." Peschel, p. 81.
174. *Oeuvres*, p. 230.

175. *Oeuvres*, p. 232. "At last, O happiness, O reason, I remember from the sky the azur, which is darkness, and I lived, a spark of gold of pure light." Peschel, p. 85.
176. *Lettres du Voyant* (13 et 15 Mai 1871), ed. G rald Schoeffer (Gen ve: Librairie Droz; Paris: Librairie Minard, 1975), p. 137. [The poet makes himself a seer by a long, immense and systematic derangement of all the senses.]
177. Suzanne Bernard's notes to the letter, *Oeuvres*, p. 344.
178. Though "The Alchemist" is collected in the section of *Ripostes*, 1912, in *Personae*, 1926, Donald Gallup's bibliography does not find the poem in *Ripostes*. It was first published in *Umbra*, 1920, with the title, "The Alchemist, unpublished 1912." *A Bibliography of Ezra Pound* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1969), p. 53.
179. A letter to Homer L. Pound, Rapallo, 11 April, 1927. *Letters*, p. 285.
180. Pound was familiar with *The Book of the Dead* since the beginning of his poetry career. See "Note Precedent to 'La Fraisne,'" *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, p. 8.
181. See Miyake's interpretation of Pound's "The Little Review Calendar," *Paideuma*, VII, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring & Fall 1978), 76-82.
182. *A Companion to The Cantos*, p. 73.
183. This interpretation is not so far-fetched as it seems. The image of gold is used all over in Canto 4 to indicate the Mysteries of Isis, and in Canto 7, in the worn, colorless scenes of modern urban life, the Greek word, "Chrysolithos" (7/25) meaning "topas" and "Χρ σιο plus λ θος," suggests a hidden potentiality of resurrecting the Mysteries. See Miyake, p. 108.
184. "And thereafter I saw the darkness changing into a watery substance, which was unspeakably tossed about, and gave forth smoke as from fire . . ." *Hermetica*, p. 105. A. D. Nock and A. J. Festugiere added a word "ophei" or serpent in their reading of the text instead of just "a watery substance." See Sasagu Araki and Yu Shibata, *ヘルメス文書* (*Hermetica*; Tokyo: Asahi Shuppansha, 1980), p. 51. The image of a serpent as nature is often seen in Blake's works.
185. "Alchimie du Verbe," *Oeuvres*, p. 232.
 It is now found once more!
 What? eternity.
 It is the sea commingled
 With the sun. Peschel, p. 87.
186. *Oeuvres*, p. 284.
187. *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, p. 63.
188. See Note 167. " λη" is used in Canto 30/148, meaning Lucretia Borgia, the female matter with no male form to work on. See Miyake, p. 86. (I owe this interpretation of  λη in Cants 30 to C.F. Terrell.)
189. "And every intellect is capable of assuming every shape." Porphyry, *De Occasionibus*. *A Companion to the Cantos*, p. 92.
190. *Lettres du Voyant*, p. 136.
191. *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, p. 57.
192. "The Approach to Paris," VII, *New Age*, XIII, no. 25 (Oct. 19 1913), p. 726.
193. *Ibid.*
194. *Ibid.*, p. 276. "Chalets of crystal and wood that move on invisible rails and pulleys." Peschel, p. 137.
195. *Die Geburt der Trag die, Der Griechische Staat* (Stuttgart: Alfred Kr ner, 1964), p. 52. ". . . as though the veil of Maya has been torn apart and the remained only shreds floating before the vision of Mystical Oneness." *The Birth of Tragedy*, tr. Francis Golffing, *The Modern Tradition*, p. 550.
196. *Lettres du Voyant*, p. 137. [. . . for he arrives at the unknown! Since he has cultivated his soul, already rich, more than anyone! He arrives at the unknown, and though, maddened

- he would end by losing the intelligence of his visions, he has seen them.]
197. "Religio or the Child's Guide to Knowledge," *Selected Prose*, p. 47.
 198. "French Poets," *Make It New*, p. 162.
 199. *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163.
 200. *Literary Essays*, p. 33.
 201. *Ibid.*
 202. "Frederick Manning," *Instigations of Ezra Pound, Together with an Essay on the Chinese Written Character by Ernest Fenollosa* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1920), p. 234.
 203. *Enneads*, ed. & tr. A. H. Armstrong, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967), III, 365.
 204. *Hermetica*, p. 117.
 205. "Three Cantos, I," *Poetry*, X, no. 3 (June 1917), 116.
 206. Letter to Homer L. Pound. Rapallo, 11 April, 1927. *Letters*, p. 285.
 207. "How to Read," *Literary Essays*, p. 33.
 208. "Il s'amusa à égorger les bêtes de luxe. Il fit flamber les palais. Il se ruait sur les gens et les taillait en pièces.—La foule, les toits d'or, les belles bêtes existaient encore." "Conte," *Illuminations, Oeuvres*, p. 259.
 209. "Irony, Laforgue, and Some Satire," *Poetry*, 1917. *Literary Essays*, p. 282.
 210. It is curious that Pound never mentioned Laforgue until 1917. Eliot's influence is presumable.
 211. In 1882, at Coblenz, where the poet served as a reader to the German Empress, he wrote that he found, "Une esthétique qui s'accorde avec l'Inconscient de Hartmann, le transformisme de Darwin, les travaux de Helmholtz." *Mélanges Posthumes*, p. 268. Quoted by Guy Michaud, *Message Poétique du Symbolisme* (Paris: Nizet, 1954), II, 305.
 212. *Oeuvres Complètes de Jules Laforgue* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1962), I, 227. [White children of choir of the moon, and eminent Words of the moon. Their Church opens to all coming, bright besides as if there were no church at all.]
 213. *Les Complaintes, Oeuvres Complètes*, I, 83. [You go away and you leave us. You leave us and you go away. Why am I not dead at the mass! O months, o linen, o meal!]
 214. "Irony, Laforgue, and Some Satire," *Literary Essays*, p. 281.
 215. *Les Complaintes, Oeuvres Complètes*, I, 131. [The heartless art has lulled me into deception too long. Even if her labours are proud, how her grains of harvest cheating! Here, let me bleat all at the pleats of your skirt which makes the convent fragrant. The Genius in me, slave, has made affectations; you skirt, rustle without asking yourself why; under the blue dove-eye of the sky of the unique tea-pot, be yourself, apart from me.]
 216. *L'Imitation de Notre-Dame la Lune, Oeuvres Complètes*, I, 230.
 217. *Ibid.*
 218. "Irony, Laforgue, and Some Satire," *Literary Essays*, p. 283.
 219. "French Poets," *Make It New*, p. 166.
 220. Quoting Pound, K. K. Ruthven called this poem, "a perfectly literal, and by the same token, perfectly lying and 'spiritually' mendacious translation." Ruthven, pp. 119-200.
 221. "How to Read," *Literary Essays*, p. 27.
 222. J. P. Sullivan, *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius: A Study in Creative Translation* (Austin: University of Texas, 1964), p. 67.
 223. London, 30 September, 1914. *Letters*, p. 80.

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Ezra Pound and French Symbolists

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Ezra Pound not only inherited the achievement of French Symbolism but also corrected its defects. Early in the career, Pound shared with Mallarmé his vision of the Ideal, his magic of art, his idealization with the music of language and even his interest in Egyptian Mysteries, though he acquired these qualities from sources other than Mallarmé. Not being directly under Mallarmé's influence, Pound shrewdly realized Mallarmé's symbols are caught in the dead end of indicating the unreality of the Ideal only, and little used for any other purpose of communication. Having learned from Gourmont's *Problème du Style* that intellect is included in the sense experience, Pound created images which can simultaneously communicate sense experiences and evoke the complicated suggestions of meanings, Ideal, emotional and even critical. Thus he released Mallarmé's symbols over the infinite flux of consciousness, creating on the other hand, together with his Imagism and Vorticism, the three kinds of poetry, *melopoeia*, *phanopoeia* and *logopoeia*, which reveal respectively Symbolists' major heritages; their cultivation of the resources of language in sound and image, their Platonic vision and their acute intelligence.

Closer to Pound than other Symbolists, however, was Rimbaud. Essentially Pound's poetry seizes in images the very moment that Plotinus' *nous* gives form to matter. The rational form is simultaneously rescued out of matter in the Vorticist's whirling the phenomena into rudimentary energy and mystical unity of all existence. Rimbaud practiced this kind of poetry with his derangement of senses, so that Pound called him a poet of *phanopoeia*. Lastly Pound discovered that Laforgue's irony is the ideal resource for him to absorb Gourmont's critical intelligence in poetry. When Pound met Eliot in 1914, he praised that Eliot had "actually trained himself *and* modernized himself. . . ." By "modernizing" Pound meant to absorb the achievement of Symbolists and to advance it even farther.