Some Elements of Modern Poetic Technique

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Abstract

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This thesis sets out to discover what techniques are available to the contemporary poet and in what way they are unique to the poetic tradition. The standpoint taken is that of a poet situated in the Western cultural and poetic tradition and a poetics is endorsed that holds that poems may be the site of evaluation, specifically in terms of technique. The thesis excludes detailed consideration of historical and political contexts. The method of research used is analysis of actual works by modern poets, within the context of poetics and primary documentation by poets themselves on their technique. The thesis is divided into three sections. The section on rhyme discusses whether the modern poet should use rhyme and describes methods used to develop the technique. The section on diction describes traditional modes of rhetoric, including levels of style and figures, and investigates contemporary rhetorical and alternative strategies. The final section researches the use of imagery, symbols and tropes, with particular reference to metaphor. The study draws conclusions about the complex possibilities in rhyme, the relevance of rhetoric and the role of the imagination in transforming the image.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> It hath been long (my dear Countrymen) the Subject of my Concern and Surprize, that whereas numberlefs Poets, Criticks and Orators have compiled and digefted the Art of Ancient Poefie, there hath not arifen among us one Perfon fo publick fpirited, as to perform the like for the Modern. Therefore to fupply our former Defect, I purpofe to collect the fcatter'd Rules of our Art into regular Inftitutes, from the Example and Practice of the deep Genius's of our Nation; imitating herein my Predeceffors, the Mafter of Alexander /Aristotle/, and the Secretary of the renown'd Zenobia /Longinus/...
>
> Alexander Pope: Peri Bathos

> Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value?...among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings.
>
> William Wordsworth: Essay Supplementary to the Preface

This work endeavours to describe for the poet and critic some of the more notable poetic techniques developed by poets during a century remarkable for technical experimentation. The aim has been to provide poets in particular with information that will cause them to become more aware of technical achievements and thereby, through emulation, to improve their skills and the quality of their poetry. The examples of technique discussed are not necessarily intended only for direct imitation, but should serve as inspiration for similar creativity on the part of the reader.

The work is divided into three main sections. The first

Technique has historical roots. It develops over the centuries. The reasons for its present qualities lie very largely in the past. A modern poet's technique may be a reaction against technical ideas prevalent in previous centuries and can only be understood within that context. Again, technique does not develop in a straight uninterrupted line and technical achievements in the past are sometimes superior to those of the present. A knowledge of the former enables one to make a more informed judgement on the latter.

Then again, it sometimes happens that modern critical contentions over a technical point repeat arguments that originate in previous centuries. It may be that the arguments of past critics are more enlightening than those of present theorists. The thoughts of a great mind of the past about technique are worth more to the writer than a dozen petty commentators, even if they are of the present day. For all these reasons a critical history has a place in a work on modern technique.

The reader may be disappointed to learn that metre is not included in this work, as an essential component of poetic technique. Metre is indeed important, in fact it was the first section written, and therein lies its misfortune. The other sections were drafted in a subsequent period, during which intensive reading and studying took place. When the time came for recasting in final form the initial drafts of the work, the writer was both pleased and dismayed to discover a discrepancy between the quality of the section on metre and the other sections. Pleased, because the discrepancy seemed to indicate scholarly progress made, dismayed because it could not be included in the work without further research and extensive revision, which time did not permit. Work on metre

themselves.

The reader will find that the thesis employs a discourse that is evaluative in the sense that the writer holds that poems can and should be evaluated in terms of their response to the demands of style, rhyme and imagery, among other factors; in other words that a poem may be subjected to critical appraisal and adjudged excellent or not in terms of its interrogation of technique. This is in contradistinction to some tendencies in postmodernist thought which would question the possibility of such evaluation. However the author's poetics are more closely aligned with movements which aim at rediscovering traditional poetic techniques, such as the recent "Expansive Poetry" movement in the United States.[1]

The methods of research I have used involve a close analysis of the actual poems of contemporary poets, directed by a study of contemporary and historical poetics and informed by research into primary documentation offered by the poets themselves on their technique. In many cases what the poets themselves had to say about technique gave me insight into the technical achievements of their poems. Sometimes their comments were more revealing than they themselves knew. In other cases their statements contained hints which could only be understood after further research was done into poetic theory. Research into poetics in general was of inestimable value to provide a firm theoretical foundation to the enquiry. Finally close analysis of the poems themselves brought to light aspects of technique not hitherto recorded.

Initially I examined poems of whatever poet came within my ken. The experience gained in this way led me to differentiate between poets. Some were identified as technically unadventurous. Others were technically interesting in one particular sphere, for instance in their idiosyncratic diction, but unrewarding to analysis in other spheres. The major poets, such as Eliot, Pound and Yeats I found to be consistently technically enterprising and worthy of study in all respects.

In each section examples from the poets were quoted to illustrate general technical features. The classical author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium describes this method, its aims and virtues:

> Laymen, reading good . . . . poems, approve the . . . poets, but without comprehending what has called forth their approval, because they cannot know where that which especially delights them resides, or what it is, or how it was produced. But /s/he/...understands all this, and selects examples that are most appropriate, and reduces to individual principles of instruction everything that especially merits inclusion in /the/ treatise... 2

In a very general sense the works of a long line of poet-critics such as Horace, Dante, Puttenham, Wordsworth and Eliot, have provided models for the work here presented. Works by critics such as the author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium and Aristotle on rhetoric and poetics have also provided models. The former work is exhaustive, well-organized and useful for consultation, but Aristotle's writings are far superior in that they are the product of an enquiring mind that penetrates to the nature of the thing, and makes theoretical connections. In like manner I have hoped not merely to produce a descriptive technical handbook, but to produce something of larger interest by enquiring into the nature and causes of technical phenomena.

Finally, a word on the importance of a study of technique.

The importance of poetic technique is often underrated, particularly by critics who are not poets. Yet it is not possible for a critic to make an informed judgement on a poet's work without understanding what it is the poet is trying to achieve and what technical means s/he is using to achieve it.

Competent poets are much more cognizant of the necessity for technical knowledge, although lesser poetasters are more inclined to place total reliance on the Divine Afflatus and/or the promptings of the Unconscious. The major poets, however, are unanimous on the subject. T.S. Eliot, both through the example of his own work and in his theory propounds the relevance of technique. He denies that technical discussions

by poets are dry and limited: technique implies, in precise form, all that a reader thrills to in nebular form in the poem.[3]

Ezra Pound is another advocate of technical virtuosity, and once considered compiling an anthology of poems illustrating technical discoveries made by poets through the centuries.[4] And William Butler Yeats' final bequest to poets was a recommendation to "learn your trade" and "Sing whatever is well made".[5]

No-one will deny, of course, that the poet cannot rely only on technique. We move beyond the sphere of technique when, for example, we consider the inspiration or insight required for envisaging and encompassing subject matter. So too, beyond what any industriousness in the craft can achieve, lies the requirement for a poet to be both born and made. Good poets are born poets, but must study to fulfill their own natures through the exercise of the intelligence, the cultivation of the imagination, the practice of virtue and the rigorous exclusion from their thoughts, feelings and behaviour of all that is not noble and magnanimous.

- But that is not the subject of this thesis.

Notes to Chapter 1

[1] Thomas B. Byers, "The Closing of the American Line: Expansive Poetry and Ideology," Contemporary Literature 33.2 (Summer 1992): 396-415

[2] /Cicero/ Rhetorica ad Herennium (Cambridge, Mass.:Harvard University Press, 1954) IV. 232-33.

> Ceteri, cum legunt... bona ... poemata, probant... poetas, neque intellegunt qua re commoti probent, quod scire non possunt ubi sit nec quid sit nec quo modo factum sit id quod eos maxime delectet; at... haec omnia intellegit et idonea maxime egigit et omnia in arte maxime scribenda redigit in singulas rationes praeceptionis...

[3] T.S. Eliot, "The Function of Criticism", Selected Essays (London:Faber, 1932) 31.

[4] Ezra Pound, "Treatise on Metre", The Structure of Verse: Modern Essays on Prosody, Rev. Ed. H. Gross (New York:Ecco,1979)237.

[5] "Under Ben Bulben".

CHAPTER 2

RHYME

pleynly, at a word,
Thy drasty ryming is nat worth a toord!

Geoffrey Chaucer: The Tale of Sir Thopas

the facilitie & popularitie of Rime creates as many Poets, as a hot summer flies.

Thomas Campion: Observations in the Art of English Poesie

However good the thought may be, however apt the words in which it is couched, yet he finds himself at a little unrest, while rhyme is wanting. He cannot leave it till that comes naturally, and then he is at ease, and sits down contented.

John Dryden: An Essay of Dramatic Poesy

restoring
with a new verse the ancient rhyme.

T.S. Eliot: Ash-Wednesday IV

Rhyme or Rime: at once a term for a particular poetic technique and a metonymy for poetry itself. But should it still be considered as synonymous with poetry? After all, modern poetry has been often regarded as verse that doesn't rhyme. This chapter will attempt to give an answer to the question whether rhyme can still be regarded as an inalienable and representative part of poetry.

What "precisely," is rhyme? In formulating a definition of rhyme ome immediately becomes aware that the concept has broadened and become very flexible during the present century.

Prior to the modern period most poets would probably have agreed in regarding the basic form of rhyme as a perfect coincidence of sound between final stressed syllables of words in which the preceding consonant differed. Thus

The Cat, the Rat and Lovell our dog,
Rule all England under a hog.[1]

As one reads in the field of contemporary poetry it becomes clear that this definition is now inadequate to contain the many varieties of contemporary rhyme. Contemporary rhyme is now, in my view, more usefully defined as a parallelism,[2] mainly of sound, but also of orthography and semantics, ranging over one or many syllables.

Parallelism is a similarity : rhyme is one of the ways in which we experience pleasure by discerning similarity in dissimilarity as Wordsworth recognised[3] and as the psychologist Freud has also stated in talking about rhyme. Freud also went on to state that the pleasure is reduced when the recognition of similarity becomes too obvious and expected. The pleasure of rediscovery is heightened by putting hindrances in its path.[4] This is one explanation for the modern desire to move beyond the familiar boundaries of rhyme. Other related explanations will also be suggested in the course of this work.

Rhyme exists in close relationship with metre and diction. Consequently rhyme may be regarded not only as a rhetorical, but also as a metrical device. Coincidence of sound confers greater stress on the words involved. This can be readily observed in an aboriginal metre like Anglo-Saxon stress verse, in which a type of rhyme, alliteration, is coincident with the main stresses. Similarly rhyme involves coincidence of duration of sound and in many cases syllabic coincidence as well, hence a relation with accentual-syllabic, quantitative or syllabic metre.

It seems reasonable to ascribe the simultaneous development of experimental metres with experimental rhymes in this century as a function of the reciprocal influence between rhyme and metre. Yeats was of the opinion that regular metre led to an expectation by the reader of regular rhyme,[5] similarly "free" verse may associate best with a freer use of rhyme. However it is not necessarily the case that a free use of rhyme is due to free verse: Regular iambic pentameter may be unrhymed as in blank

verse, or a poet may shore up loose metre with strict rhyme. Furthermore experimentalism in rhyme and metre may owe their origins individually to some larger cause such as a shift in taste from harmony to dissonance.

In this chapter I will regard rhyme as an event that takes place in language, hence rhyme inevitably reflects the diction of the poem. A "high" formal diction such as neo-classical poets use excludes all rhyme words which are "low" or too particularised, whereas poets whose diction develops towards colloquialism, such as Yeats, also develop more experimental rhymes. (See the chapter on Diction for descriptions of high and low styles). A very highly patterned diction may obviate the need for end-rhyme and satirical and witty speech increases the incidence of paradox and puns in rhyme.

Having now defined rhyme and commented on its relation to metre and diction let us consider the functions of rhyme.

FUNCTIONS OF RHYME

The functions of rhyme are many and not all equally important at all times. The mnemonic function of rhyme, for instance, became of less importance with the decline of oral poetry. However, it is still important for those who habitually memorize favourite poems. New functions may be created by poets whose originality overflows into their rhyming practice as I will demonstrate.

Pleasure is a major function of rhyme, it gives a "superadded charm" to language.[6] The musical chime of rhyme is a great source of pleasure, whether the music is harmonious or dissonant. Rhyme was very closely associated with music in its early history (See Critical History below) and some modern poets continue to take inspiration from music for their rhymes, whether it be from the dissonances of modern composers of orchestral music or from popular and witty dance band lyrics such as:

The Venus de Milo was noted for her charms
But strictly between us
You're cuter than Venus
And what's more you've got arms.

which Philip Larkin has praised as technically clever.[7]

Nevertheless there is also a counter-trend away from a musical function in modern poetry. Poets whose tone is colloquial and prosaic may de-emphasize their rhymes to an extent that the musical chime becomes very subdued:

not one of us, in taking what we
pleased - in colonizing as the
saying is - has been a synonym for mercy.[8]

So that it has become possible for a critic of modern rhyme like W.K. Wimsatt to assert that "the music of spoken words /in poetry/ is...so meager...as to be hardly worth discussion."[9]

A further function of rhyme consists in its being one of the artifices through which reality is transformed into art. It enhances and defamiliarizes language, attracting with its siren song, charming away the grotesqueries of untreated emotion and thought, preserving the ephemeral of the everyday from decay.

As an artifice rhyme endows words with the beauty of form. In Dryden's memorable words "It is like a dance which is the united design of many persons to make up one figure. Chance can never produce anything so beautiful". It gives depth to the verse, as shadows in painting cause roundness, unobtrusively, so that rhyme is "drowned in its own sweetness, as bees are sometimes buried in their honey."[10]

It is my contention that the organizational function of rhyme has had an importance in the past which has not wholly been carried over to the present age in which traditonal form has become suspect. Rhyme marks out the boundaries of the line and the stanza. It indicates formal divisions such as the octet and sestet in the sonnet, it enables stanzaic forms such as the ballade, the villanelle and many others. This function is not employed so obviously in the present century consequent upon

the destabilization of traditional form, yet poets still find structural uses for rhyme. For example, despite the inroads made by open form, rhyme is still used by many as a method of closure. Or as a method of connection : Sylvia Plath, for instance, uses the rhyme that connects the last line of a stanza to the first line of the following one.[11]

A poet such as Marianne Moore uses rhyme as an ordering, organizational principle that exists in resonant tension with the overflowing enjambement of her lines. Her elaborate stanzaic structures and rhyme schemes are like the formal twists and turns of a riverbank, through which her sense and sentences race in riverine enjambement with syllabic murmur, words flowing on, yet contained, from line to line, stanza to stanza, without a break, the words sometimes fractured by a hyphen like a rapid or stone in the middle of a bend.[12]

Rhyme may be used by the poet to counteract deficiencies in style, metre and subject matter. For certain modernist poets such as Pound or Eliot (See the Rhyming Profile of Eliot below), this function of rhyme - as an external prop - was suspect, but it has achieved a certain popularity among poets who wish to give otherwise "free" verse a minimal framework.

The semantic potential of rhyme has been highlighted in recent times by poets such as Yeats (See his Rhyme Profile below) and critics such as W. K. Wimsatt.[13] It has been recognised that the emphasis of rhyme provides a forum for the connection, reinforcement or contrast of meaning. Rhyme has a limited mimetic and onomatopoeic capacity. It has also been very effectively employed to convey emotional tone. We can see this in Wilfred Owen's poetry. Owen's use of consonance, for example, originating in the trenches of World War I, seems to strike the authentic historical note of unease.

Many poets in this century have found a fruitful use of

rhyme in its deployment with sections of verse that are unrhymed.

Finally, for an audience who is alert to the possibilities of rhyme, there is pleasure in the contemplation of the skill of the rhymer and an interest in the poet's development of the rhyming tradition.

These then are the most prominent functions of rhyme; the creative poet will be able to invent others. We will now draw up a classification of the various types of rhymes available to the poet.

TYPOLOGY

For the apprentice poet bewildered by the proliferating and variegated rhyme of this century a brief typology might be useful, which will be elaborated on later with examples of innovatory and characteristic contemporary rhyme.

One may classify rhyme according to its position in the line, whether it is an integral word or broken, the number of syllables involved and according to the degree of identity, that is, perfect or approximate rhyme.

END rhyme, as its name suggests, occurs between the end words of two or more lines.

INITIAL rhyme. Rhyme between words at the beginning of two or more lines.

INTERNAL or LEONINE rhyme occurs between words within the line.

BROKEN rhyme occurs when the word has been broken and hyphenated to form a rhyme, for example below/Jo- /hannesburg/

MASCULINE or SINGLE rhyme comprises one syllable, for example Champs Élysées/day

FEMININE or DOUBLE rhyme comprises two syllables, for example tittle-tattle/cattle

TRIPLE rhyme comprises three syllables, for example intellectual/hen-peck'd you all

PERFECT or FULL rhyme occurs when the stressed vowel and consonants of the final syllables are perfectly matched, for example Honi soit qui mal y pense/dance

REPETITION occurs when the rhyme words are identical in sound, semantics and orthography. Repetition is used in the Sestina form.

RIME RICHE. The rhyme words are identical in sound but differ in sense, for example wry/rye ; St John/ sin gin

SIGHT or EYE rhyme. The orthography is identical but the pronunciation differs, for example love/approve

APPROXIMATE, NEAR, IMPERFECT, HALF or SLANT rhyme. As the names suggest, the chime between two rhymes is less than perfect.

UNSTRESSED rhyme. The rhyming syllables in both words are unstressed, for example sosatie/brédie

LIGHT rhyme. The rhyming syllable of the final word is unstressed, for example again/Bloemfontein

FULL CONSONANCE. The initial and final consonants of the words chime in full, the internal vowel is dissonant, for example broken/bracken

CONSONANCE. The final consonant/s chime/s, the final vowel is dissonant, for example quince/consonance (this is also a light rhyme.)

CONSONANT rhyme. The final consonant chimes eg. coccyx/Brigid's Cross

ASSONANCE. The stressed vowels rhyme eg. flibbertigibbet/pinnace

VOWEL rhyme. Vowels in end words which do not necessarily chime eg. me/eye

ALLITERATION. Consonants, usually in an initial position, chime eg. weary/wayfarer

BACKWARD rhyme. One word is a mirror image of the other eg. professor/rose ; Madam/I'm Adam

CRITICAL HISTORY

As the interest in this work centres on modern poetic technique, a very detailed history of rhyme would be out of place. Yet our knowledge of the present is informed by the past and primitive poets, once educated in the tradition of their craft become fit to undertake the duties of citizenship in sustaining the civilization of Rime.

Rhyme has always been pursued by a certain notoriety, the notoriety of a nouveau rhyme riche without classical antecedents to hallow the family tree. The progress of rhyme often seems like the progress of the Israelites in the desert, the tents of rhyme are so often the locus of polemical pillars of fire produced by genteel and not-so-genteel critical sniping, or clouds of dust thrown up by controversies between poets.

The history of rhyme is also relevant to our argument insofar as it offers evidence of an on-going debate on the merits of rhyme. Points scored by the pro and anti lobby

are still being proffered by modern poets and their ancient provenance has not enfeebled their force.

To the apprentice poet the history of rhyme, in demonstrating how the character and functions of rhyme have varied over the centuries, fosters a more creative and experimental attitude towards the technique.

Rhyme makes its first sustained appearance in Western literature in the first centuries of the modern era. It is associated with hymns of the emergent Christian church, and later with Irish monastic culture. In later centuries the rhymed Latin verse of wandering scholars in Europe and rhymed Moorish poetry influenced the formation of medieval French and Provencal rhymed verse.[14]

The first major pronunciamento on rhyme by a poet derives from the latter part of the 13th century.

Dante Alighieri, best known for his Divina Commedia also wrote the treatise De Vulgari Eloquentia[15] in which he attempts to determine the most suitable language for poetic compositions and considers questions of form and technique relating to the canzone, regarded in this work as the epitome of poetry in the "high" style.

The canzone is a form in which words are wedded to music which makes it in especial a daughter of heavenly harmony. Accordingly rhyme, for Dante, is a handmaiden of melody, producing sweetness of harmony through her voice and, by disposing herself in a patterned dance which parallels the form of the musical accompaniment, effecting a synthesis of word, line and stanza with note, melody and song division. Sections of the canzone sung to the identical musical

manual, a handy reference book for gentlemen on the civilized accomplishment of sonneteering or riming. Nevertheless it is a useful work for scholars who can make their own analysis from the material collected there.

Rhyme functions identified by Dante are discernible in the poems exemplified : of such is the use of rhyme as a linking device and for closure. An examination of the relation between syllabic length of the line and rhyme patterns demonstrates a responsiveness of rhyme to line length. These functions are still operative in modern poetry.

Rhyme in this treatise is not a flexible response to music, but constitutes set patterns authorized by tradition that enable stanzaic forms such as the sonnet, ballade, canzone, madrigal or rotondello. The popularity and predominance of the sonnet form is discernible in the painstaking analyses of permitted patterns of octet and sestet and the existence of variations such as the tailed or double sonnet.

The rhyme in the verses anthologized is predominantly full rhyme, but there are examples of repetition or identical rhyme and also approximate rhyme. These examples occur in sections that describe the confections of wit. The prominence awarded punning rhymes and the like is evidence here that rhyme has become socialized, an accomplishment demonstrating a courtier-like agility of mind and ability to create rhyming conceits.

That the delights of civility may infringe upon the rights of artistry was discerned by Dante who, in the De Vulgari Eloquentia, specifically cautioned against the indiscriminate elaboration of a kind of rhyme codified in the Trattato, the Equivocation.

The Equivocation makes use of words identical in sound and spelling but differing semantically. For example, porto (to carry)/porto (port, destination). In another version of this rhyme, words split off into smaller units like cells dividing themselves, for instance Canpane/ can e pane.

Another type of witty rhyme described is the Bischiço. In this rhyme the consonants remain fixed while the vowels modulate in a chain of variations : mondo/mando/mendo/ menda/manda/monda. A sub-species converts a word of several syllables into words of fewer syllables : Madona/me dano/ mi dono/mo dine. This type of rhyme has been developed by modern poets under the guise of "consonance".

An early example of self-reflexive rhyme that was popular in the Renaissance and is still popular among contemporary poets (Peter Porter, for example, has used the form), is mentioned here. This is the rhyme that interweaves a personal name into the poem, either in a single line or at the beginning or middle of each successive line. This narcissistic rhyme consists of a parallelism in identity between one who writes and one who is written.

In approximately the same era in England, after centuries of Anglo-Saxon alliteration rhyme, full rhyme becomes a recognisable poetic mode, probably as a result of Provencal and French influence. After Chaucer (1340-1400), in whose work rhyme reaches a high technical level, it becomes a dominant mode.

In the 16th and 17th centuries the most fruitful debate on rhyme in English literature takes place with poet-critics like George Puttenham, Samuel Daniel and Dryden proseletyzing for rhyme and Thomas Campion, Ben Jonson and Milton

firing squibs against the form despite the fact that all the latter poets wrote rhymed verse. The debate draws its strength from the revival of classical learning in the Renaissance and the consequent conflict between those who deferred to classical poetics, which takes no cognizance of rhyme, and the patriotic defenders of the native and natural rhyming genius of a Germanic language like English. This controversy between "Classicals" and "Moderns" is documented in many critical histories.

Puttenham considers the classical world well lost for rhyme, which he judges a more than adequate compensation for the fact that English verse does not use quantity as classical verse does. In his Arte Of English Poesie he delights in the harmonious music of rhyme.

> the Poetes chief music lying in his rime or concorde to heare the Simphonie, he maketh all the haste he can to be at an end of his verse....[17]

This harmony is so important that accent or spelling of the rhyme word may be falsified, if the poet cannot help otherwise, in order to avoid an unpleasant dissonance. It is interesting to compare this attitude with the modern preference for dissonance over harmony.

A sophisticated point is raised by this author and that is the relation of rhyme pattern to the poet's audience. The distance between rhymes should be responsive to the degree of learning in the audience. Couplet rhyme is "the most vulgar proportion", aba and abba the more usual. Further distance between the rhymes is "artificial" and will please "the learned and delicate ear" but not the "rude and barbarous". The more artificial "do give great grace and gravity, and move passion and affections more vehemently."[18] Modern poets such as Auden have exploited distance between rhymes for delicate effects.

To the classicist Campion, rhyme is vulgar and easy, a "childish titillation", as he calls it in his Observations in the Art of English Poesie[19], the product of the decline of the classical empire, of "lack-learning times" and of barbarism. It is a frivolous practice unfit for use with any dignified subject. Yet he reluctantly

acknowledges that

"there is growne a kind of prescription in the use of Rime."

Campion is one of the first to diagnose and condemn the Procrustes syndrome in rhyme. Much as the robber Procrustes used to measure his prisoners against his bed and with violent arbitrariness stretch or shorten his victims in order to make a perfect match, so rhyme enforces a poet to "abiure his matter" or "extend a short conceit beyond all bounds of arte."[20]

In his Defence of Ryme[21], replying to Campion, Daniel argues energetically for the use of rhyme, appealing to universal custom and the natural genius of the English language. Rhyme delights the ear, stirs the heart and satisfies the judgement. Rhyme has "enargie", it gives form to lines which otherwise would hang loose.

Rhyme, Daniel argues, should be regarded not as a Procrustean tyrant but as an enabler of conceit and invention,

> for sure in an eminent spirit whome Nature hath fitted for that mysterie, Ryme is no impediment to his conceit, but rather gives him wings to mount and carries him, not out of his course, but as it were beyond his power to a farre happier flight.[22]

Moreover, since excellence in poetry derives from labour and intelligence, rhyme, which requires greater effort in form, fosters "greater and worthier effects."

The tiresome predictability of unvaried rhyme, particularly in long poems in couplets, is acknowledged by Daniel. He suggests that the poet may increase the distance between rhymes or make use of enjambement, in which the "violence of the matter" breaks through the rhyme and may give the impression of "well-measured Prose."

Daniel's views on rhyme were later echoed in part by Dryden, as we shall see, and his suggestions for rendering rhymed verse more varied and "prosaic" have been adopted by many poets of this century.

But even more congenial to most modern poets is Ben Jonson's diatribe against rhyme in his poem "A Fit of Rime Against Rime".[23] In this poem, despite his own expertise in rhymed verse he inveighs most entertainingly against his medium. Greek poetry was "free from rime's infection"; only "vulgar languages that want words and sweetness" are rhymed. Rhyme hinders true expression,

> Wresting words from their true calling;
> Propping verse for fear of falling
> To the ground.
> Jointing syllables, drowning letters,
> Fastening vowels, as with fetters
> They were bound!

That Jonson in the course of his diatribe plays nonchalantly with both masculine and feminine rhyme, initial and end rhyme, internal rhyme, consonance, alliteration, repetition and enjambement gives a covertly equivocal and light-hearted tone to his overtly cantankerous complaint.

Milton was another able practitioner of rhyme who nevertheless found the form unsatisfactory. Milton chose to use rhyme in poems such as "L'Allegro", "Il Penseroso" and "Lycidas". However he rejected rhyme for his epic Paradise Lost, and he defends his decision in the preface to that work entitled "The Verse" and dated 1668, revealing himself as an adherent of the unrhyming classical tradition.[24] The arguments he uses against rhyme are by now becoming familiar to us: Rhyme is a barbarous trivial jingling employed as an ornament to hide defects in technique and subject matter. It is true that custom has sanctioned rhyme and that good poets have used

it, however in doing so they have only made fetters for themselves. Rhyme distorts the sense and hinders true expression. In all probability Milton was additionally influenced by the belief that rhyme was too undignified to adorn, if not essentially incapable of expressing, the highest thoughts. Many poets since Milton have followed his lead in rejecting rhyme for epic verse.

Shortly after Milton finished the unrhymed Paradise Lost in 1663 (the Essay of Dramatic Poesy describes a discussion purportedly taking place on the 3rd of June 1665) Dryden was marshalling arguments against and for rhyme as a subsidiary theme in his exploration of the merits and demerits of classical vs native English drama.

The debate on rhyme is enunciated through the protagonists Crites and Neander. It is generally thought that Crites represents the views of Sir Robert Howard and that Neander expresses some of Dryden's opinions.

The argument, once again of the classical literature vs rhyme provenance, coalesces around the hypothesis that art should imitate nature. Given that this is generally accepted, is rhyme natural or unnatural? If it is unnatural should it not be eschewed?

Crites contends that although art is not nature, yet it should appear natural and rhyme is unnatural since no man speaks in rhyme. The poet cannot give any impression of spontaneity if he composes a dialogue in rhyme since it will appear to be manipulated by the poet. This leads to Crites' conclusion that rhyme cannot express great thoughts naturally, nor can it express low thoughts(such as asking a servant to shut the door) with any grace since it is impossible to give the effects of extempore speaking in rhymed verse.

Although rhyme has been extolled as bringing order to an undisciplined imagination, someone who wants judgement generally

will be deficient in judging his use of rhyme as well.

Neander replies that art is indeed not nature; therefore neither rhyme nor unrhymed blank verse is natural. And this is as it should be, since art is nature wound up to a higher pitch, above the level of the everyday and commonplace. Yet the appearance of naturalness may be achieved in both, if the poet is skilful. In rhyme the poet's art should be directed towards an apt choice of words and their skillful deployment so that the sense is expressed naturally and the rhyme adapted to the sense and not vice-versa. The poet should take fore-thought with his rhymes and not establish the first line before he has found a suitable rhyme for the second as well. The poet should cultivate variety in his cadences. This he may do through breaking off before the line end and beginning a new line or through enjambement (This, we recall, was Daniel's suggestion). In this way art and order appear as loose and free as nature. Moreover the poet may vary the rhyme pattern freely or vary the metre.

Rhyme does bring order to a lawless imagination : Crites' argument is fallacious and someone who is totally deficient in judgement is not fit to write at all. Rhyme is a tool that the man of judgement uses to keep the building of verse compact and even.

A new spirit breathes and a perhaps more constrictive attitude to rhyme emerges in Edmund Bysshe's The Art of English Poetry which appeared in 1708.[25] Alexander Pope was twenty years old at the time and neo-classical rules and decorum held sway over literature. The rational neo-classical introduced a new civility in rhyme. Bysshe's rules for rhyme which accompany his dictionary of rhyme, are relatively prescriptive and conservative.

A rational mean is recommended in rhyme : the chime between words should be neither too perfect (light/delight) nor too imperfect (a word like "vindicated" with the accent

on th fourth syllable from the last should never be used as a rhyme). The decorum of the line end should not be violated with the use of end-rhymes (such as "an","and","as",'of', "the") enforcing enjambement.(We shall see that some modern poets have disregarded this requirement.)

Certain rhymes are suitable for "Heroik poetry". Others are "base, low words" such as are met with in the mouth of the vulgar "and never us'd, either in Conversation or Writing, by the better and more polite sort of people." The word "starch" for example,is a low word , unsuitable as rhyme except in its figurative sense to describe a stiff, affected person. The standard of decorum here described has been ignored by many modern poets.

Bysshe's rhyming dictionary, which is an additional feature of his work, offers a rather limited range of rhymes. For rhymes ending in ING, for example, he gives only fourteen possibilities. Pope's use of -ING rhymes agrees largely with Bysshe's range. In his Essay on Criticism, the Rape of the Lock, the Essay on Man and the Dunciad[26] he restricts himself to the following -ING rhymes:

thing/king(s) (5 examples found) ; strings/kings (2) ; bring(s)/king(s) (2) ; sing/king (2) ; wing/king ; everything/king ; sing(s)/wing(s) (4) ; thing(s)/spring(s) (2) ; spring (s)/bring(s) (2) ; bring(s)/ring(s) (3) ; flings/wings ; things/wings ; wing/spring.

One can see that Pope would have been in serious trouble if he had lived in an age when kings were obsolete.

Pope appears to legitimize only short, monosyllabic stressed rhymes, a very limited palette from which to create effects. Despite this, his verse does not give the impression of monotony.

This strictness in rhymes is characteristic of the neo-classical period, but not of all periods prior to the modern.

Chaucer, for instance, in his Canterbury Tales, uses unstressed as well as stressed rhyme with his colloquial diction, rhymes like empoisoning/ending ; sterlinges/ringes; sing/morweninge ; forwiting/thing.

With the Romantic era and the attempt by some poets to return to a more natural poetic language, the relation between diction or style and rhyme becomes problematic in a way that foreshadows the modern age.

It will be remembered that Wordsworth aimed to introduce into poetry the real language of men, language that was similar to well-written prose and freed from the artificialities of neo-classical Parnassian. This language would differ from prose only by the addition of metre and rhyme. The problem then arose, as Wordsworth candidly acknowledged in his Preface to the Lyrical Ballads, that a discord sounded out between rhyme as an artifice and a style without conventional artificial distinctions.[27] Or, as Coleridge was later to phrase it in his Biographia Literaria, one felt a "sense of oddity and strangeness in finding rhymes at all (Coleridge's italics) in sentences so exclusively colloquial."[28]

Wordsworth contended that his rhyme (and metre) was a "superadded charm", an important element in swinging the balance of aesthetic emotion over to pleasure, and annulling the pain existing in untreated experience. Like Milton however, he too rejected rhyme for epic purposes, witness his Prelude.

Byron was another Romantic poet faced with the problem of reconciling diction and rhyme. His genius for the brilliantly conversational in verse only found an outlet when he discovered the comic form of the Italian Pulci and its adaptation by the English poet Whistlecraft. (See his Advertisement to his translation of The Morgante Maggiore of Pulci.)

Given Byron's susceptibilities to the sex, his interest in feminine rhyme seems peculiarly fitting. I cannot resist a quote from Don Juan that shows how Byron's comic rhymes, his informal rhymes, his rhymes on foreign tags, enable the comedy of his colloquial speech. The narrator is pontificating on the education of a son (the italics are Byron's) :

> No - no - I'd send him out betimes to college,
> For there it was I pick'd up my own knowledge.
>
> For there one learns - 'tis not for me to boast,
> Though I acquired - but I pass over *that*,
> As well as all the Greek I since have lost:
> I say that there's the place - but *'Verbum sat'*;
> I think I pick'd up too, as well as most,
> Knowledge of matters - but no matter *what* - [29]

And so forth. Conversational speech and rhyme are resolved in comedy. The problem of serious verse remained, however, and it may be suggested that only in our era was the problem solved with the development of a type of rhyme that meshed smoothly with colloquial language.

This kind of rhyme was pioneered in the Victorian age by a few individualist poets. That the age was by no means unreceptive to their ideas, despite the more conservative rhyming practice of reigning poets like Tennyson, is demonstrated by a rhyming dictionary of 1865.[30] In the "Index of Perfect and Allowable Rhymes" the compiler comes out strongly for the use of imperfect rhyme citing, rather oddly, since we have seen that Pope at least favoured perfect rhyme, the precedent of poets like Pope and Addison. "So far from being a defect, there seems to be sometimes a beauty in departing from a perfect exactness of rhyme." Imperfect rhymes extend the poet's ability to express thoughts ; it is better to use an imperfect rhyme than to be forced to use a weak expression with a perfect rhyme.

Even the conservative George Saintsbury, writing in 1910 [31]

shows the growing influence of imperfect rhyme. Saintsbury firmly shuts the front door in imperfect rhyme's face - and this shortly before the Modernist revolution! - by asserting that English rhyme must be full. But then he lets it in at the back door by asserting that there is a rough rule that "vowels in rhyme may take the value which they have in words other than those actually employed" i.e. Dryden may rhyme traveller/star because "er" has that value in "clerk" (unless you are an American!) A rule like this is a carte blanche for consonance.

19th century

The pioneers of contemporary rhyme referred to above include the American poet Emily Dickinson, the English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins and the French poet Jules Laforgue.

Dickinson, writing through 1850 to 1880 developed an individual mode of approximate rhyme which was interpreted as incompetence by many of her contemporaries, and officiously "corrected" by her editors.

A glance at her poems will disclose the deployment of a wide range of approximate rhyme. She uses full consonance (ball/bell (378), crawl/cool (510) , spar/despair (510)), consonance (blood/attitude (77) , comes/tombs (341)) , consonant rhyme (rides/is (986) , ring/sun (712)), sight rhyme (away/civility (712)) and vowel rhyme (low/sky (824) , doe/reply (754)).[32]

As part of his technical innovations Hopkins experimented with rhyme. He used broken rhyme quite frequently. For example in "To What Serves Mortal Beauty?" he rhymes danc -/ing/ /glance and storm/swarm -/ed/. These rhymes are stressed; the broken rhyme in "The Eurydice" is unstressed as well : un -/warned/ /fallen.

As mentioned above Byron dazzled the literary world with the pyrotechnics of his comic double and triple rhymes. Hopkins used feminine rhyme as well, but for serious purposes. In "Felix Randal" he rhymes "hardy-handsome" with "and some", a rhyme which Robert Bridges found distressing and comic. In "The Bugler's First Communion" the line "This very day came down to us after a boon he on" rhymes with "Came, I say, this day to it - to a first Communion." Robert Bridges, representing orthodox Victorian opinion, thought this rhyme "hideous" and the suspicion that the poet thought it ingenious "appalling". The same poem contains the following rhyming lines:

> There)- boy bugler, born he tells me, of Irish
> Mother to an English sire (he
> Shares their...

which is surely even more ingenious. It appears to be an example of the Welsh 'linked rhyme' in which end rhyme of one line and initial rhyme of the next rhymes with an entirely different previous line. Initial rhyme between 'there' and "shares" is also present.[33]

Jules Laforgue is familiar to the English literary world as the poet whose technical experiments influenced the English modernists, in particular T.S. Eliot. Rhyme is one of the spheres in which Laforgue pioneered innovations. In his "Dernier Vers" he uses a mixture of masculine and feminine rhyme, full and approximate rhyme, internal rhyme and repetitions. Singulars are rhymed with plurals to produce a dissonance of both sight and sound, and rhyming couplets appear in the middle of free verse.[34]

Laforgue explicitly set out to cultivate the pleasure of originality in rhyme. Rhymes of previous centuries were often

stereotyped, he believed, the words that counted coming within the line, not at the end where they could be highlighted by rhyme. His project was to give new meaning to rhyme, turning up out-of-the-way rhymes. Yeats is one modern poet who has similarly developed original rhyming words.

One of the methods Laforgue used to create original rhymes was to combine "high" and "low" words such as elegiaques/claques (elegiac/opera hats), demoiselles/vaisselles (young ladies/dishes), a type of rhyme occuring also in the work of the poet Tristan Corbiere who dared and did combine "paradis" with "radis" (paradise/radish)[35]. This type of rhyme has also been exploited by Eliot and Pound.

In this section we have traced rhyme from its origins, through medieval developments, Renaissance controversy, Romantic problematics and Victorian innovations. We now enter the modern era.

THE MODERN PERIOD

Poetry in the twentieth century, in popular mythology, is the poetry that has thrown rhyme overboard and sails all the better for jettisoning that dead weight. Modern poetry is "free verse" in popular parlance. This conception has some truth in it; it is also a misconception.

True it is that many campfollowers of the Modernist revolutionaries misunderstood their leaders' aims and methods and when they understood, lacked the intelligence and skill to emulate. Both Eliot and Pound have recorded their disaffection from unskilled practitioners of "free verse". Thus the modernist experiment became a licence for ineptitude which has continued up till the present day - Rhymsters too often equate liberty of expression with licence of form.

Very often, however, poetry that seems unrhymed to the eye innocent of modernist technique is in fact rhymed, a different convention obtains which is not yet familiar to the reader.

Yet after all, it will be objected, one cannot but acknowledge that there are good poets this century who have written unrhymed poetry. We see this in different poets at different times of the century.

Pounds Cantos are a case in point. The Cantos are largely unrhymed, though there are sections which are formally rhymed. D.H. Lawrence started his poetic career as a rhymer but burst out of the form in exasperation, his lines sloughing the old restricting form like a snake renews itself through sloughing his skin. Robert Frost, a dedicated rhymer, produced an alternative canon in blank verse of which his poem "Birches" is a brilliant representative. Marianne Moore is an afficionado of rhyme, but many of her later poems are unrhymed. Among the post-modernists Seamus Heaney's Bog poems, arguably his best, are unrhymed and John Ashbery has produced a large body of unrhymed work.

A familiar pattern amongst contemporary poets that I have identified in my reading is an initial dependance on rhyme followed by the poet launching upon a technical trajectory which takes him or her out of an ordered ellipse into freer spheres.

Auden, for example, moved from experimental rhyme to more conventional rhyme and finally to predominantly unrhymed syllabic verse. Of his well-regarded "The Sea and the Mirror", which is a bravura compilation of forms, the final and climactic section is not only not rhymed, it is prose.

In her juvenilia Sylvia Plath rhymes intensively. Much of the rhyme is of a traditional kind and regularly patterned in forms like the villanelle and the sonnet. By 1956 in her earliest achieved poems she is showing a fine awareness of the modernist range of approximate rhyme. By the early sixties her preference has become unrhymed verse.

Profiles like these indicate that there are some deeply considered objections to rhyme in this century.

What are some of these objections? Some of them are the old

> One of my wishes is that those dark trees,
> So old and firm they scarcely show the breeze..[39]

for example in the poem "Going for Water" and others. And the rhyme occurs several times in his poetry thereafter.

Donald Wesling in his book Chances of Rhyme quotes a letter of Wallace Stevens dated 1909. In this letter Stevens admits that he rhymed "breeze" with "trees" in the June Book. He says he has never forgiven himself because the rhyme is unpardonably expected. Wesling comments that Stevens avoided rhyme thereafter because he could not always strike an unprecedented note.[40]

Some of the modern objections to rhyme stem from the project of bringing into verse all the virtues of good prose. Despite the fact that rhyme, or homeoteleuton as Aristotle identified it, has been used in a modified way in prose, rhymed end-stopped metrical lines are not very compatible with the natural word order of prose. Something has got to give and if the poet is determined on a prosaic diction either s/he will have to enjambe, or to compromise with rhyme.

Frost is an exception to this rule; he is excellent in his ability to combine traditional rhyme with natural word order. Even he, though, sometimes uses periphrastic locution for the sole purpose, it seems, of fitting in a rhyme:

> I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
> When far away an interrupted cry
> Came over houses from another street...[41]

This kind of circumlocution, often called out in previous centuries by the exigencies of rhyme, was roundly condemned by poets under the sway of the Flaubertian ideal of the mot juste, as surplusage. While other causes for the phenomenon have been and will be discussed in this work, the introduction of new material into art in this century has been identified by at least one critic as the cause of the fracture of harmonious and ordered forms such as rhyme.[42]

William Carlos Williams was one of the major poets who identified the need to express new material as a factor in his rejection of rhyme: "I...found I couldn't say what I had to say in rhyme. It got in my way."[43]

One can sense the distorting influence traditional rhyme schemes can have on the language of this century in a poem like Auden's "Stephano" which forms part of his "The Sea and the Mirror", a collection of 12 poems on the theme of The Tempest. This is a traditional ballade, composed of an eight syllable line and three stanzas of eight lines each. Only three rhymes are used and they seem to determine the content overmuch. It is almost as if the rhyme scheme is pulling the meaning out of focus.[44]

As far as rhyme is concerned, poets in this century may be struggling against something far more fundamental than the English literary tradition. According to the Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics rhyme since 1830 has become more difficult " because of the victorious emergence of the former bourgeois pronunciation as a Received Standard."[45] In other words linguistic changes may be ultimately responsible for altering rhyming patterns.

Despite the above objections against rhyme, or perhaps because of them, unprecedented innovations in rhyme have taken place this century. But it is also important to note that there are poets who have remained loyal to traditional rhyme to a greater or lesser degree.

These loyalists, like Frost and Larkin, use mainly full rhymes in an unobtrusive way in ordered stanzaic forms. They do not exploit enjambement, unstressed rhyme or dissonance to any marked extent and may be actively hostile to its manifestations. Robert Graves, also a loyalist, is on record as regarding Auden's witty rhyme of bore/mother-in-law as "indecent".[46] In these poets the use of traditional rhyme may

derive partly from considerations of a particular audience. Larkin, for instance, deliberately shapes his poetry to the comprehensions of the general reader.

Other poets while making use of traditional rhyme, have felt the need to range farther afield and have resorted to various strategies to counteract the felt limitations of the form.

In order to facilitate expression in rhymed verse poets have extended the range of words available for use. They have done this either through the relaxing of conventions or through the inclusion of new vocabulary. To compare a modern rhyming dictionary with Bysshe's rhyming dictionary is to become aware of an enormous expansion in rhyme material.[47]

A modern dictionary contains words that reflect the social changes of the twentieth century like "teenage","parking", "cocktail" or "striptease", words that reflect the triumph of science and technology like "spacewalk" or "enzyme",or the cultural domination of America - words like "broadwalk" or "dime".

Conventions have been overthrown in respect of unaccented rhyme: words whose final syllable or syllables are unaccented are largely listed. Ranged unblushingly alongside full rhymes are words that are kin through consonance, once a forbidden degree of union. Prepositions like "into" and contractions like "he's" or "I'm" are no longer banished by edict, but have crept back into the fold, legitimated by Marianne Moore. Words that violate classical decorum - low words like "mop", slang like "fag", technical terms like "abseil" - are included, proclaiming the triumph of rhyming democracy.

Modern poets very often "mute" their rhymes, as Donald Wesling

phrases it. They may use different methods to achieve this, such as enjambement, distance between rhyme words or dissonance.

Why they should feel the need to do so is more problematic. One would posit an aesthetic or musical reason but other considerations have been vaunted. Muted rhyme has been thought to be more suitable for colloquial or prosaic language. Or it is regarded as more"natural" by poets like Marianne Moore(one recalls Dryden's arguments here.) Or it is recommended as combining freedom with a sense of form. Here is Robert Lowell talking to Frederick Seidel and picking up on several of these aspects with relation to enjambement:

> The couplet I've used is...run-on with its rhymes buried. I've always, when I've used it, tried to give the impresssion that I had as much freedom in choosing the rhyme as I had in any of the other words...I wanted something as fluid as prose; you wouldn't notice the form, yet looking back you'd find that great obstacles had been climbed, [48]

On another occasion, during a discussion of Robert Lowell's 'The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket' with Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, Brooks remarked of Lowell's use of rhyme:

> ...the rhymes ride up through the surf of words, as it were, so that you just get glimpses and flickers of them. It's an entirely different effect, let's say, from the rhyming as used in most traditional poetry. [49]

T.S. Eliot has made some very daring experiments with enjambement, in "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" among other poems not only. He runs the lines on within the stanza:

> Defunctive music under sea
> Passed seaward with the passing bell
> Slowly: The God Hercules
> Had left him, that had loved him well.

He also runs the lines on between stanzas, on one occasion the first part of a personal name is the end rhyme of one stanza, while the surname begins the next.

Princess Volupine extends
A meagre, blue-nailed, phthisic hand
To climb the waterstair. Lights, lights,
She entertains Sir Ferdinand

Klein...

In this way the rhyme is muted by the onward flow of the line.

Distance between rhyme words as a muting device is consciously exploited by a poet such as Auden in many of his poems. Robert Graves has written how he gauges the memory length of the reader's ear and plants the second rhyme at a point where the memory of the first is just beginning to blur but has not quite faded. He gives yet another rationalization of the technique - it is in order to obtain a more sophisticated effect.[50]

Contemporary poets resort to dissonance to create a muting effect. Elizabeth Bishop has achieved this in her poem "Roosters". This poem rhymes in triplets aaa bbb etc. but the rhyme is never overdone or obtrusive because she uses dissonance as well as enjambement and variations such as feminine rhyme. She uses sight rhyme (tiny/belly/sky), unaccented rhyme(preamble/marble/inaudible), a combination of accented and unaccented rhyme i.e. light rhyme (guess/bless/forgiveness), consonance (tears/chanticleer's/spurs) and a combination of masculine and feminine rhyme(beds/sheds/bedsteads).[51]

These poets, in their wish to be "natural", their privileging of the natural spoken word (for what else do they mean by "natural" but that it should sound like speech?) over the artifice of the written, adhere, in Derrida's phrase, to a metaphysics of presence, that is they construe virtue in the vitality of actual speech as opposed to the formal written word. This is not originally a modern phenomenon; it will be remembered that Daniel and Dryden shared the same concerns. Yet the amount of emphasis is modern, and so too is the consistent exploitation of dissonance.

Just as metaphors may become dead letters, so the living

pith of rhymes may dry up and leave two empty shells rattling together meaninglessly. Modern poets have attempted to avoid cliched rhyme and increase the semantic significance of their pairs of words. They have actively sought the rhyme never before used in the literary tradition. They have discovered the potential for wit in rhyme and have developed its possibilities as a sounding board for emotional tone.

In order to give him or herself space to manœuvre the poet may combine in his poem rhymed and unrhymed sections, or one section may have a regular rhyme scheme and another no pattern although the lines rhyme, such as occurs in Lowell's "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket". There are modern poems in which the rhyme is loud in some lines and discrete or non-existent in others. In these poems, however, it may rightly be objected that there should be some reason, semantic or other, for the vagaries of the rhyme if the artlessness is to be understood as figurative and not literal.

In some cases the modern poet prefers to abandon a type of rhyme scheme which is like an external mould or the scaffolding of a building and develop a more organic type of rhyme in which there is an internal network of rhyming relations like the veins in a petal or a leaf. "The Weed" by Elizabeth Bishop is a poem of this type. So is Marianne Moore's

A JELLYFISH

Visible, invisible,
  a fluctuating charm
an amber-tinctured amethyst
  inhabits it, your arm —
approaches, and it opens
  and it closes; you had meant
to catch it and it quivers,
  you abandon your intent.[52]

There is the suggestion of an external rhyme pattern here

in the full rhymes of charm/arm and meant/intent (but notice how enjambement mutes "arm" and "meant").

This is supplemented by consonant rhyme (quivers/opens, amethyst/meant), internal full rhyme (visible/invisible, it/it), internal consonant rhyme (approaches/closes) and internal approximate consonance (amber/tinctured, amethyst/inhabits).

Repetition, that mainstay of rhythmical prose, is a very popular alternative to rhyme. Its use in modern poetry was encouraged by the example of Whitman. A poem like "The Woman at the Washington Zoo" by Randall Jarrell makes much use of repetition instead of rhyme as a structural element.[53]

INNOVATORY TYPES OF MODERN RHYME

We have spoken about the fact that many modern poets prefer not to rhyme and we have described some of the objections to rhyming. Of those poets who rhyme, we have mentioned those who favour traditional rhyming methods and those who broaden the possibilities of traditional rhyme through various strategies. Now we should mention some types of rhyme which are either new or particularly characteristic of the modern era and make some brief comments on examples of felicitous usage. (Further examples will emerge during the course of an examination of the rhyme profiles of three modernist poets sketched at the end of this chapter.)

Broken rhyme, popularised by Hopkins, appears in the poetry of poets such as Marianne Moore, Cummings and Auden. Moore uses rhymes like warm-blooded/red- /skinned/,[54] which is also a light rhyme. A rhyme like ac- /cident/ /lack[55] is not unusual in her work and derives partly from the exigencies of her syllabic metre and stanza forms. She is willing to regard a word as a collection of syllables which can be taken apart in order to fit her line. This has the advantage

that a whole new range of rhyme opportunities is opened up; on the other hand the meaningful quality of the rhymes may be compromised: ac-/lack is not semantically resonant. Broken rhyme can give the same muting effect as enjambement. It can be combined with other types of rhyme such as light and sight rhyme, as instance Cummings's outrageous scienti-/fic/compulsory.[56]

Moore is also famous or notorious for breaking rhyming conventions with regard to Contractions and Auxiliary words. She rhymes insouciantly on words like "that", "the", "and", "or", "on","could", "theirs","your" and "while".[57] Possibilities for semantic emphasis diminish with this kind of rhyme. She also uses contractions like ox's/yes.[58] Equivocal effects may be achieved this way:

> and seek their prize
> till the evening sky's[59]
> red

The reader hears both "sky's" and "sky is" because the rhythm of the stresses favour an unstressed syllable between the two stressed words "sky" and "red". Consequently the rhyme is both exact and inexact.

Innovatory modern rhymes often have a witty or satirical character.

T.S. Eliot favours this kind of rhyme. One can trace the influence of Laforgue in the rhymes which incongruously combine "high" and "low" words (sun's last rays/camisoles and stays;[60] penitence/pence).[61]

Eliot savours the kind of rhyme rhetoric calls Paronomasia i.e."word play", "pun". Roman Jakobson exemplifies this kind of rhyme with Poe's raven/never.[62] In Eliot we find rhymes like terminate/torment,[63] horoscope/haruspicate,[64] united/quiet.[65]

Poets have become sensitized to the possibilities of using rhymes which are differentiated grammatically. W.K. Wimsatt considers this as signalling a difference in meaning;[66] Hopkins thought it added to the beauty of the rhyme,[67] but the device may also have a witty intent. The rhyme to laugh/giraffe combines a verb and a noun which heightens the incongruity of the yoke-pair. There is also a semantic connection between the words, that of cause and effect, as those may discover who, intrigued to discover which modern poet is on close terms with giraffes, traces the rhyme to Eliot's "Sweeney among the Nightingales."[68]

Difference in length of the two rhyme words may also have a witty or dissonant effect as in Moore's tie/hippopotami[69] or see/perpendicularity.[70]

In Echo rhyme the name is self-explanatory. Seamus Heaney's line/linen, them/hem are examples.[71]

The Byronic satiric rhyme is congenial to this century and it has been revived by poets like Auden . Since the subject matter of this stanza has reference to the academic world, the indulgence of a quotation will be allowed. (It was written shortly after the second world-war):

> Professors back from secret missions
> Resume their proper erudítions,
> Though some regret it;
> They liked their dictaphones a lot,
> They met some big wheels and do not
> Let you forget it.[72]

Light rhyme (in which one rhyming syllable is unstressed) has enjoyed unprecedented popularity. See, for instance, the work of Pound, Heaney and Moore. T.S. Eliot called Moore "the greatest living master of the light rhyme"[73] and the scholar in search of examples is embarrassed by the riches in her work. She herself gave, as an example of the light rhyme, her "Its leaps should be set/ to the flageolet!"[74] A more complex example which combines broken and light rhyme

is fur-/eyed/7/ochre.[75] Seamus Heaney has more recently worked with light rhyme, instance rhymes such as sacks/plough-socks which the reader will note also uses dissonant lengths, and full consonance as well.[76]

Full Consonance became a notable rhyme in the work of Wilfred Owen. His sustained use of this method in poems like "Futility" and "Strange Meeting" brought consonance into prominence.

> And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,
> By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.[77]

Although Owen popularised full consonance, it was used earlier by Emily Dickinson and it can be traced back to the earliest days of rhyme. The Bishiço described in the Critical Trattato delle Rime Volgari (see History above) is very similar, being based on identity of the consonants and variation of the vowels.

A related kind of word-play is used by Eliot in "Ash-Wednesday" when he rhymes forgetfulness/forgotten/forget.[78]

There is a type of rhyme which occurs in modern poetry which I will call, since I do not believe it has been previously classified which is closely related to meaning,

Imitation rhyme. This occurs where the sound of the rhyme simulates the sense of the verse. The use of rhymes ending in "s" lends itself to this mode, for instance in Theodore Roethke's "Forcing House"[79] which in a total of eleven lines yields thirty final "s" sounds. The recurrent hiss of the "s" could be said to mimic the steam pipes of the forcing house.

Section III of Eliot's "Ash Wednesday", thematically related to the stairs of penitence or purgatory, has a predominance of rhymes that chime with "stair".[80] Here the

repetition is mimetic of the identical treads of a staircase.

According to Margaret Holley the rhymed, unrhymed and rhymed couplets of the last two stanzas of Moore's "The Jerboa" mimic the hops on two legs that the jerboa makes.[81]

More onomatopoeic is Heaney's the ack-ack/Of the tramp corncrake.[82]

Stanza rhyme, which we defined in the Typology earlier on has been used this century by poets who wish to combine an impression of unrhymed verse with the elegances of rhyme. In Eliot's "Hollow Men" there are words which recur in each or in several of the stanzas, for instance "kingdom" appears in all five sections, "star" or "stars" in three, "together", "are", "men" and "motion", each in two sections.[83]

In section II of "The Dry Salvages" in Four Quartets Eliot uses a variation of the type of stanza rhyme dating back to the medieval age, rhyming the first lines of the stanzas with each other, ditto the second lines, and so on. The final stanza is an exception, repeating, not rhyming exactly with, the rhymes of the first stanza. This section is also illustrative of the potential of triple rhyme, that it need not be limited to comic verse.

An original use of rhyme occurs in Sylvia Plath's poems "Daddy" and "Lady Lazarus". In the former poem she repeats the same rhyme in every stanza throughout the poem, which, together with the use of repetition (such as "ich,ich,ich,ich") conveys an obsessive emotional tone:

> There's a stake in your fat black heart
> And the villagers never liked you.
> They are dancing and stamping on you.
> They always knew it was you.
> Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through.[84]

Rhyme functions here to intensify emotion with a kind

of unsubtle brutality of emphasis. This kind of rhyme throbs like an exposed nerve in a tooth.

"Lady Lazarus"[85] uses full rhyme and consonance in a repetitive sequence: all/seashell/call/well/hell/real/call/cell/theatrical/miracle. Rhymes ending in "l" are readily available in English, the drawback is that too many can sound monotonous, however they suit the emphatic tone of this poem. As one might expect the degree of consciousness of the semantic possibilities of rhyme vary among modern poets. Yeats was very aware of the possibilities. Critics such as Seamus Heaney and Marjorie Perloff have noted an entry in one of his notebooks:

> Subject To complain of the fascination of what's difficult. It spoils spontaneity and pleasure, and wastes time. Repeat line ending difficult and rhyme on bolt, exalt, colt, jolt.[86]

This note was later developed into the poem "The Fascination of What's Difficult" in which "difficult" appears once as a rhyme word and the projected "exalt" is replaced by "dolt". It is clear that Yeats intended to exploit the semantic relationship between the subject matter of his poem and the words chosen as rhymes.

There may be, but is not necessarily always, a correlation between the quality of the poem and the extent to which the rhymes are semantically operative. This does occur in Auden's "Lay your Sleeping Head My Love"[87] which is one of his best poems and in which a high percentage of the rhyme words are semantically significant. One could merely point to the first stanza which yokes "love" and "grave" and "ephemeral" and "beautiful" together. These rhymes distil in essence the theme of the tragic nature of human love in a world of mutability. For a poem which

reflects upon the discord between the uncertainties and insanities of the public world and the disabused tenderness of the lovers, the dissonant rhymes seem particularly apt.

Rhyme is a kind of echo, an Echo hovering dotingly around the Narcissistic post-modernist poet. Seamus Heaney has used rhyme in the self-reflexive manner. In 'Personal Helicon' he describes how his child-self has become sublimated in an adult poetic identity. The child, at what Jacques Lacan has described as the mirror stage, stares into wells, at an image of a desired, perfected identity. The child speaks, to hear his own voice echoing back with a new music. The adult poet stares into the mirror of art to see himself, he makes a rhyming music out of the Echo of his own desire:

> Now, to pry into roots, to finger slime,
> To stare, big-eyed Narcissus, into some spring
> Is beneath all adult dignity. I rhyme
> To see myself, to set the darkness echoing. [88]

The poem "Alphabets" [89] by the same poet meditates on the way language determines reality from childhood to adulthood. The dominance of language is reflected in the use of signifiers-letters of the alphabet - for rhymes (y/say, ay/way, hoe/o, o/window). Rhymes using words not letters (trees/ditches) refer, not to signifieds in a real world, but are self-referential, imaging the power of language to become reality.

> The letters of this alphabet were trees
> The capitals were orchards in full bloom,
> The lines of script like briars coiled in ditches.

In the antepenultimate stanza the entire world becomes contained in an omega, the subline becomes an o-rhyme, a sphere becomes a solipsistic cipher, the perceiver sees language as the egg from which he derives:

As from his small window
The astronaut sees all he has sprung from,
The risen, aqueous, singular, lucent O
Like a magnified and buoyant ovum -

A brief comment may be made here on the way poets have used modern rhyme with traditional poetic forms. Poets this century have made use of approximate rhyme with forms such as the rhyming couplet, terza rima and the sonnet. Sylvia Plath, for example, has a fondness for the terza rima, but because she varies her line lengths and uses approximate rhyme, the form may be subtle enough to escape cursory attention.[90] Wilfred Owen decentres the traditional rhyming couplet with his use of consonance.[91] John Berryman uses approximate rhyme in his sonnet sequence to Chris, including one sonnet (number 11) using assonance as rhyme.[92]

Seamus Heaney's use of approximate rhyme with the sonnet form shows that while a greater flexibility may be achieved, form may be problematized to a critical extent. "The Forge"[93] and "Act of Union"[94] are respectively, Petrarchan and Shakespearean sonnets in which the traditional rhyme scheme is rendered equivocal by the indeterminateness of the rhymes.

The rhyme pattern of "The Forge" is probably abba cddc ef cf ef but the ambiguity of the rhyme in the second quatrain undermines any certainty:

Or hiss when a new shoe toughens in water. c
The anvil must be somewhere in the centre, d
Horned as a unicorn, at one end square, d
Set there immoveable: an altar c

The quatrain could just as legitimately, if not more so, be interpreted as rhyming in couplets ccdd (water/centre, square/altar) but this would sabotage the Petrarchan form.

The ambiguity of the rhyme produces a coexistence of

different formal possibilities here, neither of which is finally dominant. This hesitation or dissonance could be argued to continue the modernist project of destabilization of harmony and potentially could be witty if done in a meaningful way; otherwise it degenerates into confusion and chaos.

In the previous pages we focussed on examples of modern rhyme that were either variations upon traditional rhyme or innovatory. Now let us examine how the individual poet creates original rhyme by describing the work of three original major poets.

RHYME PROFILES OF THREE POETS

Research in the rhyming techniques of the poets makes one aware that a poet's use of rhyme is every bit as individual as the body of his or her work itself. The greater the poet, the less can his work be mistaken for that of any other and the more his use of rhyme has a logic and a personality never before encountered in the tradition. This phenomenon may be illustrated by a characterization of the rhyming practices of Yeats, Eliot and Pound.

YEATS is one of the great rhyme innovators of this century. During the course of his career he develops an inherited, platitudinous rhyme into rhyme of great subtlety and originality.

A rather obscure remark in 1902 that "rhyme is one of the secondary causes of...disintegration of the personal instincts"[95] may derive from a dissatisfaction with the banal rhyme of an outworn tradition. Certainly Yeats never abandoned rhyme. He is a poet of formal sensitivity for whom the ceremony of rhyme derives from that general courtesy and ceremony in which Beauty is born, the "traditional sanctity and loveliness" that "elevate a rhyme".

The availability of working sheets for some of Yeats' poems enable the scholar to trace the evolution of a poem, reconstructing the way he fits rhyme to subject matter.(See Jon Stallworthy's Between the Lines: Yeats' Poetry in the Making).

He starts out with a broad idea of what he wishes to say and sometimes sketches out an initial series of rhymes for a stanza. What follows is a gradual rapprochement between content and form, as Yeats probes different combinations of rhymes, altering completely, it may be, his original possibilities. Just as some lines may be données, so some rhymes are 'given' with a kind ofinevitability; other lines and other rhymes must be foraged for with patience. It may even happen that a line and rhyme are never perfected but only abandoned, though only the poet is ever aware of his failure. He doesn't allow the need for a rhyme to alter his meaning in broad terms, but he is prepared to compromise in the particulars if it will improve a rhyme. Similarly, although he may be determined to incorporate a particular rhyme, in most cases he is willing to rearrange, reject, or recreate in order to find a rhyme that will both express the meaning and socialize well with other rhymes in the poem.

Yeats thought of rhyme as in reciprocal relation with metre and diction. As he moved toward a more colloquial and passionate poetic speech so he tended to make more use of approximate rather than traditional rhyme. His increasing technical skills led to an increasing mastery of rhyme, an expanded awareness of rhyming possibilities. We have already noted above his awareness of the semantic possibilities in rhyme. According to Marjorie Perloff this awareness is more evident in his mature poetry. She also notes that in an early volume Wind Among the Reeds 8% of the rhymes are approximate. In his next volume In the Seven Woods 22% of the rhymes are approximate and this percentage rises to

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(stanza 1), shade/shade (stanza 2), aloud/blood (stanza 3), and blood/flood (stanza 5). This shows a higher integration of rhymes than in other poems of comparative length. Though one cannot positively assign a reason for this phenomenon, it pleases the critical sense as if it were evidence of some particular artistry.

"Lapis Lazuli" is a poem of Yeats' late phase.[101] It is in some ways an exceptional poem in that many later poems do not exhibit quite the same complexity in rhyme. (See his collection Last Poems) Nevertheless it shows the possibilities Yeats was able, and occasionally willing, to exploit. Some of the rhymes used in this poem are: fiddle-bow/know, play/Cordelia, Lear/there, once/ounce, shipboard/sword, muleback/rack, Callimachus/rise, bronze/stands, lapis lazuli/longevity, servingman/stone, avalanche/cherry branch, snows/house.

If one compares these rhymes with those of "He Gives His Beloved Certain Rhymes" the expansion in vocabulary will be seen to be immense. And not only does he use a much wider range of rhyming words but he breaks new ground in pairs like lapis lazuli/longevity which have not appeared in poetry, one would surmise, either before or since. He knows how to exploit the unique and sonorous quality of the proper noun in rhyme. He makes daring phonetic associations that seem to have an inevitable semantic connection: play/Cordelia. He uses consonance, light rhyme and grammatical forms that include the verb, pronoun, adjective, preposition and adverb. The increase in adventurousness, confidence and creativity is unmistakeable.

T.S. ELIOT

Unlike Yeats, Eliot was not intensely preoccupied with the exploration of original rhyme or the exploitation of approximate rhyme, though both occur in his poetry. Eliot's perception of the poet's mission to redeem the ancient rhyme is less secular. Rhyme is of the word, and the word is with the Word. Rhyme is an Incarnation of harmony, an echo that

inhabits the Garden, a still point in the turning world of verse.

Laforgue was a strong influence on Eliot's earlier rhyme. In Prufrock we find the Laforguian unequal couplet, the couplet embedded between unrhymed lines and the rhymes between "high" and "low" words. This influence became less obtrusive as Eliot developed his own ideas on rhyme, and on his own type of "free verse".

In his Reflections on Vers Libre' Eliot comments on rhyme as follows:

> But it is possible that excessive devotion to rhyme has thickened the modern ear. The rejection of rhyme is not a leap at facility; on the contrary it imposes a much severer strain upon the language. When the comforting echo of rhyme is removed, success or failure in the choice of words, in the sentence structure, in the order, is at once more apparent. Rhyme removed, the poet is at once held up to the standard of prose. Rhyme removed, much ethereal music leaps up from the word, music which has hitherto chirped unnoticed in the expanse of prose...
> And this liberation from rhyme might be as well a liberation of rhyme. Freed from its exacting task of supporting lame verse, it could be applied with greater effect where it is most needed. There are often passages in an unrhymed poem where rhyme is wanted for some special effect, for a sudden tightening up, for a cumulative insistence, or for an abrupt change of mood. But formal rhymed verse will certainly not lose its place. 102

This passage is remarkable for the way in which Eliot polarizes rhyme and poetic speech. Sub-standard lines creep into poetry under the countenance of rhyme. But the poet's language should not need external support, it should be self-sufficient. When this is achieved, rhyme as a prop or crutch becomes redundant and may be used for rhetorical special effects. Traditional rhyme is the frame over which the limp vine of the line must be trailed, but when the clinging vine grows into a self-supporting tree rhyme's role of support becomes obsolete. Eliot supposes this might be a

"liberation" of rhyme, but one does wonder how much freedom is involved in being removed as a structural principle and being relegated to a 'Special Effects' department.

The separation adumbrated above between the "ethereal music" of unrhymed verse and 'formal rhymed verse' becomes characteristic of Eliot's poetry. A poet in whom the historical sense was acute, he developed a type of poetry in which the rhyming tradition of the past was placed in relation to the individually structured repetitive form of the present. Eliot is never so much himself as when he is alluding to someone else, and in a poem like Four Quartets "quotations" of traditional rhyme patterns are set amongst the more individual freer sections.

Eliot's "free verse", which is without doubt his predominant form, uses irregular stanzas and rhyme patterns. In Ash Wednesday, the high point of his free style, every section has its own idiosyncratic form and rhyme. Repetition (or exact rhyme) gives a highly structured and symbolic form to this 'free' verse. This repetition is influenced by biblical parallelism:

> there is a time for building
> And a time for living and for generation
> And a time for the wind to break the loosened pane...
> East Coker I

But this use of repetition also imitates certain rhetorical features of Lancelot Andrewes style, as will be discussed more fully in the chapter on diction. The result is passages such as the following:

> Time present and time past
> Are both perhaps present in time future
> And time future contained in time past
> If all time is eternally present
> All time is unredeemable.
> Burnt Norton I

Eliot develops this technique of repetition from Prufrock through The Wasteland (especially section v), and it reaches its apogée in Ash Wednesday and Four Quartets.

Where the internal patterning of his lines is less intense traditional rhyme often resumes its place, as occurs in some lines of "Marina" for instance. The poems composed in imitation of Gautier's Émaux et Camées and written in a brief period of revulsion against free verse (See for example, "Sweeney Among the Nightingales") have traditionally rhymed regular stanzas and do not use repetitive patterning of language.

The Wasteland, as it now stands, is mostly unrhymed. Pound is usually praised for his blue-pencilling and excising of sections of this work, but one could argue that he destroyed the characteristic cast of the poem, in which rhymed sections counterpointed unrhymed sections. Apart from the Shakespearian blank verse in section II, other traditional allusions existed. Section IV originally included some rhymed quatrains and some blank verse, but these were later excised. Section III in the original version was initiated by a pastiche of Pope in couplet rhyme, also rejected.

The typist's seduction was originally narrated in rhymed quatrains. Under Pound's influence some quatrains were kept and some omitted, quatrains were compressed or altered (and rhymes lost in the process) and some rhymes excised. What appears to be irregular rhyme in the final version is actually a remaindered mess. My comments in the above two paragraphs may be confirmed by anyone who examines the original draft of the poem as I did.

With hindsight one can see that 'il miglior fabbro' might

have been more responsive to the distinctive character of the Eliotian enterprise if instead of excising he had helped to overhaul or shorten "traditional" sections.

Eliot reverted to the counterpointing of free and rhymed sections in Four Quartets. In each Quartet the first part of section II and all of section IV are rhymed (with the exception of "The Dry Salvages"IV). Rhymed sections include cinquains rhyming ababb, sestets in stanza rhyme, octaves in unequal couplets, and septets with a rhyme pattern similar to rhyme royal.

Section II of "Burnt Norton" and of "East Coker", those "periphrastic stud(ies) in a worn-out poetical fashion" have been commonly regarded as irregularly rhymed. "East Coker II" does have a regular pattern however, as Frank Burch Brown has demonstrated.[104] It is aabb/cdd/eee/ddc/fagf. "Burnt Norton II" runs aba/ccb/dcb/bde/eec. It seems possible that Eliot is imitating, in these two sections, a medieval rhyme scheme such as occurs in a ballade. A pattern like those quoted in the Trattato delle Rime Volgari (for example aba/cdcd/dba/bebe/eba) could seem 'irregular' if one wasn't aware of its traditional character. I have not been able to trace an exact original for Eliot's patterns, however.

In general one receives the impression that Eliot, despite his respect for, interest in and knowledge of traditional end-rhyme, found the form constricting. His rhyme "quotations" are brief lyrical sections, artificial in the best sense of the word, which do not so much advance the argument of the poem as rehearse in very figurative language what will be repeated and expanded on a more

discursive level in the "free verse" sections. Eliot seems to regard this type of rhyme as more ornamental than functional, as hindering rather than facilitating the expression of the theme. W.H. Auden, whose poem "The Sea and the Mirror" owes something to Eliot's technique, appears to demonstrate a similar sense of traditional rhyme's limitations.

The most accomplished rhyming technician of this century, in my view is Ezra Pound (though a case could be made for Eliot as the greater artist in rhyme, since Pound's rhymes draw attention to themselves in a way that sometimes transgresses the bounds of decorum). His knowledge is grounded in a thorough early study of traditional forms such as the ballade, canzone, aubade, sestina and the sonnet, the product of his joint interest in technique and Provencal literatur After the first decade of the century, however, his verse becomes freer and unrhymed.

The major poem "Near Perigord" is unrhymed. Then occured the temporary revulsion against "free verse" which led Pound and Eliot to write poems in the style of Théophile Gautier's Émaux et Camées. Gautier uses mainly endstopped perfect rhymes; Pound's homage, as it appears in Hugh Selwyn Mauberley, is not an exact imitation but a brilliant improvisation or variation.

For his major work, the Cantos, Pound, like Milton, turned away from rhyme. There are a few lyric sections that are rhymed, but the greater part is unrhymed.

Pound's most original work in rhyme was done in Hugh Selwyn Mauberley. It is an isolated peak of achievement in his oeuvre, unrivalled for the variety of its rhyme.

Effortlessly exploited are features common to modern

rhyme such as the use of enjambement to provoke a dissonance between the run-on impetus of the line and the backward counterpull of the rhymes, the collocation of stressed and unstressed rhymes, the display of varieties of consonance and assonance.

Pound introduces much new material into his rhymes. He uses words which are rare in the poetic canon for rhymes (reveries/mendacities[105], ambrosia/arcadia/phantasmagoria[106]) and words of scientific origin (series/irides, diastasis/anaesthesis).[107]

He uses words and phrases in languages other than English as rhymes (eni Troie/lee-way[108], l'an trentiesme/diadem[109], tín(Gr. for 'what')/tin (the metal))[110] and he delights in the sonorous or exotic proper name (Messalina/engraver's[111], Pier Francesca/Achaia)[112] or rhymes combining a foreign word and a proper noun (eau-forte/Jaquemart).[113]

Laforgue's influence is evident in the yoking together of "high" and "low" rhymes:

> The sale of half-hose has
> Long since superceded the cultivation
> Of Pierian roses. [114]

This is a remarkable rhyme for the satiric quality of the contrast between the commonplace object and the exquisite and aesthetic, the wit that has found out a phonetic resemblance between 'hose has' and "roses" and the dissonance between a rhyme of one word and another of three words.

As regards the latter characteristic, Pound appreciates the difference in quality given to rhymes of unequal length. Pisistratus/us[115] has something of the witty and unexpected about it attributable to this factor, apart from the dissonances in stress, language, and grammatical identity that contribute to the effect.

Very deft in this poem is the pointing of meaning through rhyme. In sections II and III the "tawdry cheapness" of the modern age is scornfully compared to the "Attic grace" of classical civilization. The dissonance in values is satirically enacted in the rhymes: grimace/grace, plaster/alabaster, Samothrace/market-place. The word 'grace' shares identical letters with "grimace" yet is antithetical in meaning. What morphology implies, semantics denies.

The semantic relation between the rhymes may be synonymic rather than antithetical as in ambrosial/Ariel, the words sharing a sense of the celestial and beautiful, or may stand metonymically in a parasitic relation, for instance when a youthful generation "Charm, smiling at the good mouth" is devoured by "an old bitch gone in the teeth", a botched civilization.[116] [117]

Meaning may be mimetically conveyed through the type of rhyme used. In the section "The Age Demanded" the preponderance of rhymes using abstract nouns (better tradition'/concentration/confession/aggression and so forth) is striking. When one recalls Pound's pursuit of the concrete particular in his poetry and his dislike of abstractions, then it seems likely that these rhymes are intended to convey something about Mauberley, his ineptitudes as an artist, for instance, and as a man.

Subtlety of rhyme in 'Mauberley" is a tribute to Pound's musical ear. A rhyme such as them/civilization in section V is so tenuous as to call into question whether it is a rhyme or not - the final consonants do not exactly match but are phonetically related.

A subtle connection between stanzas is created by rhyme

such as the terminal "s" sound in section III (replaces/ Cos/barbitos/Dionysus/macerations/says/days/Samothrace/ market-place/us/equals/Pisistratus/us) or as in "Yeux Glauques" where "Swinburne" (stanza 1) has musical affinities with "Burne-Jones cartons" (stanza 3) and "still-born" (stanza 4). The play of similarity and difference between the forms gives great delight.

A useful point of comparison in measuring the distance travelled by Pound's technique lies in the pastiche of Edmund Waller's "Goe, lovely rose" in "Envoi". Waller's rhyme scheme is a regular ababb repeated in each stanza. Pound's rhyme pattern varies from stanza to stanza, just as in Mauberley as a whole the rhyme patterns vary between sections, and within the same section may have maverick stanzas which sound the dissonant note of the Modernist project. "Medallion", for example, comprises quatrains abab except the second stanza which is abcb.

Waller's rhymes are all full rhymes of approximately the same length such as rose/knows, spied/abide/died. Pound has rhymes of this kind but also rhymes like lie/longevity, a sight rhyme combining short and long words and

hers/worshippers, a light rhyme, differing in length and grammatical identity. His final triple rhyme of oblivion/down/alone is informed by similarity of emotional and musical tone. The multiple rhyme signals closure, as it does in several other sections of the poem.

These comments should be sufficient to indicate the originality, musicality and wit of Pound's rhymes. It must be acknowledged that this type of rhyme could not be indiscriminately used in all kinds of verse. It is perhaps most suitable for the ironic and satiric genres. Nevertheless Pound's rhymes convincingly demonstrate the achievement of the modernist poet in the sphere of rhyme.

CONCLUSION

In summing up our researches in this chapter we find that the historical debate between pro-rhymers and anti-rhymers has not yet been resolved. The debate is often enacted in the career of each individual poet as s/he moves between the possibilities of traditional rhyme, unconventional rhyme and unrhymed verse.

In respect of the rhymes deployed in the contemporary era, it appears that the colloquial or satiric character of much modern poetry has determined the kinds of rhymes used. Modern poets resort to various strategies to mute their rhymes. Consequently full or perfect rhyme is supplemented or replaced by approximate or imperfect rhyme.

Modern poets have also developed the semantic possibilities inherent in rhyme and have placed a premium on the unusual and original rhyming word.

It is strikingly evident that rhyme is not an elementary negligible form but one capable of subtle and profound effects in the hands of the inventive and artful poet.

Poets should be aware of the wide range of possibilities inherent in rhyme in order to orchestrate their effects with intelligence and sensitivity. They may learn from the rhyme profiles in this chapter that rhyme is not a rigid form but one amenable to development by the creative innovator.

Notes to Chapter 2

[1]A political squib composed by William Collingbourne against Richard III, whose device was a hog. The perils of rhyme are illustrated by the execution of the poet on Tower Hill in 1484.

[2]Roman Jakobson in his "Linguistics and Poetics". Selected Writings III (The Hague:Mouton, 1981) 18-51 describes rhyme as a particular case of poetic parallelism.

[3]Wordsworth regarded the perception of similarity in dissimilarity as a fundamental principle of aesthetics, as he states in his "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads", Selected Prose (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988) 297.

[4]Sigmund Freud, "Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious". The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud ed. A. A. Brill (New York: Modern Library, 1938) 714.

[5]William Butler Yeats, Letters on Poetry, from W. B. Yeats to Dorothy Wellesley (London: Oxford University Press, 1940) 90.

[6]Wordsworth used this phrase to describe the function of metre in his "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads" 295.

[7]Philip Larkin, Required Writing: Miscellaneous Pieces 1955-1982 (London: Faber,1983) 50. In an interview with the Observer Larkin comments that the lyrics influenced his concept of poetry as something that scans and rhymes.

[8]Marianne Moore, "Virginnia Britannia", The Complete Poems of Marianne Moore (London: Faber, 1967) 107.

[9]W.K. Wimsatt, "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason". The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry (London: Methuen, 1970)165.

[10]John Dryden, "An Essay on Dramatic Poesy". Selected Works of John Dryden ed. William Frost (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953) 321-387.

[11]Sylvia Plath, Collected Poems (London: Faber, 1981). See poems like "Parliament Hill Fields" 152, "Cut" 235 and others.

[12]Many of her poems illustrate this description, for instance the poem "Virginia Britannia" already quoted.

[13]"One Relation of Rhyme to Reason".

[14]According to the article on Rhyme in the Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974) 705-709.

[15]Dante Alighieri, De Vulgari Eloquentia: Dante's Book of Exile ed. Marianne Shapiro (Lincoln:University of Nebraska Press,1990).

[16]Antonio da Tempo, Trattato Delle Rime volgari and Compendio Dell'Arte Ritmica by Francesco Baratella (Bologna:Forni, 1970).

[17]George Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936) 2.75.

[18]Puttenham 86.

[19]Thomas Campion, Observations in the Art of English Poesie in Samuel Daniel, A Defence of Rhyme and Thomas Campion, Observations in the Art of English Poesie(Edinburgh: University Press, 1966).

[20]Campion 6.

[21]Samuel Daniel, A Defence of Ryme and Thomas Campion, Observations in the Art of English Poesie (Edinburgh:University Press,1966).

[22]Daniel 15.

[23]Ben Jonson, "A Fit of Rime Against Rime". The Literature of Renaissance England eds. John Hollander and Frank Kermode (New York:Oxford University Press, 1973) 572.

[24]John Milton, "The Verse", Paradise Lost ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Penguin, 1989) 3.

[25]Edmund Bysshe, The Art of English Poetry(london, 1708).

[26]Alexander Pope, Collected Poems ed. Bonomy Dobrée (London: Dent, 1983).

[27]Wordsworth, "Preface" 287.

[28]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria or, Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions; and Two Lay Sermons (London: Bell,1889) 180.

[29]George Gordon, Lord Byron, "Don Juan", Poetical Works ed. John Jump (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970) Canto I.LII-LIII.

[30]J. Walker, A Rhyming Dictionary new ed. J. Longmuir (London: William Tegg, 1865).

[31]George Saintsbury, Historical Manual of English Prosody (London: Macmillan, 1910).

[32]Emily Dickinson, The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson ed. Thomas H. Johnson (London: Faber, 1970).

[33]Gerard Manley Hopkins, Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins ed. W. H. Gardner (Harmondsworth: Penguin,1953). All the poems cited appear in this volume.

[34]Jules Laforgue, "Dernier Vers", Poems ed. J. A. Hiddleston (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) 181-217.

[35]Warren Ramsay, Jules Laforgue and the Ironic Inheritance (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953) 7.

[36]William Carlos Williams, "The Old House" (1944), The Collected Later Poems (London: Macgibbon & Kee, 1965)116-17.

[37]e. e. cummings, "Poem, or Beauty Hurts Mr. Vinal", Selected Poems 1923-1958 (London: Faber, 1960) 12.

[38]Pope, Essay on Criticism 1348-353. 66-67.

[39]Robert Frost, Selected Poems ed. Ian Hamilton (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973) 29.

[40]Donald Wesling, The Chances of Rhyme: Device and Modernity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) 35.

[41]Frost, "Acquainted with the Night"in the collection"West-Running Brook", Selected Poems 152.

[42]Theodor Adorno, Aesthetic Theory ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984) 213.

[43]William Carlos Williams, Interviews with William Carlos Williams:Speaking Straight Ahead" ed. Linda Welshimer Wagner (New York: New Directions, 1976) 81.

[44]Wystan Hugh Auden, Selected Poems ed. Edward Mendelson (London: Faber, 1979) 138. I will quote here the first stanza of the poem "Stephano".

Embrace me, belly, like a bride;	a
Dear daughter, for the weight you drew	b
From humble pie and swallowed pride	a
Believe the boast in which you grew	b
Where mind meets matter, both should woo	b
Together let us learn that game	c
The high play better than the blue:	b
A lost thing looks for a lost name.	C

[45]Princeton Encyclopedia 709.

[46]Robert Graves, "Harp, Anvil, Oar", The Structure of Verse: Modern Essays on Prosody rev. ed. Harvey Gross (New York:Ecco,1979) 36.

[47]I have consulted two modern rhyming dictionaries:Rosalind Fergusson, The Penguin Rhyming Dictionary (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985) and Frances Stillman, The Poet's Manual and Rhyming Dictionary (London: Thames and Hudson,1966).

[48]Robert Lowell, "An Interview with Frederick Seidel", Collected Prose (New York: Farrar, Strauss ,Giroux, 1987) 242.

[49]Robert Lowell, Robert Lowell: Interviews and Memoirs ed. Jeffrey Meyers (Ann Arbor:University of Michigan Press, 1988).

[50]Robert Graves, On English Poetry: Being an Irregular Approach to the Psychology of This Art, from Evidence Mainly Subjective (London: Heinemann, 1922) 90.

[51]"Roosters" appears in her collection "North and South", The Complete Poems (New York:Farrar, Straus and Giroux,1969). I quote here two separate representative stanzas.

gilding the tiny
floating swallow's belly
and lines of pink cloud in the sky

the day's preamble
like wandering lines in marble.
The cocks are now almost inaudible.

[52]Moore, The Complete Poems 180.

[53]Randall Jarrell, "The Woman at the Washington Zoo", The Complete Poems (London: Faber, 1971) 215.

[54]"The Buffalo", The Complete Poems 27.

[55]"The Fish", The Complete Poems 32.

[56]"of all the blessings which to man," Selected Poems 51.

[57]See for instance "The Jerboa", The Complete Poems 10.

[58]"The Buffalo", The Complete Poems 27.

[59]"To Military Progress", The Complete Poems 82.

[60]Thomas Stearns Eliot, "The Wasteland", Selected Poems (London: Faber, 1954) 59.

[61]Eliot, "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service", Selected Poems44.

[62]Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics" 38-39.

[63]Eliot, "Ash-Wednesday", Selected Poems 86.

[64]Thomas Stearns Eliot, "The Dry Salvages V", Four Quartets (London: Faber, 1944) 32.

[65]Eliot, "Ash-Wednesday", Selected Poems 86.

[66]Wimsatt, "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason".

[67]Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics" quotes the student papers for 1865 of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Hopkins writes that the two elements in beauty of rhyme are like sounds and unlike meaning. Hence grammatically unlike rhymes are richer.

[68]Selected Poems 46.

[69]"The Jerboa", The Complete Poems 10.

[70]"An Egyptian Pulled Glass Bottle in the Shape of a Fish", The Complete Poems 83.

[71]Sonnet 5 in the sonnet sequence "Clearances", The Haw Lantern (London: Faber, 1987) 29.

[72]"Under Which Lyre", Selected Poems 178.

[73]See his Introduction to her Selected Verse.

[74]Marianne Moore, The Complete Prose (London: Faber, 1987) 589. The rhyme appears in "The Jerboa".

[75]The rhyme occurs in "Virginia Britannia".

[76]"The Barn" in the collection "Death of a Naturalist", Selected Poems 1965-1975 (London: Faber, 1980) 14.

[100]For the texts of "Byzantium" and "Lapis Lazuli" see Appendix A.

[101]For the text of "Lapis Lazuli" see Appendix A.

[102]T. S. Eliot, "Reflections on Vers Libre", The Structure of Verse: Modern Essays on Prosody 232-33.

[103]Selected Poems 103-4.

[104]Frank Burch Brown, "Covert Rhyme in the Scheme of Eliot's 'East Coker'", Papers on Language and Literature 18.4 (Winter 1982): 421-27.

[105]Section II.

[106]"Mauberley" Section II.

[107]"Mauberley" Section II.

[108]Section I.

[109]Section I.

[110]Section III.

[111]"Mauberley" Section I.

[112]"Mauberley" Section I.

[113]"Mauberley" Section I.

[114] Section XII.

[115]Section III.

[116]Section III.

[117]Section V.

CHAPTER 3

DICTION

> The excellence of diction consists in being perspicuous without being mean. The most perspicuous is that which is composed of common words; but at the same time it is mean...That language, on the contrary, is elevated, and remote from the vulgar idiom, which employs unusual words: by unusual I mean foreign, metaphorical, extended... Yet should a poet compose his diction entirely of such words, the result would be, either an enigma, or a barbarous jargon...
>
> Aristotle: The Poetics XXVI

> The Sublime is a certain excellence and perfection of language...
> ...ornamental words are the peculiar light of our thoughts...
>
> Longinus: On the Sublime I, IV

> I gotta use words when I talk to you
>
> T.S. Eliot: Fragment of an Agon

> There's every mode of singing robe in stock,
> From Shakespeare's gorgeous fur coat, Spencer's muff,
> Or Dryden's lounge suit to my cotton frock,
> And Wordsworth's Harris tweed with leathern cuff.
> Firbank, I think, wore just a just-enough;
> I fancy Whitman in a reach-me-down,
> But you, like Sherlock, in a dressing gown.
>
> W.H. Auden: Letter to Lord Byron III

INTRODUCTION

I will begin with a definition and, taking as my model the classical commonplace that rhetoric is the ars bene dicendi, the art of speaking well, I will define the technique of poetic diction as the art of using language well in poetry.

For many readers the words "poetic diction" have perjorative associations derived from Wordsworth's treatment of the term in his Preface to the Lyrical Ballads. In that work he narrows the term to mean artificial as opposed to natural poetic language. I do not use the term in this narrow sense but in its original broader sense, since I will entertain not only Romantic but also Classical concepts of diction.

I include questions of style and word usage under poetic

diction. The term "style" is akin to "diction" and in fact the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines them in similar terms. However while I define diction as the art of using language in poetry, I use the term style in a narrower sense to refer to manner of expression, the architecture of the sentence, and the concepts of decorum and levels of style. I use the term "word usage" in an even narrower sense to refer to particular types of words, alterations to words and the like.

When we speak of style as a manner of expression, however, we find that critical literature refers to expression both as the ornament or clothing of subject matter, and as an organic expression of the subject.

The concept of style as ornament or clothing has been a commonplace since classical times. Puttenham in his grandiloquent Elizabethan language expresses this concept as follows:

> This ornament we speake of is given to it by figures and figuative speeches, which be the flowers as it were and coulours that a Poet setteth upon his language by arte, as the embroiderer doth his stone and perle, or passements of gold upon the stuffe of a Princely garment, or as th'excellent painter bestoweth the rich Orient coulours upon his Table of pourtraite....[1]

Style as an organic expression of the subject is a concept known to classical authors, for example Longinus, but has achieved prominence in the Romantic and particularly the Modern period. Coleridge, for example, in his essay <u>On Poesy or Art</u> differentiates between form as proceeding and shape as superinduced, the latter being "the death or the imprisonment of the thing."[2] In the Modern era the concept of style as ornament comes under increasing attack. I. A. Richards, for example, writing in 1936, considers this analogy as misleading since it implies a separation of form and content.[3]

That not every poet was persuaded of this is evident from the Auden stanza quoted as an epigraph, in which a clothing metaphor

is the organizing figure. But in most cases the concept of organic form exercised a critical hegemony over the writers of the first half of this century.

It seems as if the writer is faced with two opposing ideas of style: style as separable or style as inseparable from content. But we might more comprehensively grasp a subtle concept like style by deconstructing crude binary bifurcations.

If then we use the not uncommon metaphor of a house for a poem ("stanza", for example, means "room") we can regard style in literature as analogous to architectural style and, as such, both separable and inseparable from that which is informed. A house need not be architect-designed, but if it is, the architectural style or design or form is not something superimposed on the house, but constitutes the house. If the style or design or form is good it expresses the function and shapes the matter or material of the house.

Similarly, literary style is something which <u>can</u> be conceived of as separate from the poem, but good style is functional and helps to constitute content.

One could also deconstruct the opposition between style as imposed upon the subject and style as an organic expression of the subject by changing the terms of the argument slightly and considering the opposition between style as art and style as nature or organic. Then one could argue that while one can imagine a natural language without an elaborate style, yet the art that one uses when one applies style to language is actually natural since nature includes such phenomena as style.

Shakespeare says much the same thing in <u>A Winter's Tale</u> when, in querying an opposition between Art and Nature he has his character argue:

> Yet nature is made better by no mean
> But Nature makes that mean...
> .....
> The art itself is nature. 4.4

In the Postmodern period a new concept of style appears to have arisen in which style floats free of content and context altogether and exists as a playful juggling of unreferential discourses, a pastiche of dead texts. This type of style is epitomised in the work of John Ashbery and will be described later in the chapter.

Having defined our terms, let us proceed to a brief overview of the topics to be raised in this chapter.

Is there, we ask, a special language for poetry? If there is, how does the poet create such a language? How does s/he fit this language to different subjects? What forms of expression are most elegant or forceful? What words should be used?

If it is denied that there is a special language for poetry, or if it is considered that poetic language does not differ from the language of prose, under what standards, with what goals and methods does the poet compose?

What place has the "conversational" in poetic diction?

If, for postmodern poets, language is a prison-house, how can they smuggle out their messages? Or should they organize a jail-break?

While the author's opinion as to the correct answers to these questions will become obvious to the reader my primary aim is not to impose my own beliefs on the reader but to enable him or her to formulate his or her answers with the aid of the examples of theory and practice discussed.

Tropes will be discussed, with imagery, in a separate chapter. They are classified as figures of diction, but differ from other figures which organize language on the material or grammatical plane, in that they bring about semantic transfigurations.

I have measured out my life with coffee spoons
T.S. Eliot: The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

THE LITERARY LANGUAGE

We initiate our response to the above questions with an enquiry into the very nature of the medium of diction itself, the language. Is poetic diction the language of everyday speech? Is it the language of prose? Let us consult the considered judgement of historical authorities.

In the classical era Aristotle, in his treatise On Rhetoric, noted that in poetry the poet makes the language unfamiliar, deviating from normal usage. Aristotle polarizes ordinary speech and poetry, placing prose in the middle, as a mean between extremes. Poetry differs from prose, on the lexical plane, in employing neologisms, rare words and compound words.[4]

In the medieval era we turn naturally to one of the most important writers, Dante, whose treatise De Vulgari Eloquentia is, among other things, an enquiry into the nature of the literary language. Dante begins his treatise with an encomium on "the speech of the common people", the vernacular[5]; however it soon appears that this is not a validation of ordinary speech for literary purposes. On the contrary, Dante considers that ordinary dialects have uncouth words, confused constructions, defective pronunciations and rustic accents.[6]

Dante's paradigm for the literary language is the unitary, Edenic language, Hebrew, which all men spoke before the hubris of the Tower of Babel brought about a cataclysmic fall into polyglossia.[7] His project is to redeem language from its fallen dialectal state and construct an ideal archetype, an illustrious vernacular that belongs to every city, though it seems to belong to none. Like the mythical panther, it scatters its fragrance everywhere and shows itself nowhere.[8] It is

the standard of all vernaculars: noble, clear and perfect. This language will ipso facto be used only by the noblest poets on the worthiest subjects in the highest style.

Dante does not specifically discuss whether poetry differs from prose, but he does quote, in his examples of admirable sentence construction, from prose works as well as poetry, which shows an acceptance of some congruency between the two forms.

In the Renaissance we have Puttenham's assertion that the literary language should be more ornamental than ordinary speech. It is, however, based on natural, pure speech, the language of the Court or London or civil-bred men (not the language used at "Universities where scholars use much peevish affectation of words out of primative languages")[9]. More succinctly, Ben Jonson said "the true artificer's language differs somewhat from the vulgar. Yet it shall not fly from all humanity."[10]

Neo-classical doctrine of the following centuries accepted that the literary language differed from the everyday language.

The Preface to the Lyrical Ballads by Wordsworth is a key Romantic document on poetic language. At first glance it would appear as if Wordsworth is recommending the vulgar tongue for the literary language, since he emphasizes that he writes the "language really used by men".[11] But closer examination reveals important qualifications. This language must be imprinted "with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature"[12]. It must also be"purified... from what appears to be its real defects..."[13]. This selection of the language really spoken by men, made, as Wordsworth says, with"true taste", "will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life".[14] It is thus clear that Wordsworth has

in mind a "more permanent and philosophical language"[15] than the language of everyday speech.

According to Wordsworth "the language of a large portion of every good poem... must necessarily (except with reference to the metre) in no respect differ from that of good prose."[16] There is no essential difference between good prose and poetry.

Coleridge's objections to Wordsworth's poetics of the literary language are enunciated in his Biographia Literaria. Coleridge rejects the concept of a literary language taken from the mouths of men in real life, and specifically in rural life. He argues that the language of men in rural communities is dialectal, unimaginative, confined to particulars and has a restricted vocabulary. In no way can this be regarded as a literary language. He goes on to say that even if this language is purified of grossness the result would not differ from the language of any man of common sense.[17]

I wish to ask whether this criticism does not rest on a misinterpretation of Wordsworth's programme? That there is misunderstanding somewhere is evident from the discrepancy between Wordsworth's assertion that their opinions on poetry almost entirely coincided and Coleridge's stance of dissociation from parts of the theory of diction.

Coleridge does not seem to have any sympathy for Wordsworth's visionary belief in the impression made on the language of a country dweller by the sublime forms of nature. On the contrary he regards rural isolation as impoverishing not enriching language. (When Wordsworth contemplates a countryman he sees a representative human being whose language reflects universal feelings incorporated with the beautiful forms of nature; what obtrudes itself more on Coleridge's attention is the fact that the rustic does not read Kant). Furthermore, although Coleridge notes the

extent to which Wordsworth's diction differs from ordinary language he does not note that it intentionally differs, though understandably, since Wordsworth's statements in this respect are sometimes ambiguous.

Coleridge asserts that the language of poetry is essentially different from prose. As conversation differs from prose, so prose differs from poetry. Syntax and modes of expression, such as figures of speech, are characteristically different in prose and poetry. (This may be open to dispute - traditionally rhetoric drew its examples of figures from both prose and poetry, though acknowledging that poetry was distinctive in its use of metre and more unusual words.)

To exemplify modern critical views on the subject I turn to Ferdinand de Saussure and Mikhail Bakhtin, since both are authoritative figures in the field of language.

According to Ferdinand de Saussure language, given free development, only exists as dialects. As soon as some level of civilization is reached one of the dialects is chosen as a standard language and absorbs to itself elements of the other dialects. The literary language is analogous to the standard language[18] and hence, in a sense, an artificial creation.

The literary language is not ordinary speech according to Bakhtin, in his rather polemical pronouncement, since

> Vulgar, nonliterary discourse is saturated with low intentions and crude emotional expressions, oriented in a narrowly practical direction, overrun with petty philistine associations and reeks of specific contexts.[19]

Bakhtin differentiates sharply between the language of poetry and that of prose. Prose incorporates heteroglossia, that is, varieties of social languages . Poetry uses a unitary language[20], a canonical style subdued to the poet's intentions and stripped of specific contexts.[21] In other words,

prose language incorporates multiple types of language such as those used by different social or professional groups, those used by specific narrators or those languages belonging to different genres, whereas the language of poetry is dominated by the articulation of a single person, the poet. The poetic language, being cut off from actual social dialects may become conservative and moribund[22], and will therefore regularly have to be renewed.

Yet Bakhtin admits that a certain latitude for heteroglossia exists in the "low" poetic genres (for example satire) and may in certain epochs spill over even into "high" genres[23]. Thus Bakhtin deconstructs the absoluteness of his own distinction between prose and poetry.

In conclusion, most, if not all authorities agree that the literary language is not ordinary speech. This might seem to be a self-evident statement not worth demonstration. This is not the case, however, since in the course of our discussion of the diction of modern poets we will find some confident assertions to the contrary, particularly among American poets.

There is a language continuum upon which plane is situated, at different points, ordinary speech, prose and poetry, in that order. It is more practicable to consider the terms "prose" and "poetry" as deriving meaning relatively from their interaction than to think of them as absolute standards. Otherwise futile arguments can arise, for instance whether Walt Whitman writes poetry or prose because his verse is more "prosaic" than the poetry of other poets like Tennyson.

Historically, different eras will vary in their estimate of the correct place for poetry on the language continuum. The subject matter of poetry also influences the situating of the style on the continuum, as does genre.

When what we hoped for came to nothing, we revived
Marianne Moore "Elephants"

CRITICAL HISTORY

CLASSICAL AND NEO-CLASSICAL THEORIES

Now that the reader has taken cognizance of the kind of language suitable for poetry, we can proceed to discuss concepts which have been developed since classical times of the form that the language takes in poetry. Historically the Romantic era breaks quite noticeably with the Classical tradition of diction and this is taken into account in my organization of the discussion.

In the Classical era a body of theory on diction developed

around the concepts of decorum, style, figures, sentence construction and word usage. Classical theorists are in general agreement about decorum, levels of style and figures and, for the convenience of the reader, I have summarized these canons at the end of this section and have collected examples to illustrate the canons in an Appendix. The discussion of Classical theories of diction will therefore focus more on the differences and originalities of the Classical theorists than what they have in common.

Poetics and Rhetoric, in the Classical era, were closely related. The art of writing well and the art of speaking well were regarded as very largely co-extensive. Poetry and prose were accepted as similar literary phenomena; poetry differed from prose principally in its bondage to a stricter rhythm (i.e. metre) and its freedom in employing a wider and more exotic range of words. Consequently we find that poets have made intensive use of Classical rhetorical treatises such as Aristotle's On Rhetoric, the Rhetorica ad Herennium (once attributed to Cicero), Cicero's De Inventione and De Oratoria and Quintilian's Institutes of Oratory.

Aristotle's Poetics and On Rhetoric (particularly Book 3) contain in germ much that was expanded on by later theorists. For instance, in the On Rhetoric he advises that the style be lowered or raised appropriately to the subject,[24] a hint that was expanded on by later writers for the formulation of the canon of decorum and levels of style.(See the summary at the end of this section and the Appendices for terms not explained here.) He comments on sentence construction, identifying what was later termed parison, anaphora and antistrophe.[25] He mentions some figures, the originals of dozens identified by later critics. For instance he identifies circumlocution and its

suitability for use in an elevated style, the maxim or Sententia and epithets. The kernel of an organic and also a psychological theory of diction is contained in his comment that frequent epithets, compound words and unfamiliar words are suitable for one speaking passionately.[26]

Aristotle initiates the section on diction in his Poetics with a brief linguistic analysis of language, an approach sympathetic to contemporary thought. He then proceeds to word usage. He identifies words according to whether they are common (in common use), foreign (i.e.dialectal or regional), metaphorical, ornamental or neologisms. There are also words that poets extend, contract or otherwise alter in order to defamiliarize them, a use he particularly recommends as being both clear and exotic. (Greek may be more hospitable to this practice, but a certain potential also exists in English). There is the beginnings of a decorum of genre in his recommendation of exotic words for epics and metaphorical words (i.e. words close to common usage) for iambic verse (probably drama). Overall Aristotle recommends moderation or the mean in using words neither too trivial nor too exotic.

After Aristotle, Theophrastus, his protegé, formulated the classical requirements of good style as correctness, clarity, propriety and ornamentation.[27]

Horace, in his Ars Poetica expands our concept of decorum by stipulating that words be suitable to the person speaking and to the emotions expressed. Nature shapes our feelings and expresses them through words - the tongue is the soul's interpreter.[28] This is a view of decorum as truth to nature.

Horace also indited an influential passage on word usage. A poet achieves excellence of expression if, "by a curious combination" s/he makes a familiar word seem original. If a familiar word is not available, the poet has a privileged

licence to create neologisms as well. This privilege should, however, not be abused. Horace conceives of language as organic: Words are like the generations of leaves in the forest, the old pass away and the new are born.[29]

In his treatise Peri Hypsos or On the Sublime Longinus describes the high style. He defines the style, considers the elements of which it consists, how the poet can achieve sublimity and gives examples to illustrate his points. Longinus is of particular importance to modern poets because he adopts a thoroughly organic and psychological attitude to style.[30] Nature is the foundation of the sublime style, and nature delights in further regulation or art such as is consistent with the use of stylistic forms which are functional and reflect realities of thought and feeling. The sources of the sublime style are: Bold thought, intense feeling or passion, appropriate figures, noble and graceful expressions (including tropes and words), and dignity and grandeur in sentence construction.[31]

Typically Longinus emphasizes that thought and feeling precede expression in importance. Style is but the echo of the soul. Form should not be mechanically applied, but subject matter is incarnated in form. Longinus is among the first to recommend that the poet try to imagine how an "Ancient" , such as Homer, Demosthenes or Plato (and for later poets Longinus himself) would conceive of and express the theme the poet envisages.

The figures that are appropriate to the sublime style include the apostrophe, interogation, or questions and answers, asyndeton, hyperbaton, polyptotes and periphrasis. These figures, excepting periphrasis, judiciously used, give the impression of force or vehement passion since human beings under stress of emotion naturally express themselves in these styles. Take the example of hyperbaton or "disordered words": Under the pressure of emotions

human beings naturally transpose expressions or words. The figure is a conventional term for a psychological truth.

Too elaborate and studied a use of figures awakes the reader's suspicion that s/he is being manipulated. Figures must combine with sublime sentiments. In this way, "as the lesser lights of heaven are paled in the surrounding effulgence of the sun, so the artifices of rhetoric become invisible amidst the splendour of sublime thoughts."[32]

Equally the use of expressions such as hyperboles or tropes such as metaphors are appropriate if uttered under excited feelings.[33]

Both excessive contraction of sentences (where concision mutilates the sense) and excessive extension (producing enervation) are counterproductive. The sentence should be harmonious, both in sound and rhythm. Language is the music of nature in the soul which re-echoes as music in the reader's breast.[34]

The concept of decorum received a further extension in the Middle Ages when Dante turned the requirement of propriety upon poets themselves. Only the noblest poets should compose in the high style upon the worthy subjects of War, Love and Virtue since, as he phrases it, a pig embellished with an elegant harness is ridiculous.[35] Sentence construction for use in the high style should be as elegant as possible, complex and based on the example of the worthiest classical authors, consequently Latinate in many cases.[36] Words suitable for the high style are those which are neither simple and childish, soft and feminine, or hard and rustic. Urbane words which are neither too smooth or too rough are suitable. (Dante uses the archetypal clothing or cloth metaphor for style: the chosen words will be "combed" and "hairy". By these metaphors he seems to imply a certain harmoniousness in the sound and grandeur in length)

The Classical canons of style were revived and expanded during the Elizabethan age in England. With the awakening of national selfconsciousness we find a project among writers to enhance the homely vernacular and make it more decent and civil, to give it more subtlety and efficacy. Diction similar to that used in an "alehouse tale" can no longer suffice, the poet's language must become cunning and eloquent, in short, courtly.[37] It seemed only natural to turn to classical models of style and decorum.

Puttenham in his The Arte of English Poesie devotes the major part of the work, Book 3, to ornamentation of language, and a great part of Book 3 to a description of numerous figures. For to Puttenham, although it is a fault to use figures foolishly, it is no less an imperfection to use no figures at all, reducing the literary language to ordinary talk," than which nothing can be more unsavourie and farre from all civilitie."[38] With characteristic Elizabethan confidence he colonizes the Classical terms, supplying English equivalents whose metaphorical richness, particularly in the field of insult, is worth quoting.

So, for instance, Micterismus is translated into The Fleering Frumpe, Antiphrasis becomes The Broad Floute, Charientismus The Privy Nippe and Hiperbole The Overreacher, or The Loud Lyer.[39]

We recall that Theophrastus formulated the qualities of good style as correctness, clarity, propriety and ornamentation. After the exuberant magniloquence of the Elizabethans and their stress on ornamentation, the emphasis changes in the Augustan age and brings about a demand for clarity.

Clarity is Pope's watchword, clarity and truth to nature. This he makes evident in his An Essay on Criticism. This work

contains Pope's comments on decorum (l.318-323) and word usage (l.324-336). Although he gives the topics a new emphasis, his precepts are essentially classical and do not need repetition here. His comments on style and the line do, however introduce something new into our discussion.

His criteria of style are clarity,naturalness and wit, by which he means that

> True wit is Nature to advantage dress'd;
> What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
> (l.297-8)

Wit, here, is almost a synonym for style itself. This style organizes, improves and makes explicit what exists implicitly as an "image" (l.300) in all minds. Language should incarnate universal thoughts and feelings with almost archetypal truth and succinctness.

Wit, in the traditional narrow sense of sparkling humour, should be moderated and set off by "modest plainness of style"(l.302).

It is "false eloquence"(l.311) when style overbears content either through the chaotic ornamentation of glittering conceits (l.289-292) or through senseless verbosity (l.309-310).

> But true expression, like th' unchanging sun,
> Clears and improves what e'er it shines upon...(l.315-6)

In his discussion of the poetic line Pope introduces the concept of onomatopoeia. The sound must seem an echo to the sense (l.365). Pope regards onomatopoeia as deriving from the "power of music" (l.382). Roman Jakobson calls it "sound symbolism"[40] and W.K. Wimsatt defines onomatopoeia as a species of verbal mimesis or as a kind of kinaesthesis in Pope's specific examples.[41]

These examples (see l.366-373) show how the sound of a line may echo its sense in being soft and smooth (use of letters which phonetically are enunciated with ease), loud and rough (use of the fricative"r"), slow and effortful (use of extra stress

in the metre), or fast (Dactylic metre and an extra unstressed syllable). (My comments in parentheses are only meant to give an approximate idea of Pope's technique and are not exhaustive).

Before leaving Classical theories of diction and turning to the Romantic and Modern era I will summarize for the reader's convenience the generally accepted classical canons on decorum and figures. Examples of the high, powerful, middle and low styles, their use and abuse, together with examples of, and an alphabetical Index to, the figures will be found in the Appendices. This section is also co-temporal and co-extensive with modern poetry since I have drawn my examples without exception from modern poetry, and, particularly as regards figures, almost entirely from T.S. Eliot. Readers may conclude for themselves whether classical rhetoric's neck has in fact been wrung, a procedure which some modern poets enthusiastically recommended in the early half of the century. Poets may also be encouraged to emulation by evidence that one poet, such as Eliot, may obtain mastery over a wide range of stylistic forms.

DECORUM[42]

> Settled are the various forms and shades of style in poetry: if I lack the ability and knowledge to maintain these, how can I have the honoured name of poet?... Let each style keep its appointed place with propriety.[43]

All the Ancients agreed that there were at least two styles, the high and the low. Theophrastus distinguished also a middle or mean style and Demetrius added a fourth, the powerful. In practice, except for the high and low styles which are irreconcilable, styles may combine with each other, thus producing subtle shades of diction.

The style used by the poet should be approriate. It should be appropriate to the status of any narrator or speaker and approriate to the envisaged audience. It should be appropriate

to the subject matter: the poet should not speak casually about weighty matters, nor solemnly about trivial ones. It should be appropriate to genre. Traditionally the high style is used for tragic, heroic and sacred poetry. The middle style is appropriate for odes, lyrics and elegies, and the low style is used in the pastoral, satirical and burlesque genres.

THE HIGH STYLE[44]

The poet should aim at creating a sense of grandeur or sublimity. Normal diction is out of place here, because unimpressive. A poet may have recourse to extension of the length of the sentences or clauses, the use of circumlocutions and repetition. The repeated use of connectives such as "and...and...and" can be effective. The Ancients recommended beginning and ending the line metrically with a long syllable. Figures which have grandeur should be chosen; see Longinus above for figures suitable for the sublime.

Exotic and ornate words, impressive and compound words are appropriate, but should be applied sparingly. Words coined by the poet hint at inspiration and are accordingly suitable for this style. The neologisms may be derived from some language with cultural prestige and should be similar to existing words. Phonetically the sound of the line should be neither too smooth nor too rough.

Allegorical and oracular speech is sublime.

It should not be forgotten that stateliness and grandeur arises primarily out of nobility of subject matter.

The characteristic fault of the high style inappropriately applied is bombast, known as frigidity among the Ancients. It occurs when the diction is turgid and overinflated and when an extravagant style is linked to trivial subject matter.

THE POWERFUL STYLE

Forcefulness can be achieved through constructing short, successive periods, also through deliberately shattering rhythm or metre. Compression conveys a sense of power in reserve. Figures useful in this style are anaphora, homoeoteleuton, asyndeton, gradatio, rhetorical questions and metaphor. Compound words are appropriate here, and a certain roughness phonetically.

Vehement speech and symbolic utterances are powerful. The subject matter should naturally suggest powerful treatment.

The powerful style misapplied has as faults, disjointedness, crass words and disagreeable or degrading subject matter.

THE MIDDLE STYLE

This style preserves a mean between the high and the low. It is more relaxed than the high but not colloquial. Demetrius refers to this style as the "polished" and characterizes it as having grace, charm, brightness and wit. The poet may find helpful the use of repetition, concision, exaggeration, proverbs, and quotations from another writer. All these stylistic features may give grace to the work. The sound of the verse should be smooth and metre is suitably more regular in this style. Words should be agreeable.

Demetrius gives Sappho's erotic subject matter as typically eliciting the polished style. In general, subject matter that does not rise absolutely to the heroic requires this style.

Characteristic faults of the middle style are slackness and affectation.

THE LOW STYLE

The conversational manner and current speech idiom are features of this style. The diction should appear normal, familiar and lucid. Sentences should not be overlong and word order should

be natural. Words should be simple and familiar and accurate.

The faults of the low style are aridity, triviality and meagreness. Bathos is an incongruous descent from the high to the low style.

MIXING THE STYLES

A good poet orchestrates his styles. As the author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium writes:

> But... we should vary the type of style so that the Middle succeeds the Grand and the Simple the Middle, and then again interchange them, and yet again. Thus, by means of the variation, satiety is easily avoided.[45]

T.S. Eliot's The Wasteland is a good example of deployment of styles. The high style is used very typically in most of Section V,"What the Thunder Said." An example of the middle style is the passage beginning "The river's tent is broken" from Section III,"The Fire Sermon". An obvious example of the low style is the Pub scene in Section II, "A Game of Chess."

FIGURES[46]

Figures are devices which add both force and beauty to style. Not all the figures can be used in all the styles; yet some figures may be used in all styles and all styles use some figures, even if only one of the ubiquitous forms of repetition.

The figures of repetition, such as anaphora, epistrophe and others, are of the most prominent in the literary language and lend great power and charm.

> ...the frequent recourse to the same word is not dictated by verbal poverty; rather there inheres in the repetition an elegance which the ear can distinguish more easily than words can explain.[47]

The reader should turn to Appendix C to find examples of some of the more important figures, with definitions and some comment on usage. Also included in this work is an Index to figures and tropes.

Tropes are figures of a special kind, and I have thought best to discuss them, with imagery, in a separate chapter.

Apart from the distinctive tropes, figures are traditionally divided into figures of speech - which manipulate diction on a material level - and figures of thought - in which the actual structure of the language is not altered. However there is not universal agreement as to which figures belong in which category and the reader is free to differ amicably from the logic of the arrangement in the Appendix.

> I don't know how humanity stands it
> with a painted paradise at the end of it
> without a painted paradise at the end of it
> Ezra Pound Canto LXXIV

ROMANTIC THEORIES OF DICTION

Now that the principal tenets of Classical theory of style and word usage have been discussed, we will turn our attention to Romantic theory which, while not completely breaking with earlier doctrine, certainly devalues rhetorical aesthetics and gives a new emphasis overall to the question of language.

Characteristic of Romantic theory is a new standpoint in the Art vs Nature debate. Whereas in Classical poetics the poet accepted that nature was the origin and the end, but needed art, with its discipline, refinement and embellishment, as intermediary, in Romantic poetics the poet tried to dispense with the middleman. Nature did not need the improving hand of art since nature was superior to anything art could produce in feeble imitation.

Romantic theory has had a wide-ranging influence on modern poetic diction as will appear later on. Jean Jacques Rousseau and William Wordsworth are important representative figures and I will confine my comments to them.

Rousseau's essay On the Origin of Language is an important document for the understanding of modern poetry and has attracted the attention of critics such as Jacques Derrida.

In Rousseau reoccurs that archetypal human quest: the search for an originary language common to all. In Classical times the common language could be situated in the Golden Age. In the Medieval period it could be identified with the speech of Eden. Modern linguistics has postulated a proto-Indo-European parent language. But the Romantics sought a natural language, the first innocent speech of man in nature as opposed to the degenerate language of man in society.

At various points in his essay, but mainly in chapter 4, Rousseau posits characteristics of this supposed primal language of original plenitude. The natural language is characterized by energy and freedom, it is oral, intonational and musical. Natural speech is melodic and expressive of emotion. It is naturally figurative, rich in tropes and onomatopoeia. It is enriched with imagery and aphorisms.

With the Fall of man from nature into society language degenerates diachronically. That is, historically, over a period of time, although it becomes clearer and more receptive to concepts, it loses energy and emotional expressiveness, becomes duller and more prolix. Speech loses its predominance to writing and writing becomes debilitated by conventions and rules of imitation, in short by art.

As will become evident, many modern poets, in their diction, appear to be trying, with more or less awareness, to recapture some of the characteristics of a supposed natural language in their poetry.

Some criticisms of Rousseau's theory suggest themselves.

The assertion that speech is self-evidently more natural than writing can be queried. Ferdinand de Saussure has argued that noone has actually proved that speech is inherently more natural

then other semiotic systems.[48]

Derrida, in his comprehensive discussion of the Essay has characterized Rousseau's position as embodying a fallacious "Metaphysics of Presence". Rousseau wishes to pretend that the oral accent did not already and always lend itself to regularization, grammar, prescription and reason.[49] Application of the principles of art do not necessarily enfeeble language.

> ...imitation, principle of art, has always already interrupted natural plenitude... having to be a discourse, it has always already broached presence in differance,...in Nature it is always that which supplies Nature's lack, a voice that is substituted for the voice of Nature.[50]

A poet should also, in my opinion, subject to hard scrutiny the premise that emotion or feeling is necessarily more "expressive" than concepts and reason.

Wordsworth's views on diction are stated in the Preface and Appendix to the Lyrical Ballads.

Wordsworth uses the term "poetic diction" in a narrow perjorative sense as pertaining to a false, artificial and self-perpetuating jargon. He ascribes to the poetic myth that is encountered in Longinus and Rousseau and also in statements by Puttenham, Dryden and no doubt other poets[51], namely that the earliest poets wrote from passion excited by real events and used naturally in their language figures which were conventionalized by later poets. Until the Romantic era this myth was regarded as validating the use of figures since they were grounded in an imitation of nature. For Wordsworth, however, the myth invalidated the conventional use of figures, since they had become the province of art not nature. (By "art" Wordsworth often implies "bad art").

The conventions of art are suspect to Wordsworth, mechanical and trivial compared to the sanctity and truth of Nature. Art

assumes the meanness of nature, that it can improve on nature. But nature is sublime and does not need elevation, only a receptiveness to her emanations of reality and truth. Art's function is the lesser one of removing what is painful and disgusting in reality, in order to foster aesthetic pleasure. The argument that since poetry can never be identical with nature, it should therefore accept its status as art and give a conventionalised representation of nature is rejected by Wordsworth as defeatism unworthy of a dedicated poet. It is not the conventions of art that should reflect nature, but the"mind of man" that should be a mirror of nature.[52]

In "poetic diction" figures are applied mechanically to subject matter with which they have no real connection by a poet who is unprompted by any real feeling. This conventional language is added to and perpetuated by poets from motives of self-aggrandizement until a style reflecting "the plain humanities of nature" is replaced by a corrupt language, "a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics and enigmas."[53]

To the false "poetic diction" Wordsworth opposes the "real language of men", a "simple and unelaborated language" that takes its impulse from a democratic dialogue of one human being speaking to another.[54]

The essence of style, for Wordsworth, must be sought in truth to subject matter, in a purposeful incarnation in language of feeling and thought. He accepts the use of figures only as an organic functional expression of psychological truth, not as an embellishment, a "foreign splendour". Figures form a natural part of language when men are moved by feeling; in such a case they are justified in poetry. This is true decorum, a matching of style to subject matter and to feeling.

To rephrase what I have said in other words: Wordsworth considers that the essence of style lies in looking steadily at the subject. From a judiciously chosen subject feelings arise on occasion and the language in which they are expressed is naturally figurative. Decorum of style is based on feeling. Great passions naturally produce a higher style than milder feelings.

Thus Wordsworth accepts that there are different levels of style. He mentions a style which is naturally "dignified and

variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures" deriving from passionate subject matter. He also mentions a style more subdued and temperate, prompted by milder passions.[55] Examples of these styles could be said to occur in The Prelude, Book 13 l.36-65 describing the vision on the slopes of Mount Snowdon and Book 1 l.535-562 describing homely amusements.

From our examination of the theories of Rousseau and Wordsworth it is evident that in the Romantic era some features of traditional poetic diction continued to be acceptable while others are rejected or receive a new emphasis; in brief the poet is required to elevate the poetic language through nature rather than art.

> War, one war after another,
> Men start 'em who couldn't put up a good hen roost
> Ezra Pound Canto XVIII

THE MODERN PERIOD

We have enquired into the nature of Classical and Romantic theories of poetic diction. This is knowledge of the poetic tradition which is essential for all modern poets since the influence of these theories, whether as something to repudiate or something to accept, extends into the modern period. While aesthetic solutions valid for one historical period cannot be adopted mechanically by another period, traditional knowledge informs, and at the very least gives depth to the practice of the best poets.

Now we turn to strategies of poetic diction evolved during this century. And firstly we will demonstrate that there is a place for traditional classical rhetoric in modern poetry, and also for what could be called baroque rhetoric. Then we will examine the rejection of rhetoric in poetic diction by

certain poets and the alternative strategies employed, namely the Penollosan style and varieties of the Conversational style. As final alternatives we will describe two postmodern responses to the technique of diction.

It should be understood that an individual poet's style may be identified with more than one of the trends isolated here. Cummings, for example, straddles several trends. Berryman has some of the characteristics of a postmodernist, but is not tout court postmodern in the sense that Ashbery is. Style is not something to be nailed down in categories with impunity.

CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL RHETORIC

A modern poet may choose to adopt, adapt, or use some of the forms conventionalised in classical rhetoric. Or s/he may use these forms without an historical awareness of their provenance.

T.S. Eliot uses classical techniques in a full awareness of their historical development and is consequently critical of what he regards as a false opposition between "rhetoric" and "conversational" diction. In his essay "Rhetoric and Poetic Drama"[56] he subtly deconstructs the terms and shows that the "conversational" style inappropriately applied may be termed rhetoric in a perjorative sense, while rhetoric can give great scope to the expressive possibilities of speech, as the Jacobean dramatists demonstrated. Decorum, an adaptation of style to subject "with infinite variations", is, Eliot contends, essential for the expression of thoughts and feelings on a variety of subjects.

Modern poets such as Eliot and Ezra Pound demonstrate how fecund an historical awareness of their craft may be, enabling them to conceive of poetic diction in a revolutionary way through a paradigm of classical rhetoric.

Such, for instance, is the conception we find among these poets of the public role of poetic diction. These poets regard

the word as the essence of civilization, a reflection of the health of the nation, and their belief in the use of language for ethical and political good can be traced back to the origins of rhetoric. Thus Ezra Pound:

> The WORD... reaches down and through and out into all ethics and politics. Clean the word, clearly define its borders and health pervades the whole human congeries, in una parte più o meno altrove.[57]

Such a socially and politically comprehensive conception of poetic language may be regarded as revolutionary by narrower intellects, as Wordsworth discovered, and Eliot in his turn. Eliot has recalled that he and Pound were labelled "literary bolsheviks" and "(with a point which has always escaped me) as 'drunken helots'."[58]

During the first half of this century, the period of the two world wars, a sense of the critical state of Western civilization elicited a response by these poets in terms of poetic diction. The abuse of language, whether intentional by propagandists or the press, or unintentional by those using imprecise, inflated or abstract language, was thought by a writer like Pound to be the indirect cause of war.[59] The poet had to launch a counter-offensive of precision and clarity of thought. The poet's quasi-military mission in purifying the dialect of the tribe could be expressed in images and terms of warfare:

> And so each venture
> Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
> With shabby equipment always deteriorating
> In the general mess of imprecision of feeling,
> Undisciplined squads of emotion.[60]

In their ethical, communal and public conception of poetic diction these poets take up a traditional classical or rhetorical stance.

Modern poets often without premeditation reflect in their poems a decorum that matches style to subject matter. Others are more reflective and may speak generally of high and low styles, as Peter Porter does, who terms them "aria" and

"recitative".[61] T.S. Eliot has referred to the low and the high styles as "approaches to ordinary speech and withdrawals from ordinary speech"[62], a description which parallels his conception of metre as an approach to and a withdrawal from the regular iambic pentameter.

T.S. Eliot is, however, thoroughly aware of traditional norms of decorum, as is Ezra Pound and they show this mastery in their poems. Generally a poem of a certain length is necessary to give the poet an opportunity to consciously orchestrate various levels of style. Mixing the levels of style is very useful in a long poem to refresh the reader's attention, to counterpoint different sections of the poem, to provide variation in tone and pace and, of course, to facilitate incorporation of different levels of subject matter.

Levels of style may be used to comment ironically upon each other as occurs in "Sweeney Erect" by T.S. Eliot. Compare the first and the last stanza:

> Paint me a cavernous waste shore
> Cast in the unstilled Cyclades,
> Paint me the bold anfractuous rocks
> Faced by the snarled and yelping seas.
> .....
> But Doris, towelled from the bath,
> Enters padding on broad feet,
> Bringing sal volatile
> And a glass of brandy neat.

←Here the high, even parodic, style of the invocation frames ironically the low, comic style, just as the sublime subject matter (the myth of Theseus and Ariadne) "places" the ignoble contemporary events (a sordid incident in a dubious house involving Sweeney and a woman). The levels of style are reflected in the word usage: Common banalities for the low style (except for the metaphorical "padding") and for the high style words that are exotic ("Cyclades"), foreign i.e. Latinate ("anfractuous"), extended ("unstilled"), and ambiguous and metaphorical ("snarled and yelping").

Pound's and Eliot's attitude towards decorum implies that one should remember that the classical prescriptions for a high, middle and low Style are general guides which await his or her creative adaptation. The range of styles possible is theoretically infinite and one might consider whether it is not a quality of greatness in a poet to have command over a wide range of styles.

Ezra Pound uses several types of style in The Cantos. Those that are most obvious are a low or documentary style, a middle style, a polished or middle-to-high style, and at least three kinds of high style, but this is not an exhaustive analysis.

The documentary low style has its own internal variations. Some passages are the original work of the poet:

> One year floods rose,
> One year they fought in the snows,
> One year hail fell, breaking the trees and walls.
> Down here in the marsh they trapped him
> in one year,
> And he stood in the water up to his neck
> to keep the hounds off him. Canto IX

Some passages make use of actual historical documents, some unchanged, some creatively transformed. Readers recalling Aristotle's distinction in his Poetics between history and Poetry - that history deals with particular things which have been and poetry with general or universal things that might happen - will naturally ask themselves whether this type of style is actually poetry. It must be remembered however that Pound rejected the Aristotelian aesthetic for the Fenellosan which valorized concrete particulars rather than abstract generalities, which, Fenollosa thought, were characteristic of medieval logic. (See the section on Fenellosa below.) The Malatesta Cantos are headed by lines which dramatize the aesthetic conflict between History and Poetry:

> "Slut!" "Bitch" Truth and Calliope
> Slanging each other sous les lauriers...

Pound's low style makes distinctive use of slang and one comes across examples like "wangle", "joy-ride", "paid upon the nail", "no end of fuss and botheration", "to spout the bunkum", "I'm the goat".

Pound's middle style is a conversational, meditative staple that can slip easily from one register to another (and even from one language to another).

> and Mr. Edwards superb green and brown
> in Ward No 4 a jacent benignity,
> of the Baluba mask: "doan you tell no one
> I made you that table"
> methenamine eases the urine
> and the greatest is charity
> to be found among those who have not observed
> regulations Canto LXXIV

Here Pound moves from the Latinate and formal "jacent benignity" to a sample of dialectal speech, thence to medical diction and finally to a general maxim or enthymene (rhetorical syllogism).

One also finds a type of passage which exemplifies a polished or lyrical style:

> This fruit has a fire within it,
> Pomona, Pomona
> No glass is clearer than are the globes of this flame
> What sea is clearer than the pomegranate body
> holding the flame?
> Pomona, Pomona... CantoLXXIX

For an example of Pound's powerful style I refer the reader to Appendix B. Pound also uses a high style for passages in which gods make an appearance. The style is distinguished by uncommon word usage such as "hyaline" and "chrysophrase" and compounds like "rose-paleness" and "glass-glint".

Exotic proper names are much used as is proper to the epic genre:

> Vendramin, Contrarini, Forida, Fondecho Canto LXXV

I refer the reader also to William Carlos Williams' Paterson, a long poem in which different levels of style are deployed. Wordsworth contended that the greater part of a long poem must necessarily be prosaic. Williams extends the prosaic to actual prose such as newspaper articles, a geological report, personal letters and even an interview with himself. Paterson might be said to approach a Bakhtinian dialogic style in which a unitary poetic style is broken by other socio-historical voices.

It is clear then that decorum is still a valid standard of technique in modern poetry. But what of figures? Has the Romantic concept of diction destroyed most of their validity for the modern poet?

One cannot, it seems, escape the conclusion, that neither a knowledge of, nor a deliberate use of figures, is widespread among modern poets. This neglect of a stylistic resource is attributable either to conviction that the credibility of figures has been undermined or to the consideration that an extensive use of figures does not in propriety match with the low style so prevalent in modern poetry or else simply to an ignorance of the existence of figures on the part of poets who have not had an education in which the classics form a major part.

There are some poets, however, who do make use of figures. Of these poets T.S. Eliot is exceptional in incorporating a wide range of figures in his style, as may be verified in Appendix C. Through his patterned language words that move in time reach the stillness of eternal form.

Through the use of the various figures of repetition of synonymous, similar and antithetical words Eliot creates an elegant and unique style that appears in The Wasteland (particularly in Section V) and is elaborated in Ash Wednesday and Four Quartets. This style is also founded upon Eliot's admiration for the style of the Jacobean prelate Lancelot Andrewes

> which appears to repeat, to stand still, but is nevertheless proceeding in the most deliberate and orderly manner, there are often flashing phrases which never desert the memory /such as/ "the word within a word, unable to speak a word."[63]

← This ideal is embodied in the lines with which Ash WednesdayV commences.

> If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
> If the unheard unspoken
> Word is unspoken, unheard;
> Still is the unspoken word, the Word unheard,
> The Word without a Word, the Word within
> The world and for the world;

> And the light shone in darkness and
> Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
> About the centre of the silent Word.

In these elaborately patterned lines one can distinguish the figures of polysyndeton (or anaphora), isocolon, ploce, anadiplosis, atanaclasis, antithesis and paronomasia. The language repeats, stands still, yet nevertheless proceeds, revolving on the axes of the similar signifiers "word", "Word" and "world".

Eliot is unique in his skillful technique. Of the other poets that use figures, their range is mostly limited. They appear to prefer figures that may seem natural or have psychological justification or be in some way in line with the temper of the modern age.

John Berryman, for example, places a high value on polyptotes, or unexpected turns of sense.

> You lead the reader briskly in one direction, then you spin him round, or you sing him a lullaby and then hit him on the head.[64]

Abrupt shifts of tone, particularly from the light to the disenchanted and grim, appear to be congenial to the modern mood. Berryman's major allegiance is to the hyperbaton, or displaced word order. Robert Lowell has testified that Berryman could quote widely to prove what could be done with disrupted and mended syntax.[65] The hyperbaton in Berryman's hands contributes to energy and intensity of expression. In the Dream Songs it is appropriate as representing the disordered language of dreams. It is also functional as a psychological reflection of a disordered mind. Sometimes the effect is subtly haunting.

> But never did Henry, as he thought he did,
> end anyone and hacks her body up
> and hide the pieces, where they may be found.
> He knows: he went over everyone, & nobody's missing.
> Often he reckons, in the dawn, them up. (my italics)
> Nobody is ever missing. Dream Song 29

The subtle poignance is lost when the line is rephrased in straightforward syntax: He often reckons them up in the dawn.

Although the maxim is a classical figure it can be used in a homely, folksy way. Frost uses it in this way; he makes the homespun wisdom of the Yankee rustic the key-note of his style, his art is the amplification and sophistication of proverbial turns of speech.

> You can't make a ppem without a point...You've got to snap the quip to make Pegasus prance.[66]

Frost's relative popularity as a modern poet may be partly explained by his style. As Aristotle dryly comments,

> One great advantage of maxims to a speaker is due to the want of intelligence of his hearers, who love to hear him succeed in expressing as universal truth the opinions which they hold themselves about particular cases.[67]

Oral poetry or folk poetry quite naturally uses figures of repetition or what Roman Jakobson calls "parallelism".[68] As such these figures are acceptable to poets influenced by Romantic theories of diction who aim at a more primitive, truthful and natural style.

Ted Hughes is one of these. He has passed through a number of stylistic phases. One style he has experimented with is derived from the folktale in its exploitation of figures of repetition. See for example some of his "Crow" poems or his poem"How Water Began to Play" (Selected Poems)

> Water wanted to live
> It went to the sun it came weeping back
> Water wanted to live
> It went to the trees they burned it came weeping back
> They rotted it came weeping back
> Water wanted to live...

One figure which was known in classical times has had an unprecedented revival in modern poetry and that is the quotation. This figure is prominent in Modernist poets such as Eliot, Pound and Moore, and has also been used extensively by the postmodernist John Ashbery. Beneath an appearance of homogeneity this figure is used in heterogeneous ways by poets. It is very flexible and

lends itself to development.

Eliot uses quotations in The Wasteland for concision in the sense that a line may bring to mind an entire context. He uses quotations both as tribute to literary tradition and as an ironic standard for a sordid modern world. Quotations foster a phantasmagoric effect, as if they are fragments of language seen or heard and later reassembled in a dream to form a new entity.

Pound in The Cantos makes much use of references in synoptic form, not only in English but also in Greek, Latin, Italian,

French, Provencal, Spanish, German and Chinese. In Pound the quotation gives the fluxes and refluxes of thought of a speaker of cosmopolitan culture and wideranging literary mastery.

In Moore it is a diffidence in relation to the excellence of other writers, a "hybrid" method[69], a "collection of flies in amber"[70], a use of language in which the text refers to other texts.

Ashbery will be discussed separately, but we may briefly remark that his use of quotations differs from the Modernist technique in that he uses quotations to form a stylistic pastiche, he recycles texts to form a new context.

It should now be obvious to the reader that this figure has many facets and is adaptable to many functions.

Some modern poets are still strongly influenced by classical tenets on word usage. Eliot is an obvious example. For these poets a phrase or sentence is right

> ...where every word is at home,
> Taking its place to support the others,
> The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,
> An easy commerce of the old and the new,
> The common word exact without vulgarity,
> The formal word precise but not pedantic,
> The complete consort dancing together....
> T.S.Eliot Four Quartets.Little Gidding V

In Eliot's work one finds a number of striking examples of the common word defamiliarized. In "Rhapsody on a Windy Night", for example,he writes "Regard that woman/Who hesitates toward you in the light of the door..." There is an estrangeing conflict of meaning here between the sense of standing still and of moving forward, the grammatical form enacts a psychological ambiguity.

Also worthy of note is the precision with which he can use a common word. For instance he tells the train traveller that he will see "the narrowing rails slide together behind you" (Four Quartets.The Dry Salvages III). The kinaesthetic accuracy of the word leaves the reader breathless.

The use of "foreign" words,i.e. Latinate, Greek-derived or dialectal words is not uncommon among modern poets. Even so determined a colloquialist as W.C. Williams uses,on occasions, in Paterson words like "glabrous" and "gracile". Ted Hughes occasionally exploits the Yorkshire dialect and writes of a "brunt wind that dented the balls of my eyes" ("Wind"). Eliot is quite notorious for his pedanticisms like "polyphiloprogenitive" ("Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service").

The common word defamiliarized is very often to some degree metaphorical, in other words the metaphor may be more or less "alive". Robert Frost's practice, as he describes it, is to take an everyday word and transfer it to a different context. Thus in "Birches" he writes that the breeze"crazes" the enamel of ice-covered birch trees. The word is shifted from the context of china pottery and applied to ice.[71] This is essentially a metaphorical procedure.

A dearth of what one could call purely "ornamental" words in modern poetry can be ascribed to the emphasis on the functionalism of the word.[72] However if modern poets have narrowed the range of words available in one way, they have extended the range in another. Classical norms deplored ambiguity. Modern poets write on the premise that words exist as a constellation of synchronic and diachronic meanings and that this characteristic is available for exploitation by the poet. Eliot, for example, writes in The Wasteland Section III l.224 of the typist whose drying combinations are "Out of the window perilously spread." Here both a banal and an ironic discourse are being activated in a kind of dialogue: a meaning of "in danger of falling" and a sense similar to Keats' "magic casements, opening on the foam of perilous seas" ("Ode to a Nightingale" 169-70.).

Some classical norms persist,then,in modern poetry, but often with a new emphasis.

The classical ideal enjoined a restrained use of figures or unusual words, but some modern poets form their style on a deliberate overemphasis of rhetorical strategies. This type of style I have termed Baroque Rhetoric.

> I myself walked at the funeral of tenderness
> John Berryman

THE BAROQUE RHETORICIANS

What do we mean by the term "baroque"? It has been used to designate an architectural style but also in a more general sense to indicate a mode complementary to the Classical.[73] Lowry Nelson uses the term to designate, among other types of poetry, metaphysical poetry.[74] As Nelson comments, the word has been variously interpreted. In my reading I have come across descriptions of characteristics which include dynamism, ornamental exuberance, irregularity, the grotesque and extravagant, theatricality, exploitation of contrast, suspense and surprise, a tension between polarities such as sensualism and spirituality, naturalism and illusionism, and a tortured emotional outlook. Grandiloquence of statement and a mixture of styles are features which are particularly apropos to my use of the term as well as a full use of rhetorical devices, which Lowry Nelson identifies in German baroque literature.[75]

I also regard an emphasis on the irrational as characteristic. Ben Jonson has stated the case against the irrational baroque style:

> ...neither can his mind be thought in tune, whose words doe jarre; nor his reason in frame, whose sentence is preposterous; nor his elocution cleare and perfect, whose utterance breaks itself into fragments and uncertainties.[76]

This criticism is founded on an unquestioning belief in the rational. Our century, however, has experienced an eroding of trust in reason. Freud's work on the Unconscious has enabled a new poetics, one based on the dark side of the psyche, on the

irrational, instinctive and emotional forces of the mind. Psychology has given new validity to a baroque style, one in which "words are plastic and may be moulded into almost any shape."[77]

The baroque classification should not be taken as a rigid category, however poets such as John Berryman, Dylan Thomas, e.e. cummings and Theodore Roethke have, individually, at least some of the characteristics of this style.

A poet writing in this style attempts to create an idiosyncratic idiom and write in language

> so twisted & posed in a form
> that it not only expresses the matter in hand
> but adds to the stock of available reality [78]

The poet using this style may deliberately disregard decorum and work with a number of heterogeneous styles. Berryman' style in his Dream Songs mixes "Blackface" discourse derived from Minstrel Shows (a discourse which deviates from standard grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and spelling, for example, "I is", "heavy bored", "astonishin'", "dere", "ornery")[79] with baby talk ("Henry is weft on his own"), legal discourse ("I feel sure, my Lord/this august court will entertain the plea/Not Guilty by reason of death"), public rhetoric ("...to the foothills of the cult// will come in silence this distinguished one/essaying once again the lower slopes/in triumph"), blues songs ("I'm scared a lonely. Never see my son,/ easy be not to see anyone..."), clichés ("Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed woke not Henry up") and others.

The highly patterned style may mix figures and make an excessive use of them, hyperbaton and hyperbole being favourites. An excessive use of alliteration is characteristic and is one of the means whereby these poets attempt to infuse intensity and energy into their style.

The poet may enlist typography as a rhetorical device. In

a poet such as Cummings style becomes a graphic reality in a hybrid art that is both verbal and visual, in which the signifier is foregrounded in a mimesis of the signified. Word-images are taken apart thus irrationally deconstructing concepts. The dissonantal typographical devices iconically represent emphasis and energy.

The classical norm of "correctness" of syntax and grammar is disregarded by writers in this style who have little use for the natural word in the natural order, although a distinction should be made between an unnatural word order that is non-functional and one that is functional:

> "He stood" wrote Mr. Newbolt, later Sir Henry,
> "the door behind" and now they complain of Cummings
> Ezra Pound: Canto LXXX

Pound is making the point here that traditionalists are illogical to complain of an unruly word-order that is functional while accepting a non-functional one that seems more conformist.

Syntax is regularly distorted in this style, the torsion justified by an appeal to emotion:

> since feeling is first
> who pays any attention
> to the syntax of things
> will never wholly kiss you
> Cummings IS.5.Four.vii

Distorted syntax may be used to convey spontaneity and joy but also emotional trauma. Berryman has used enjambement in this way, separating parts of speech that have an intimate syntactic link in order to convey a feeling of strain and suffering.[80]

Grammatical decorum is also subverted in this style.

Berryman has argued the merits of using pronouns ambiguously, thus reserving a commitment of identity. In the Dream Songs Henry refers to himself as "I", "he" and "you". The reader is made to guess who is talking to whom. Berryman considers that this creates a richer and more aware response.[81] Whether this is so or not, must depend, I think, upon the skill of the poet

and the individual poem. It can produce an effect that is simply confusing. In Berrymen's Homage to Mistress Bradsheet personalities shift and dissolve into one another. It has been suggested that this technique owes something to Coleridge's definition of the Imagination as that which dissolves in order to recreate.[82] I suggest that a closer paradigm is the manipulation of personalities by the Unconscious in the dream-world. In his Interpretation of Dreams Freud has described a condensation process wherein personalities fuse into one dream figure and yet remain themselves.

The morphological functions of words may be rearranged, an ingenious way of making a familiar word seem new as Horace recommended. Many examples could be quoted of nouns used as verbs or as adjectives and verbs used as nouns. Cummings is the most intensive and successful exploiter of this technique:

> my father moved through dooms of love
> through sames of am through haves of give...
> 50 Poems. 34

Here the poet uses verbs like "am", "give" and "haves" as nouns and an adjective "sames" as a noun. The effect is intriguing as the diction uses familiar words yet is defamiliarised.

Practitioners of the baroque style appear to be able intensively to access child-like layers of the personality in which the childself indulged in playful experimentation in words without regard for the meaning of words or the connection between sentences.[83] Dylan Thomas describes his first experiences with words:

> ...and though what the words meant was, in its own way, often deliciously funny enough, so much funnier seemed to me, at that almost forgotten time, the shape and shade and size and noise of the words as they hummed, strummed, jigged and galloped along. That was the time of innocence...[84]

In this word-intoxicated style adjectives are unstinted ("the gay great happening illimitably earth"-Cummings), exotic words are mixed in with liberal hand ("hircine", "utraquist", "cantabanks"-Berryman), and neologisms abound ("man unkind"-Cummings; "a breakneck of rocks"-Thomas).

Freud, in his Wit and the Unconscious has argued that wordplay is enabled and formed by the Unconscious in ways similar to the creation of dreams. If this is so, wordplay is particularly appropriate in an irregular style which foregrounds irrational elements.

Ambiguity is often a feature of this style, development through association technique rather than logic and the choice of fantastical or dream-like subjects. The characteristic fault, understandably, is obscurity. Mannerism is a charge that can often be substantiated when the convulsed syntax serves no purpose or disguises a banal content that will not sustain close inspection.

The reader is referred to Appendix D for an example of the baroque style.

> Do not go gentle into that good night
> Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
>
> Dylan Thomas "Do not go gentle into that good night"

THE REVOLT AGAINST RHETORIC

We have described for the reader modern styles which can be related to traditional rhetorical norms. For the rest of this chapter we will examine modern stylistic strategies which define themselves as in some manner avant-garde.

In the second decade of this century the poet was popularly advised "to take Rhetoric and wring its neck." This programme was not as revolutionary as it might seem however. Since the literary language is more conservative than the spoken language it has periodically to be brought up to date and consequently a rejection of the poetic diction of the previous generation is a recurring phenomenon. Pope satirized the "imperfections" of Milton's rhetorical diction[85] and the Romantic rejection of so-called "poetic diction" of earlier poets has been described. Similarly a modernist poet such as Pound threw out the"doughy mess" of third-rate Romantic diction and fourth-rate Elizabethan rhetoric that characterized, in his opinion, British verse of 1890-1910.[86]

Rhetoric also came under attack by critics such as I.A. Richards who thought that it should be dismissed to Limbo and a new rhetoric formulated in which figures and word-usage were functional not embellishment.[87]

Poets such as Pound condemned rhetoric for inexactness and verbosity, for "talk about the matter, rather than presentation." According to Pound, rhetorical diction such as the Elizabethans used imparted "grace, richness of language, abundance, but you have probably nothing that isn't replaceable by something else..."[88]

To this writer, however, when functionalism is laid in the balance against characteristics of style such as grace, richness of language and abundance, the scale does not tilt up decisively against rhetoric.

Consequently poets as different as Pound and Frost in the earlier part of this century began fervently[89] to jettison evidences of rhetorical practice in word usage, and contractions like

"'twas" or "mid" and archaisms like "hath" or "bruisèd" or "mewards" were excommunicated until the poet could proudly proclaim of his lines:

> Here they stand without quaint devices
> Here they are with nothing archaic about them[90]

(Not everyone abandoned archaic diction without regret:

> "forloyn" said Mr. Bridges (Robert)
> "we'll get 'em all back"
> meaning archaic words Ezra Pound Canto LXXX)

Overall the factors influencing poets against traditional features of style were a renewed emphasis on the functional as opposed to the ornamental, which expressed itself in a rejection of surplusage and a preference for natural word order, the influence of Romantic theories of diction which contributed to an emphasis on prose and actual speech, and a growing conviction that the actual material of diction, language, was itself problematical.

The ideal of natural word order was espoused by some modernist poets, for example Marianne Moore. Subject, predicate, object was the natural order which could be violated for emphasis but not to rescue a rhyme.[91] In other words, word order should be functional and not manipulated for purposes of adornment. Poets might have thought this a new stylistic norm, but in actual fact, the norm was already formulated in the classical era. The Rhetorica ad Herennium (272-3) censures dislocation of words ("transiectionem verborum"), unless it is neatly effected ("nisi quae erit concinna")

The removal of surplusage is likewise a norm that antedates the contemporary era. It is true that classical style allows amplification but this amplification must be purposeful. It would seem as if one person's surplusage is another person's functionalism. Elizabethan style is not generally known for its concision, yet Puttenham writes that "the Poet or maker's speech becomes vicious and unpleasant by nothing more than

using too much surplusage." [92] In the Romantic era Coleridge recorded the lessons in removal of surplusage he received from his schoolmaster, lessons which were based on a belief in the organic logic of a poem, the functionalism of figures and a reason assignable not only for every word but the position of every word.[93] The latter is, in everything but name, the doctrine of the mot juste espoused by Flaubert amd propagated by Pater in his essay on Style, a doctrine which was enthusiastically received by modernist poets. In this century, the era of mechanical reproduction and of Einsteinian physics, the norm was reformulated. William Carlos Williams declared the poem to be a machine made of words, of which no part can be redundant. Surplusage must be removed for economy's sake so that all the mass (the language) can be converted into energy (movement).[94] The norm was also reinforced by a demand for a close correspondence between form and content and a demand for compression, possibly influenced by Freud's description of the condensation technique of dreams.

But while we are arguing that the norm is not new it cannot be denied that some of the previous century's poetry seems prolix when judged according to Modernist norms. My own reading has proved this to be the case. This writer, by way of experiment, reduced the number of words in a stanza of a well-known poem by a well-known Victorian poet from 80 to 58, by rendering it in modern unrhymed diction. (Much of the surplusage was connected with the necessity to rhyme at the end of each line.)

The stylistic preferences of poets of this century have been moulded by the hegemony of prose. Poets were directed to masters of prose style like Maupassant, Ibsen, Stendhal and Flaubert and told to write at least as well as the best prose writers. Prose was regarded as the best medium for registering states of cosciousness clearly through precise word usage. [95]

Also regarded as being in opposition to rhetorical disciplines is the contemporary interest in reproducing the tones, accents and rhythms of actual speech. (This is not necessarily the case. As has been shown, the low style can incorporate actual speech.) These writers reverse Yeats' dictum and record not the common speech of the people, but the speech of the common people. [96] Among the Modernists Pound, for example, recorded fragments of speech in The Cantos:

> Ah certainly dew lak dawgs,
> ah goin' tuh wash you Canto LXXIX

Among the Postmodernists John Ashbery has spoken of his preference for a "prosaic language, a language of ordinary speech" since "we are most ourselves when we are talking, and we talk in a very irregular and anti-literary way." In his opinion prose poetry of the past had "a kind of rhetorical falseness". But what interests him is"the pathos and liveliness of ordinary human communication." [97] Poetry in unmemorable speech:

> A little puttering around
> Some relaxing, a lot of plans and ideas,
> Hope to have more time to tell you about
> The latter in the foreseeable future
> "Tenth Symphony" Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

Ashbery's rejection of rhetoric can be placed in the context of a trend away from High Modernism's cult of Art and towards popular and more immediately pleasurable sources of entertainment, to the techniques of mass communication.

These then are, in general terms, some of the considerations that may influence a poet to turn away from traditional stylistic norms. We will now examine a few of the new styles in greater detail. And first we will describe Ernest Fenellosa's Ideogrammic style.

> as a lone ant from a broken ant-hill
> from the wreckage of Europe, ego scriptor
> Ezra Pound Canto LXXVI

FENOLLOSA AND ICONIC FORM

Fenollosa's poetics, as set out in his essay "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry"[98], were a seminal influence on Pound, and to a lesser extent Cummings and William Carlos Williams.

Fenollosa believed that an intrinsic Form in the Chinese sign made it particularly suitable for poetry and that the poets should try to incorporate the qualities of the ideogram into their own language. Unlike alphabetic script in which the signifier has an arbitrary relation to the signified or sound-concept, the Chinese sign has a vivid, natural connection with its meaning.

Man Sees Horse

The above characters, for example, schematically represent a man, an eye on running legs and a horse. The concepts are incorporated in concrete imagistic graphic form.

Chinese ideograms generally embody a transference of energy, an agent acting upon an object, through the use of verbs and natural word order, thus reenacting a primal process of Nature.

A Chinese sign is inclusive of a number of grammatical functions. It deals with concrete particulars rather than the dead, abstract concepts of medieval logic and rhetoric. And to deal with concrete particulars is a preferential mode for the modern poet, in that it is a "scientific" method which puts things under the microscope and watches them move.

A poet using the ideogrammic method will achieve a sense of the unseen, the general, through the suggestive and associative combination of particulars -

> words crowd upon words, and enwrap each other in their luminous envelopes until sentences become clear, continuous light-bands(34)

- and through the use of metaphor.

All languages are vitally metaphorical in their primitive state and the Chinese signifier peculiarly retains in vital and visible graphic form the aboriginal metaphoric formulation of a concept.

How should poets apply this technique to their own diction? They will realize that contemporary language has become thin and cold, being based on the logical efficiency of the factory not on nature. They will reject this mechanical diction for an organic one which in vivid concrete particulars and through the creation of metaphor enacts a transference of energy.

Fenollosa's poetic is a contemporary updating of Romantic theory, his ideal poetic language has, in part, a resemblance to Rousseau's originary language. Rousseau's language had a vital relation to nature, would be formed through, among other things, images and metaphors, would be grammatically innocent and, strangely, would resemble Chinese in some respects.

Criticism of Fenollosa's theory has not been lacking. W.K. Wimsatt and others have queried whether the ideogram is pictorially expressive beyond its conventional meaning. Wimsatt has also argued that iconic form situated in the signifier has only a superficial relation to the concepts expressed.[99] (But this writer would argue that it is an extension of the possibilities of form, previously situated in syntax, phonetics, rhythm etc.). I.A. Richards has criticized the founding of style in concrete particulars and images, arguing the importance of abstract concepts. To emphasize concrete particulars and images in diction is to make language the poor cousin of experience, something which, although it attempts to equal the immediacy and plenitude of sensory perception, can never do so. Language has, however, the ability to fulfill perception through reinforcement with concepts, thought and feeling. I find myself in agreement with Richards.

Ezra Pound used stylistic techniques based on the Fenollosan

aesthetic in The Cantos. On occasion he incorporates Chinese ideograms to reinforce the adjacent English verse. For example in Canto LXXIV:

a man on whom the sun has gone down  οὐ τις

OU TIS is equivalent to "no man" and refers to Odysseus and Pound himself, in his parlous state at the end of the second World War. According to William Cookson, in his book A Guide to the Cantos of Ezra Pound, the ideogram depicts a sun setting through vegetation and a man with his arms outstretched.

In the verse "a man on whom the sun has gone down", a complex state or predicament is rendered through a metaphoric combination of concrete particulars, in a way which merges the literary with the graphic of the vivid primitive image. The formulation enacts a transference of energy. The passage works through an associative technique with other passages of related disastrous import. Thus in several respects the verse shows the Fenollosan influence.

The influence is not always blatantly ideogrammic. In Canto LXXIV for example, these lines occur:

under the olives
saeculorum Athenae /timeless Athene/
γλαύξ, γλαυκῶπις, /glaux glaukopis/
olivi /little owl with gleaming eyes/
that which gleams and then does not gleam /olive trees/
as the leaf turns in the air
Boreas Apeliota libeccio

← Athene's eyes gleam and do not gleam when her helmet is raised or lowered; an owl's eyes gleam and do not gleam when it opens or shutters its eyes, and olive leaves gleam and do not gleam when the wind exposes their silver undersides. The concrete particulars associate freely with each other, embodied in discrete fragmentary words, phrases and clauses in which the connecting links are suppressed, but can be construed.

William Carlos Williams' poetry also shows a Fenollosan influence, for instance in his distaste for abstract conceptual thought and his contention "no ideas but in things", his substitution of the "verbal sequence" for the "grammatical sentences" of

Medieval logic[101] and his characteristic preoccupation with movement in a poem. This movement creates a duplicate nature:

> It is not to place adjectives, it is to learn to employ the verbs in imitation of nature - so that the pieces move naturally - and watch, often breathlessly, what they do...You do not copy nature, you make something which is an imitation of nature.[102]

e.e. cummings is another poet who displays a kinaesthetic preoccupation in some of his verse. He uses typography mimetically to express states of energy or entropy. These formal technical strategies use the signifier to express slowness (separation of the letters in space or by punctuation), speed (the characters are run together), and high points of energy, of finality (capital letters). His technique and its Fenollosan derivation is illustrated in this poem from the collection No Thanks (13)

```
                    r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r
                who
a)s w(e loo)k
upnowgath
          PPEGORHRASS
                              eringint(o-
aThe):l
      eA
        !p:
S                                      a
                 (r
rIvInG                .gRrEaPsPhOs)
                                    to
rea(be)rran(com)gi(e)ngly
,grasshopper;
```

Here typography enacts the leap of a grasshopper; iconic form attempts to create a duplicate nature, a Fenollosan nature of "things in motion, motion in things". The sentence is charged with verbs of movement (look, upgathering, leap, arriving, become, rearranging) and embodies a process of entropy - energy - entropy. Concrete particulars are privileged over abstract thought. The different graphic forms of the signifier "grasshopper" give it something in common with the Chinese ideogram which Fenollosa described as a moving picture, "a vivid shorthand picture of the operations of nature "[104]

The style acts out the successive operations of nature and the actual process of perception. It shows the mind rearranging visual input ("as we look") of successive movement to form a grasshopper.

This poem gives us an intimation of the pervasiveness of the Fenollosan aesthetic on some modernist poets.

> Earth's the right place for love:
> I don't know where it's likely to go better.
> Robert Frost "Birches"

THE SPOKEN WORD

A prominent characteristic of the poetic style of some modern poets is the way they seek to empower diction through the incorporation of actual speech, often dialectal discourse.

In Bakhtinian terms they distance themselves from a poetic language which is in some way removed from everyday speech and approach the language of prose with its feeling for the historical and social concreteness of living discourse.[105]

Speech in its natural state is dialectal and a poet recording the particulars of speech will very often use a dialectal or regional diction. This dialectal diction may be deliberately emphasized as a strategy to defamiliarize language. Dialectal speech is also a recurrent feature of developing literatures in which poets explore and validate a new idiom, as in this example taken from "Hotknife" by the South African Sydney Clouts (Collected Poems):

> Nellie newwe
> tol' me she was married sir
> she newwe tol' me she was married sir.
> .....
> She say Hotknife, swietaat, you a fat man.
> Sa! ten years for luff sir.
> I'll newwe kiela man again
> .....
> Where you Nellie
> blerrie mischiff
> Ten years is not a fency fawtnight...

The poetic of the spoken word adumbrates the influence of Wordsworth in its selection of the "real language of men" and opposition to a special poetic diction, its siting of the poetic in the prosaic and its rustic or regional bias. The incorporation of actual speech in poetic diction has many advantages:accessibility, verve, vividness, humour. It should be remembered, however, that some artifice or form is necessary to lift common speech above the banal.

William Carlos Williams is an example of a poet whose diction is determined by the spoken word. For Williams a poem is a machine made out of words; its movement is distinguished by the character of its speech. The poet takes words as s/he finds them in their native environment and composes them without distortion that would compromise their significance, into an intense expression of perceptions.[106] Adapting a metaphor from de Saussure,[107] one should imagine atmospheric pressure reacting on a sheet of water to produce waves;just so does perception combine with speech to form movement.

Poetic diction for williams is an escape from the lingua franca of English into the vernacular of the American idiom. The universal of classical style is situated in the concrete particulars of the local, in words marked by a place.[108] (The influence of Fenollosa is noticeable here).

When Williams was writing Paterson he visited the area in which the poem is situated and walked the streets, noting the actual conversation of the people.[109] This practice plainly departs from the classical Aristotelian approach to diction. Coleridge expresses the classical position when he asks whether a poet should wander about copying the words of people in uncultivated society and answers that the poet should rather regulate style through the principles of good sense or taste or by the power of the imagination.[110] But as we have had occasion to note, the classical principles of diction have been questioned and rejected by some modern poets.[111]

If the poet accepts this new poetic s/he will have to ask in what way poetry differs from conversation. One answer is that in

this poetry the rhythmic, metrical and sound organization is emphasized and this sufficiently distinguishes it from conversation.[112]

The quality of the spoken word in Paterson varies. This example is rhythmic and also colloquial in spontaneity and verve:

> Hi, open up a dozen, make
> it two dozen! Easy girl!
> You wanna blow a fuse? (3,III)

This example is of dialectal language, naturally figurative under the influence of emotion:

> But child, Nov 1, I did crack you know yourself I been going full force on the (jug) will we went out (going to Newark) was raining, car slapped on brakes, car turned around a few times, rocked a bit and stopped facing the other way, from which we was going. Pal, believe me for the next few days. Honey, I couldn't even pick up a half filled bucket of hot water for fear of scalding myself. (3.II)

There exists a psychological dimension to Williams' poetic of the spoken word. This inheres in Williams' insistence that the poet should listen carefully to what people actually say. The analyst and the poet are both practitioners of the art of interpreting speech. The poet has to listen for the poetic dialect which lies beneath the everyday dialectic in which people are shut, incommunicado. The poem is the underlying meaning, the essence, that which, beyond all they have been saying, they have been trying to say. The poet must phrase the words in such a way that the stereotype reveals the moving details, the moment of insight, the evasive hidden life.[113]

Another poet whose diction is enabled by American regional speech is Robert Frost. He tries to write as if he is speaking the words himself. However we have it on Robert Lowell's authority that Frost's speech was "a work of art, much better than other people's ordinary speech and yet natural to him."[114] Frost prefers to use a selection from the

everyday non-literary language, which he raises to a higher level through metaphor [115], a programme which has some points of contact with Wordsworth's.

He makes an original contribution to diction technique, however, in his poetic of Intonations. Intonation is the "sound of sense" in the vernacular; it is a subtext that exists beneath and beyond the conceptual content of the words, it is the characteristic music of a particular utterance, its voiceprint [116]. Intonations are an aboriginal natural mode of speech which the poet can become aware of and exploit. He has analysed intonational patterns in his own work, most explicitly in his poem

THE PASTURE

1 I'm going out to clean the pasture Spring;
2 I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
3 (And wait to watch the water clear, I may)
4 I sha'n't be gone long. - You come too.

5 I'm going out to fetch the little calf
6 That's standing by the mother. It's so young,
7 It totters when she licks it with her tongue.
8 I sha'n't be gone long - You come too.

According to Frost in 11 there is a "light, informing tone", in 1.2 an "only" tone, a tone of reservation, in 1.3 a tone of supplementary, of possibility and in 1.4 a free tone, assuring and an afterthought, inviting. In the second stanza there are similar free, persuasive, assuring and inviting tones.[117]

This poetic of Intonations can be traced back to Romantic theories of diction. Rousseau described intonation as aiding meaning and imparting vitality and energy to speech.[118]

More recently intonation has been described by a Russian Formalist as more metaphorical than words, and leading discourse beyond verbal limits.[119] The use of this technique could then be said to indicate some dissatisfaction with language as a mode of communication and a search for a more "natural" and comprehensive utterance.

It could be said to indicate a preference for the spoken word rather than the written, a feeling that "writing obscures language; it is not a guise for language but a disguise." [120]

A poet may yet succeed in making the written language work towards the expressiveness of the spoken. e.e. cummings realizes the poetic possibilities of proletariat speech through a technique of phonetic transcription:

> Hool
> spairruh luckih? Thangzkeed. Mairsee.
> muh jax awl gawn. Fur Croi saik
> ainnoughbudih gutnutntuhplai?
> HAI
> yoozwidduhpoimnuntwaiv un duhyookuhsumpnruddur
> givusuhtoonunduhphugnting
> ViVa II

Disiz duhwoiks onduh SpokeWoid. Neouw fur sumpn/cumpleetly diffrn.

> listen: there's a hell
> of a good universe next door; let's go
> e.e. cummings 1×1 . XIV

THE PROBLEMATICS OF LANGUAGE IN A POSTMODERN ERA

For some modern poets it is axiomatic that traditional stylistic criteria are no longer valid since the very substance of style, language, has become problematical. There is a proliferation of signs:

> Texts mount and complicate themselves, lead to further texts and those to synopses, digests and emendations.
> W.C. Williams Paterson 3.III

←There is a proliferation of the verbal sludge of speech:

> well ughhuh sure why not yuh course yeh well
> naturally i und certain i o posi but...
> e.e.cummings No Thanks 17

←Yet

> The poet
> discovers still, no syllable in the confused
> uproar: missing the sense
> W.C.Williams Paterson 2.II

For some modern poets language is a self-enclosed system like Algebra, which has lost its power to refer to reality and has become the only reality. Of the two poets discussed here, John Ashbery accepts and exploits this situation, Ted Hughes seeks a remedy. Both turn to the irrational sources of language, the one to negate, the other to increase language's power to signify. I have chosen to discuss these particular poets because of Ashbery's prominence and accomplishment as a post-modernist and because of the daring and originality of Hughes' experiment in poetic diction.

John Ashbery offers the poet an example of a radically open discursive style in which "words are only speculation", mirror-play, "they seek and cannot find the meaning...We see only postures of the dream..."[121] His diction is a dance of signifiers, alternately introducing and then evading signifieds.

His style is disjunctive without a cohesive structure, a recycling of the disposable debris or junk of mass communication. His text, to adapt the phraseology of Roland Barthes on postmodern texts, is "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, [many not] original, blend and clash... a tissue of quotations."[122]

Ashbery's style effects a merger between high culture and mass culture in that elements of populist discourse are incorporated into the very substance of his work to form a pastiche. This heterogeneous pastiche is not introduced for the purposes of satire, as modernist poets use parody, and does not refer to any stylistic norm, or indeed to any identifiable context. In his style standards of reality and truth are replaced by a playful medley of discourses, depth is replaced by multiple surfaces.[123]

Ashbery has stated that his poetry starts out from the "underground stream" of the Unconscious, but it is also monitored by the conscious mind.[124] Much that is original in his style can, in fact, be related to the irrational language of the Unconscious, or of the Dream as described by Freud,

except that whereas in the Dream the manifest content has a latent meaning, in Ashbery's style there is only manifest content, only surface.

For example Freud has described discourse in dreams as comprising fragments of speech heard or read, torn from their context and fitted together in the Unconscious to form an entirely new meaning.[125]

Similarly Ashbery has written poetry which is a composite of different discourses, fragments cut from magazines or popular literature, phrases overheard on the street, or his own snapped off hermetic perceptions which are reassembled within a new context. One of his aims has been to put together as many different kinds of language and tone as possible and to shift them abruptly, to overlap them all,[126] in the type of technique Barthes has called a "metonymic montage":[127]

> all diaries are alike, clear and cold with
> The outlook for continued cold.
> "A Man of Words" Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

In these lines a rather cryptic statement on diaries is linked with what appears to be an extract from a weather forecast to form an enigmatic, illogical discourse.

Also reminiscent of dream technique is the way identities can merge in his poems, through a metamorphosis of the personal pronoun.

> Just time to reread this
> And the past slips through your fingers
> wishing you were there
> "A Man of Words" Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

(This stylistic phenomenon can also be understood in terms of a postmodernist destruction of the autonomous ego, the "death" of the subject.[128])

Likewise subjects melt into one another in a fragmentation of what we are accustomed to regard as reality.

> This severed hand
> Stands for life, and wander as it will,
> East or west, north or south, it is ever
> A stranger who walks beside me.
> "Worsening Situation" Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

The normal environment of the rational world dissolves into an irrational kaleidoscope of stereotypes. The weather,

for example, is uncertain beyond any meteorological use of the term. In "Hop o' my Thumb" (Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror) the action takes place in "dark" which has "brightness" in "noon sun". This becomes "an electric storm of rain" and then "dark mist smeared against the fog."

His similes are sometimes surrealistic non-sequiturs:

> But Time is a garden wherein
> Memories thrive monstrously until
> They become the vagrant flowering of something else
> Like stopping near the fence with your raincoat
> "Suite" Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

One of his favourite stylistic mannerisms is to deconstruct the binary oppositions of logic, producing the supralogical inclusiveness of meaning of the Unconscious:

> a vague
> Sense of something that can never be known
> Even though it seems likely that each of us
> Knows what it is and is capable of
> Communicating it to the other
> "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror"

Ashbery achieves enigmatic humour by disconcerting the comfortable assumptions of the rational mind.

To a postmodern society dominated by the emptiness and meaninglessness of the violent dreams of T.V., Ted Hughes has attempted to oppose a "morally responsible art".[129]

His response to a language which he regards as effete and devitalized in comparison with, for example, Shakespeare's language, has been an attempt to revitalize the medium through a return to the sources of language and literature. The way he has chosen to do this is through dramatic mythic poetry, with its ancient communal quasi-religous and healing functions. This dramatic poetry is accompanied by music and gesture and staged in a sacrosanct setting. The experiment took place in 1971 with the staging of Orghast by the Peter Brooke company in Iran.

Hughes has always seen the central problem of poetic diction as the need to reinfuse the language with a lost vitality, to reconnect words with "the elemental power circuit of the universe" to use his own phrase.[130]

We experience reality as a 1,000volt shock of energy, but the medium through which it should be conducted, language, dribbles out the experience in tinglings that can only just be felt. This is because words belong to a late stage of human evolution, they are "unnatural" and inadequate to express psychic experience which reaches back beyond the individual's birth to archetypal depths no expression can take hold of. Moreover they are loaded with the intentions and meanings of others and the poet has to subdue their heteroglossia to create his own meaning.

Poetic language which has moved beyond the trivial is language which is capable of summoning up the spirits of things,[131] the element of the magical which modern civilization has mortified.

The English Director Peter Brooke has a similar conviction that the plenitude of originary speech has been reduced to a small thin range of tones, an indication of a concomitant reduction in language of emotional capacity and meaning.[132] He has been seeking for a type of communication that reaches beyond cultural patterns, searching for pure pattern itself, a true mass medium as opposed to mass media.

Their collaboration led to the creation by Hughes (with some help from the community of actors) of the poetic language "Orghast" for the drama of the same name based on the myth of Prometheus. (English was rejected because its sophisticated associations were regarded as incompatible with barbaric myth.) Like Adam the poet was given the opportunity to name things in a fresh new language.[133]

This language is conceived on a paradigmatic basis with music, as communication which transcends articulate conceptual expression yet speaks and has meaning to common structures in the minds of all. It is based on rhythmic sounds and tones -[134]

Hughes believes that the deeper into language, the less visual/conceptual it is and the more audial/visceral/muscular, since the visual nerves connect with the modern brain and the audial with the primal animal brain and nervous system.[135] It attempts to eschew abstraction, naming any concepts through metaphors derived from the physical.[136]

The sounds and tones of the language are assumed to be able to convey quite complex states and meanings and also areas of experience which ordinary language cannot reach. Hughes does not regard his signifiers as arbitrary. Because there is a collective tonal unconscious it follows that within a culture there is an optimum sound for any meaning, and, when different cultures are involved, there is still an optimum sound for some meanings. As proof he instances his invention of the word "hoan" for "light" which he discovered meant "ray of light" in Farsi (Persian language).[137]

The language is designed to produce feeling naturally through the actors' exploration of sound, the sound sequence to be "as flexible as an electrocardiogram and an encephelogram combined,"[138] that is to express vividly the impulses of emotion and thought.

Words are created through what Hughes calls a "metaphorical" relationship between sounds and feeling. For instance "str" for words meaning strong or straight. "Kr" is regarded as onomatopoeic for "devour" and this physical root is used to create the abstract idea of"destruction".[139]

The language, in composition, went through different phases: first as a conventional language, then musical blocks of sound, and finally as fixed consonants with vowels free for improvisation and inspiration. The following are examples drawn from the three stages:

1. OARGLAKRIS GLAUR PRORGHAST
   The eagle, overshadows out of the sun
2. SÓYINNABLARGA FÓTTAHOÁNYA
   I was in darkness Brought into light
3. OOOL O NEEEAAAR NEEY-AGH
   Woman has opened life

140

Many of the words of Orghast in actuality are distortions of English, for example "furreor" ("fury"), "offeyta" ("fated"), "starrangald" ("strangled"), and this is sometimes apparent in an entire phrase "dadadda blodspred" ("your father's blood spread"). Other words are derived metaphorically: "snayldorp" ("curl up"), "drumlit" ("heart"), "coron" ("peak"). Some are crude onomatopoeia: "bletton gleblottun" ("shot blind").

(These written examples should be understood to give only an approximation of the actual sound, and hence the actual language.)

An interesting feature of the experiment was that despite the poet's efforts to keep the language open it began to develop an autonomous life of its own like a conventional conceptual language and was even used in a telegram by one of the actors.[141]

This experiment in poetic diction is in the tradition of Joyce's Finnegan's Wake with its invention of a language extending beyond specific cultures. One always feels, however, that Joyce's language has an advantage in containing conceptual meanings, even if they are multiple and associative. Hence its qualities of wit and learning.

Orghast as an experiment into the origins of language owes something to Romantic theory of language as formulated by Rousseau. It shows this influence in its quest for the primordial "natural" words, its interest in arousing emotions rather than expressing concepts, its locating of energy and vitality in orality and plenitude in intonation, its rooting of words in imitative sounds or accents of emotion, in vowels and in rhythm. In its aim to avoid grammaticalization and achieve a free openness it is archetypically romantic, but

Hughes has acknowledged that it is only briefly achievable.

We have in the preceding pages shown the reader two post-modern responses to poetic language: Ashbery's diction which incorporates populist discourse in the discourse of high art, without ever reaching a popular audience, and Hughes' diction which attempts to reach the understanding of human beings of all cultures, yet was heard only briefly by a small, elite and, in many cases uncomprehending, audience.

> The night sheen takes over. A moon of cistercian pallor
> Has climbed to the center of heaven, installed,
> Finally involved with the business of darkness.
> And a sigh heaves from all the small things on earth....
> John Ashbery "As One Put Drunk in the Packet-Boat"
> Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

CONCLUSION

We have now discussed the question of what constitutes a poetic language and described historically features of Classical and Romantic theories of diction. We have shown that the Classical tradition has persisted into the Modern period but that some poets have rejected it and turned to other stylistic ideals, notably those connected with the imperative to reproduce "the real language of men", and those connected with the Fenollosan poetic. Finally we described two avant-garde poetic languages.

There remains only to identify recurring common factors in the heterogeneous dictions used by poets. These are primarily, the influence of psychology and an agenda to reconnect language with reality or experience.

Firstly, psychology. The reader is reminded of how Williams takes the analyst as a paradigm of the poet, how Ashbery uses the "logic" of the Unconscious", how Berryman uses a traumatized language to encompass traumatic subject matter (He also uses poetry as a mode of self-analysis, of self-transformation.). Hughes is also influenced by psychology, primarily Jung's theories on the Collective Unconscious and the archetypal depths of experience. His paradigm for the poet is the Shaman, who evokes "spirits" by descending into the Unconscious, the "dark hole in the head" ("The Thought Fox").

Without wishing to overstate the importance of psychology it is noteworthy that the diction of modern poetry generally is characterized by features which are features of the language of dreams, as described by Sigmund Freud.[142] This discourse is emotional rather than conceptual, synthetic more than analytic, condensed rather than discursive, allusive, ambiguous, and often obscure. It is a plastic mode of expression, often containing elements of the irrational, its syntax is often fragmented and the fragments

are linked through a logic of association.

When we recall that the Dream works with memories and is liberated from specificities of time and space, we are struck by the resemblances between Freud's Dream and Coleridge's definition of the Imagination as something which dissolves, diffuses and dissipates in order to recreate; and even more so with his definition of Fancy as "a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space", blended with and modified by the Will("Libido" is one sense of the word "Will") and receiving its materials through the law of association.[143]

Secondly many modern poets subscribe to the archetypal myth that the Fall of Man has brought about a Fall in Language, a rupture between words and the things they describe, which must be healed by the poet. Consider Eliot's emphasis on the reconnection of diction with the subtleties of thought and feeling, Pound's programme to restore precision and clarity to language, Fenollosa's recommendation of the ideogram as naturally, not arbitrarily connecting with the signified, Hughes' concern to revitalize language. This anxiety in the felt alienation of language from reality expresses itself in many poets, in attempts to invest language with "Energy" (or, as sometimes expressed, "intensity" or "passion").

A feature of good poetic diction which I have not discussed is a poet's ability to generate beautiful or memorable lines. Instead I have inserted between sections of this chapter quotations of golden lines so that, together with the other information provided, those readers who are also poets may study these and become

> lord of his work and master of utterance
> who turneth his word in its season and shapes it
> Ezra Pound Canto LXXIV

Notes to Chapter 3

[1]Puttenham 138.

[2]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "On Poesy or Art" in Coleridge's Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare & Some Other Old Poets & Dramatists (London:Dent,1907) 319.

[3]I.A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (London:O.U.P.,1936)12.

[4]Aristotle, On Rhetoric (Oxford:O.U.P.,1991) 3.2.221-2.

[5]Dante Alighieri, De Vulgari Eloquentia ed.Marianne Shapiro (Lincoln:Univ. of Nebraska Press,1990) 1.1.47.

[6]Dante 1.xvii.66.

[7]Dante 1.v.52.

[8]Dante 1.xvi.64.

[9]Puttenham 144.

[10]Ben Jonson, Discoveries and Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden (London: Bodley,1923) 33.

[11]William Wordsworth, "Preface to Lyrical Ballads and Appendix", Selected Prose (Harmondsworth:Penguin,1988) 281.

[12]Wordsworth 282.

[13]Wordsworth 282.

[14]Wordsworth 287.

[15]Wordsworth 282.

[16]Wordsworth 286.

[17]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria;or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions; and Two Lay Sermons (London:Bell,1889) xvii. 161-172.

[18]Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics (New York:McGraw -Hill,1959) 195-6.

[19]Michael Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination:Four Essays (Austin:Univ. of Texas Press, 1981) 384.

[20]Bakhtin 271.

[21]Bakhtin 297.

[22]Bakhtin 287.

[23]Bakhtin 383.

[24]Aristotle,On Rhetoric 3.2.221.

[25]Aristotle, On Rhetoric 3.2.221.

[26]Aristotle, On Rhetoric 3.8.243.

[27]Aristotle, On Rhetoric 3.2.221.

[28]Horace, Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica (London: Heinemann, 1929) 1.99-118, 458-461.

[29]Horace 1.45-72, 454-457.

[30]I am indebted to Brian Vickers who, in his book Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry(London:Macmillan,1970) alerted me to the existence of an organic or psychological approach to Rhetoric.

[31]Longinus, "On the Sublime", Classical Literary Criticism: Aristotle, Horace, Longinus.(Harmondsworth:Penguin,1965) 8.108.

[32]Longinus 16-28.125-138.

[33]Longinus 30-38.139-150.

[34]Longinus 39-43.150-155.

[35]Dante 2.I.70.

[36]Dante 2.VI.77.

[37]Puttenham 3.II.139.

[38]Puttenham 3.II.138-9.

[39]Puttenham 3.XVIII.191.

[40]Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics", Selected Writings III: Poetry of Grammar and Grammar of Poetry (The Hague:Mouton,1981)46-7.

[41]W.K. Wimsatt, "In search of Verbal Mimesis",Day of the Leopards (New Haven:Yale U.P.,1976).

[42]For this section I have relied heavily on Demetrius' work On Style in Aristotle's Poetics;Demetrius on Style (London:Dent,1934).

[43]Horace 1.86-98. 456-459.

[44]The reader is reminded to consult the Appendix for examples of High, Powerful, Middle and Low styles, and examples of their characteristic faults, together with some critical remarks.

[45]/Cicero/, Rhetorica ad Herennium (Cambridge,Mass.:Harvard U.P., 1954) 268-9."Sed figuram...commutere oportet, ut gravem mediocris, mediocris excipiat adtenuata, deinde identidem commutentur, ut facile satietas varietate vitetur."

[46]The section on Figures has been based on Book IV of the Rhetorica ad Herennium, Book 3 of Puttenham and diverse other works on rhetoric.

[47]Rhetorica ad Herennium 280-1. "...sunt non inopia verborum fit ut ad idem verbum redeatur saepius; sed inest festivitas, quae facilius auribus diiudicari quam verbis demonstrari potest."

[48]De Saussure 10.

[49]Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology (Baltimore:John Hopkins U.P., 1976) 201.

[50]Derrida 215.

[51]I am indebted to Brian Vickers who, in his book Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry, drew my attention to references to this myth by Longinus,Puttenham and Dryden.

[52]Wordsworth 289-293.

[53]Wordsworth 302-307.

[54]I have altered the phrase "a man speaking to men" (288) for one more acceptable to feminists and trust Wordsworth would also have found this acceptable.

[55]Wordsworth 279-288.

[56]T.S.Eliot,"Rhetoric and Poetic Drama",Selected Essays (London: Faber,1932) 38-9.

[57]Ezra Pound,"We have had no battles but we have all joined in and made roads", Polite Essays (New York:Books for Libraries,1937)50.

[58]T.S.Eliot, The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism (London: Faber,1933) 71.

[59]Pound, Polite Essays 50.

[60]T.S. Eliot,Four Quartets.East Coker V.22.

[61]Peter Porter,Interview with Martin Harrison, Australian Literary Studies 11.4 (Oct 1984):462.

[62]T.S. Eliot,"Four Elizabethan Dramatists", Selected Essays 111.

[63]T.S. Eliot,"Lancelot Andrewes", Selected Essays 349.

[64]John Berryman, Letter to his mother,Collected Poems 1937-1971 (London:Faber,1991) xviii.

[65]Robert Lowell, Collected Prose (New York:Farrar,Straus, Giroux,1987) 112.

[66]Robert Frost, Interviews with Robert Frost ed. E.C. Lathem (New York:Holt,Rinehart and Winston,1966) 7,186.

[67]Aristotle,On Rhetoric 2.21.186.

[68]Jakobson 46-7.

[69]Marianne Moore, The Complete Poems (London:Faber,1967) 262.

[70]Marianne Moore, The Complete Prose (London:Faber,1987) 551.

[71]Robert Frost, Talk given to the boys of the Browne and Nichols school in 1918, Robert Frost on Writing ed.Elaine Barry (New Brunswick,New Jersey:Rutgers U.P.,1973) 144-8.

[72]See, for example, I. A. Richards 86.

[73]Germain Bazin, Baroque and Rococo (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964) 6.

[74]Lowry Nelson, Jr., Baroque Lyric Poetry (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961).

[75]Nelson 154.

[76]Jonson 82.

[77]Sigmund Freud, "Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious", The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud ed. A. A. Brill (New York:Modern Library, 1938) 649.

[78]John Berryman quoting Richard Blackmur in "Olympus", Collected Poems 179.

[79]For a more detailed analysis of the discourse of the Dream Songs see Kathe Davis, "Honey Dusk Do Sprawl:Does Black Minstrel Dialect Obscure The Dream Songs?, Language and Style 18.1 (Winter 1985) 30-45.

[80]John Berryman, "A Note on Poetry", Collected Poems 286-87.

[81]Berryman, Collected Poems lvi.

[82]Charles Thornbury, editor of the Collected Poems.

[83]Freud, "Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious" 719.

[84]Dylan Thomas, "Poetic Manifesto", The Poet's Work ed. Reginald Gibbons (Boston:Houghton Miflin, 1979) 185-7.

[85]Alexander Pope, Peri Bathous: or, Martinus Scriblerus his Treatise on the Art of Sinking in Poetry ed. Edna Leake Steeves (New York: Russell & Russell, 1952) 41.

[86]Ezra Pound, "Hell", Polite Essays 34.

[87]Richards 3, 57, 86.

[88]Ezra Pound, "How to Read", Polite Essays 175.

[89]The rejection of rhetoric took on an ethical tinge. For example, Frost told C. Day Lewis that he abandoned archaic words because he was "ashamed" of them (Interviews with Robert Frost 172-3) and Marianne Moore regarded uncapitalized beginnings of lines as "wholesome" (Collected Prose, 396).

[90]Ezra Pound, "Salutation the Second", Selected Poems (London: Faber, 1959) 94.

[91]Moore, Collected Prose 509.

[92]Puttenham 257.

[93]Coleridge, Biographia Literaria 1.3-4.

[94]William Carlos Williams, Authors Introduction to"The Wedge", Selected Essays (New York:New Directions, 1954) 256.

[95]Pound, "How to Read", Polite Essays 181.

[96]W.B. Yeats told Dorothy Wellesley that poetic diction should use, not the speech of the common people but the common speech of the people. See Letters on Poetry from W.B. Yeats to Dorothy Wellesley (London:O.U.P., 1940) 48-9.

[97]John Ashbery, "The Art of Poetry", Paris Review 90 (1983)55-6.

[98]Donald Allen & Warren Tallman eds., Poetics of the New American Poetry (New York: Grove Press, 1973) 13-35.

[99]Wimsatt, Verbal Mimesis 61-62.

[100]Richards 31, 128.

[101]W.C. Williams, Paterson (London: Penguin, 1963) 4.III.

[102]W.C. Williams, "A Beginning on the Short Story (Notes)", Selected Essays 302-3.

[103]Fenollosa 17.

[104]Fenollosa 15.

[105]Bakhtin 331.

[106]Williams, Introduction to "The Wedge" 256.

[107]De Saussure 112.

[108]W.C. Williams, "Kenneth Burke", Selected Essays 133.

[109]W.C. Williams, as told to John C. Thirlwall, Interviews with William Carlos Williams: Speaking Straight Ahead ed. Linda Welshimer Wagner (New York:New Directions, 1976) 72.

[110]Coleridge, Biographia Literaria xviii.187.

[111]Not all. Some have an "I'm from Missouri" attitude to the avant garde. Jack Spicer in a letter written to Federico Garcia Lorca (The Poetics of the New American Poetry, 226-7) writes "[Some] pick up words from the street, from their bars, from their offices and display them proudly in their poems as if they were shouting, 'See what I have collected from the American language. Look at my butterflies, my stamps, my old shoes!' What does one do with all this crap?"

[112]Robert Creeley in conversation with Linda Wagner, Poetics of the New American Poetry 283-4.

[113]W.C. Williams, "Projective Verse and The Practice", The Poet's Work 201.

[114]Robert Lowell, "An Interview with Frederick Seidel", Collected Prose 264.

[115]Frost, Interviews 172-3.

[116]Frost, Letter to John T. Bartlett 22 Feb 1914, On Writing 63.

[117]Frost, Lecture given at the Browne and Nichols School 1915, On Writing 142-3.

[118]J.J. Rousseau, Essay on the Origin of Language (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) 57-58.

[119]V. Voloshinov, "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry: Questions of Sociological Poetics", Bakhtin School Papers (Oxford: RPT Publications, 1983) 13.

[120]De Saussure 30.

[121]John Ashbery, Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror (New York: Viking, 1975) 69.

[122]Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author", Image-Music-Text (Glasgow:Fontana, 1977) 146-7.

[123]For the concepts expressed in this paragraph I am indebted to Frederic Jameson's article "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," New Left Review 146 (July-Aug 1984):53-92.

[124]Ashbery 51.

[125]Sigmund Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams", The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud 404-5.

[126]Ashbery, "The Art of Poetry" 55.

[127]Roland Barthes, "The Struggle with the Angel", Image-Music-Text 140-1.

[128]Jameson 63.

[129]Ted Hughes, Interview with Egbert Faas, "Ted Hughes and Crow", London Magazine (Jan 1971): 7.

[130]Interview with Faas 9.

[131]Ted Hughes, Poetry in the Making: an Anthology of Poems and Programmes from Listening and Writing (London: Faber, 1967).

[132]A.C.H. Smith, Orghast at Persepolis (London:Eyre Methuen,1972).

[133]In this respect the comment of Bakhtin (287) is apropos: "The poet, should he not accept the given literary language will sooner resort to the artificial creation of a new language specifically for poetry, than he will to the exploitation of actual available social dialects."

[134]It is interesting to note here a comment by Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Oxford:Blackwell, 1978) I. 143: "It would be possible to imagine people who had something not quite unlike a language: a play of sounds, without vocabulary or grammar... But what would the meaning of the sounds be in such a case? What is it in music?..."

[135]Smith 45.

CHAPTER 4

IMAGERY, IMAGINATION, SYMBOLS, TROPES

To employ with propriety any of these modes of speech... is a great excellence. But the greatest of all is to be happy in the use of metaphor; for it is this alone which cannot be acquired, and which, consisting in a quick discernment of resemblances, is a certain mark of genius.

Aristotle: The Poetics xxvi

Visions, moreover, which by some are called Images, contribute very much...to the weight, magnificence, and effect of compositions. The name of Image is given in common to any idea, however presented to the mind, which is communicable to others by discourse; but a more particular sense of it has now prevailed. When the imagination is so warmed and affected, that you seem to behold yourself the very things you are describing, and to display them to the life before the eyes of an audience, it is called an Image.

Longinus: On the Sublime I. xv

/The Poet's/ language is vitally metaphorical; that is, it marks the before unapprehended relations of things...

Shelley: A Defence of Poetry

In full and living language /metaphor is/ what is most gripping, but also the most problematical - how does it happen that language is at its most effective when it manages to say something by saying something else? It's enthralling indeed, and it's even thought that this is the way to the crux of the phenomenon of language...

Jacques Lacan: Metaphor and Metonymy. The Psychoses

INTRODUCTION: PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF PERCEPTION AND IMAGERY

This chapter will analyse the forms impressed upon language by the imagination. It is a subject, the terms of which are often used without precision and very promiscuously. This linguistic abuse probably arises out of an ignorance of the nature and method of these aesthetic agents. In my reading I have found that the term image, for example, is often used indiscriminately to refer to an image, a symbol or to figurative language. Yet it is essential that the poet (and critic) command clarity in their use of this terminology.

And so we will be asking questions designed to elucidate definitions. What is an image? What relation does an image have to a symbol? To a trope like metaphor?

At this point, minimally, we can state that an image is ontologically unique: it may and usually does appear in a trope or symbol but is a separate concept. The image originates at a more basic level of language, it is an elemental form which combines to create more complex forms.

What is the imagination? This is another term which I have found is often used to indicate different concepts. For example it is sometimes used to indicate the agent that forms a raw sensory stimulus into a perception[1], or to refer to that which gives rise to images in the absence of a sensory stimulus. Coleridge uses the term to indicate the faculty that combines images of the natural world with thought and feeling or images arising from thought and feeling to create a new nature. Poets such as Blake or Yeats understand imagination as the emanation and inspiration of an eternal world. Thus each writer makes imagination over in his/her own image. Let us limit ourselves here to the comment that it is an active, creative faculty, closely linked by Kant

and Coleridge with perception itself.

Now language is partly an abstract from experience and consequently the terms we have raised, and the concepts they relate to are also closely linked to perception. Imagery is a bridge between the external world of perception and the internal world, the foundation and building block of language. The symbol uses an image, very often a concrete percept to refer to its cluster of abstract signifieds. Metaphor's method of organization by similarity and dissimilarity apes a fundamental process of perception.

So that anyone who begins to think about images and figurative language finds that s/he is brought up against the fact not only of their implication in the creation of language itself, but also of the interwovenness of language with the process of perception.

Consequently it will be beneficial to give in this introduction a brief resumé of how we may construe the relation between perception, imagery, language and between perception and figurative language. (I will confine myself to visual perception which is the most important.) It is essential for any poet to understand the processes involved - as far as that may be possible - in order to create intelligently with the medium.

Imagery is the medium of visual perception.[2] Despite the fact that some people claim to experience little or no imagery, the idea has persisted since classical times that imagery plays a functional role in mental activities. At the turn of the century however, with the rise of behaviourist psychology which excluded from its attention phenomena which could not be scientifically measured, the role of imagery in mental processes was questioned.[3] Accordingly literary critics such as I.A. Richards played down its role in the poetic process. The pendulum has now swung back and recent authorities in psychology

have reinstated imagery in a prominent role.[4]

Imagery is a broad term under which several varieties are subsumed. Imagery occurs during the process of perception when pictures in the mind occur in psychological response to some sensory stimulus. Imagery also occurs independently of the object stimulus, and may be simple or composite in form. These images are familiar to us as playing an important role in the construction of meaning, the processes of thought and memory, mental and verbal associations, language and dreams.

Images in imagination are fainter than, for example, the images of memory, but are freer to combine sense impressions to create something new. Samuels states that a continuum exists in which the imagery of imagination ranges from a heavy reliance on past perceptions to imagery largely made up of newly created material.[5]

We are most concerned here with imagery in language. How is a percept image transformed into a language and what are the functions of imagery in language?

Paivio conceives of language as a symbolic system which is differentiated into non-discursive and discursive modes, i.e. imagery and a verbal system. In other words, as Samuels has stated, psychologists feel that people use both visual and verbal modes.[6] Imagery enters the language system as a vivid short-term untransformed sensory image. This image elicits an auditory-motor verbal response which becomes associated with a less vivid version of the original image. The word and image composite develops associative connections with other words and images.[7] For instance percept images of a variety of chairs seen become generalised in the mind - according to Hume through the imagination [8]- into a concept image of the idea of a chair which is linked with an auditory-motor response, an arbitrary sequence of sounds in language, "chair". The word "chair" and

the image associated with it develop associative links with words like "seat", "throne" or elevate" and their images.

Images that we imagine are translated into words in the verbal process of writing and similarly, when we read a word the name calls up before our mind the picture of what is named,[9] and it elicits a meaning which is related to the original psychological reaction pattern to the stimulus.[10]

Imagery is evoked by words to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the concreteness or abstractness of the word, the more concrete, the higher the imagery rating. According to Paivio nouns as a class have the highest rating for effective imagery evocation, followed by adjectives, verbs, pronouns and adverbs.[11]

Imagery and the verbal system in language have different but overlapping functions. Images excel in the representation of concrete data whereas the verbal system is more suitable for expressing abstract concepts. But these functions overlap since some images are relatively abstract and words can also express concrete data.[12]

Through the representation of concrete data, imagery facilitates associative meaning, concept discovery, memory recall and the comprehensibility of sentences.[13]

Literary effectiveness does not lie entirely in the realm of concrete imagery, however, as the Imagists might have us believe, since abstract words are associated with higher physiological arousal and pupillary dilation, which seems to indicate favourable reader response.[14]

Moreover language with much concrete imagery is associated with more primitive symbolic modes. In the psychological development of the child the use of concrete language and imagery predominates at an earlier stage of development; the child, in maturing, progresses towards a more abstract and discursive symbolic mode. The development of language in the child has often been regarded as analogical of the diachronic development of a language from a primitive, concrete, high-imagery mode to a more abstract system.[15]

We have followed the image from sensory stimulus to its incorporation in language. Let us now return to the basic level of the image in perception. And here will be demonstrated that the way the imagination structures the image in perception is analogical to the way the imagination structures the image in literature. There is a kind of imagination involved in the creative transformation of a simple sensory image into a complex perception. This imagination is metaphorical, in a very broad sense of the term.

According to Hume, images in the imaginative process in phantasy are associated together or combined according to the principles of resemblance, contiguity in time and space and causal connexion.[16] I understand the imaginative process in perception to operate according to these principles as well.

Philosophers and poets have seen the close link between perception and the imagination.

According to Kant the imagination, or "einbildungskraft", is the faculty not only of representation or dreaming, but also the faculty of perception which plays a fundamental role in synthesizing chaotic sense impressions.[17]

Coleridge recognised that imagination was a form of voluntary perception (See Critical History below). Likewise Wittgenstein, as will be described, understood a close relation between perception (seeing), similarity (seeing an aspect) and imagination (seeing as aspect voluntarily).

In perception the imagination matches images, transferring elements of meaning from one to the other. The images together create a context in which meaning is situated. That is, the imagination informs the basic sensory image with our knowledge of the appearance or behaviour of objects and in this way we give meaning to experience. Thus perception is a metaphorical or symbolical process, and philosophers who recognise this speak of "a language of the senses."[18]

One of our most basic habitual imaginative acts is to match a two-dimensional sensory image of an object with images of our experience of that object and accordingly to construct a three-dimensional meaning from it. Another habitual act is to construe movement from the context of a succession of static images, for example on the TV screen. Similarly, if an image of a smiling face is exposed on a screen, rapidly followed by an unsmiling face, the viewer will transfer elements of meaning from the former and see the latter as smiling to some extent as well. The images interact below the threshold of awareness.[19]

The meaning transferred to the image may be that of causality. For instance, if a square is moved across a screen and comes into contact with another square, which then moves in its turn, the imagination matches symbolically associated images of causality experience (for instance of a truck bumping into a car) with this scenario and construes the visual event into a drama in which the first square hits the second and makes it move.[20]

Or the imagination may confer animation. If a rectangle is moved across the screen and it expands and contracts simultaneously, an image of a caterpillar or similar creature is matched with this and the rectangle is seen to be propelling itself by its own movements.[21]

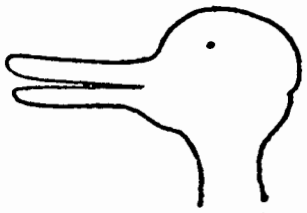
These transferences of meaning, though involuntary, are similar to those operating voluntarily in metaphor and the literary imagination.

Another perceptual archetype for metaphor is the Figure/Ground effect.[22] This means that any differentiated image is always perceived, even by small children, as being organised into a pattern in which one part stands out and the other part is background.[23] The part which stands out is known as the Figure, the rest as the Ground. The Figure is organised on the basis of similarity, but it is not known why the mind should have this

predisposition to distinguish between similitudes and dissimilitudes.

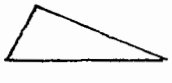
The resemblance to metaphor consists in the matching of images on the basis of similitude and dissimilitude. This resemblance is assumed in the borrowing of the terms "Figure" and "Ground" to describe metaphor by a critic such as I. A. Richards.[24] Verbal intelligence has been linked with the ability to organize a Figure; similarly Aristotle discovered genius in a capacity to see similarities and form metaphor.

One way of illustrating Figure/Ground perception is through a puzzle picture or "Gestalt Figure" like the Duck/Rabbit shown below.



← The figure of either a duck or a rabbit will be highlighted for the perceiver, but not both at the same time.

In his Philosophical Investigations Wittgenstein discusses this particular image in the context of differentiating between perception, seeing a similitude, and seeing with the imagination. The process of perceiving either the duck or the rabbit is the involuntary process of seeing a similitude (or a "likeness"). This process differs from sensory perception, he argues, in that it is half visual experience and half thought. (Though as we have demonstrated, ordinary perception may also involve a kind of thought or imagination.)

Seeing with the imagination is differentiated from "seeing a likeness" in that it is volitional. For instance a triangle  can be seen under various "aspects" or images: as a triangular hole, as a solid, as a geometrical drawing, as standing on its base, as hanging from its apex, as a mountain, as a wedge, and so forth. In visualising these aspects, says Wittgenstein, it appears as if an image comes into contact and for a time remains in contact with the visual impression. This is the operation of the imagination.[25] (The matching and interaction

of images, the transference of meaning - here too is the operation of metaphor).

Perception takes place not only through imagination but also through reason. Perceiving through the imagination is a synthetic mode, through reason an analytic mode. Individually people vary in the extent to which they adopt one or other mode. When the synthetic mode is used the perceiver integrates his or her perceptions, is receptive to visual illusions, reconstructs perception imaginatively. In the analytic mode the perceiver distinguishes parts or details of the whole perceptual field.[26]

This division between synthetic and analytic mode in the perceptual field is paralled by the distinction between metaphor and metonymy as basic principles of language. It has been noticed, for instance, that on a most fundamental level, children name their perceptions either metaphorically or metonymically.

For instance a child may adopt the word "moo-i" for the moon and then proceed to use the word in a synthetic metaphoric way for concepts associated through similarity: various round objects, or even a circle drawn on paper. Then again it has been recorded that another child in Italy used the word "aqua" in an analytic metonymic way for concepts associated through contiguity: glass, a drinking glass, and what was drunk from it.[27]

This brief introduction to the chapter should have made it clear to the reader that the imaginative formation of images and figures in perception is the archetype of the imaginative formation of images and figures in language and literature.

We may now proceed to give a brief summary of critical thought on our subject from Classical up till Modern times.

CRITICAL HISTORY

CLASSICAL THEORY

Of the classical authorities on imagery and figurative language Aristotle is the most thorough and still the most respected.

But we must first briefly mention Plato. Plato's attitude towards imagery is conditioned by his theory of Ideal Forms. Since phenomena of the real world are only imperfect copies of Ideal Forms, and since the poet produces unreal images of these phenomena, his work stands at a second remove from Reality. Furthermore the poet's images incorporate the distorted illusory character of sense perception. For instance the poet may image a house as a matchbox because the apparent size of an object varies with its distance from our eyes. Poetic imagery, then, embodies "mistakes", "confusion" and "tricks of fancy".[28] This point of view is still worth consideration by the poet, particularly those whose locus of the imagination tends to be situated in the area of sense perception, as is the case with some contemporary poets. We will see that Wordsworth answered Plato by situating imagination in a sphere which gives intelligence of the Eternal world.

Aristotle, as we have said, is our main authority. He is still a fundamental authority because he enquires into the nature and essential qualities of metaphor. We will examine his views on metaphor as expounded in his Rhetoric Book 3 and Poetics XXV.

Aristotle's theory of metaphor is often placed in opposition to Romantic and Modern concepts of metaphor. That is, the classical conception of metaphor as an adornment, essentially separable from meaning and based on similarity and the Romantic and Modern view of metaphor as constitutive of meaning and based on interaction. However this is to ignore the many different facets of metaphor that Aristotle recognizes.

According to Aristotle, metaphor is a word transferred from its proper sense and is similar to the word replaced. It is an adornment of style - yet it is also an essential constituent of language. Just as modern authorities have emphasized, Aristotle regards metaphor as omnipresent in language, whether the metaphor is alive or dead. (Dead metaphor suggests meaning directly to the mind without intervention of an image.)

Aristotle also sees an epistemelogical function in metaphor. He says that metaphor brings about learning more than other words, some kind of understanding or thought not previously existing.[29] It is based on the poetic principle of imitation and is a source of knowledge. We learn new things from metaphor, it gives one something fresh. So metaphor is also creative of meaning.

Another aspect of Aristotle's analysis which is similar to a modern approach is the way he conceives of metaphor as a master figure of language. Other figures such as similes, proverbs, hyperboles, personifications and riddles are essentially metaphoric.

Metaphor is one of the most valuable stylistic resources because it defamiliarizes language, yet retains more clarity than other defamiliarizing structures. A judicious use of metaphor may elevate or lower the style, depending on whether the analogue is better or worse than the thing described. One of its great merits is what Aristotle calls a "bringing before the eyes" or <u>energeia</u>.[30] What he appears to mean by this is that it gives movement, life or animation to the inanimate, as for example in Aristotle's example "the arrow flew".

Aristotle classifies metaphor into four kinds on the basis of a word transferred from genus to species (a more general term used for a particular one: "stands" instead of "anchored" - anchored is a kind of standing); from species to genus (a particular term used for a more general: "a thousand" instead of "many"); from species to species, which is the most common sort ("to cut

off his life" or "to draw forth his life, each a species of "taking away his life") and by way of analogy where four terms are involved: A is to B as X is to Y. (Pericles' comment that the young men killed in the war vanished from the city as though someone took the spring from the year.)

Aristotle's analysis of metaphor is penetrating and insightful; to my knowledge his treatment is the most comprehensive of classical authorities.

Longinus, for example, in his treatise On the Sublime includes metaphor in tropes as being a source of the sublime. He discusses imagery and the importance of imaginative identification with his subject by the poet for setting pictures before the eyes of the reader[31], but for our purposes the most interesting point to note about Longinus is the way he firmly subordinates imagery to the discussion of figures, in stark contrast to the modernist emphasis on the image.

Quintilian classifies metaphor on the basis of transference from inanimate to animate (an enemy is called a "sword"), animate to inanimate (the "brow" of a hill), inanimate to inanimate ("He gave his fleet the rein") and animate to animate ("Scipio was barked at by Cato.")[32]

The anonymous author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium[33] (once thought to be Cicero) defines tropes as using language which departs from the ordinary meaning of the words and is, with a certain grace, applied in another sense. He classifies as tropes onomatopoeia, antonomasia or epithets, metonymy, periphrasis, hyperbaton, hyperbole, synecdoche, catachresis, allegory and metaphor.

This author defines metaphor as transference of meaning on the basis of similarity. The functions of metaphor are to create a vivid mental picture, for brevity, for avoiding obscenity

(euphemism), for magnifiying or minifying and for embellishment. This author is more pragmatic, derivative and schematic than Aristotle, but he exercised considerable influence upon thought in the Medieval period.

MEDIEVAL THEORY

It is not easy to characterize in brief the critical activity of many centuries without being facile. It has been said that

in the medieval era tropes, and metaphor, were devoted to the glorification of God.[34] This is a generalization with some truth in it.

Bede's treatise on rhetorical style Concerning Figures and Tropes[35], the first of its kind in England, reiterates classical classifications, but illustrates them with examples drawn exclusively from the Bible.

An outstanding example of the use of tropes for the glorification of God is Dante Alighieri. Pertinent here is his achievement in allegory in the Divine Comedy, which dramtizes the soul's journey to God. His well-known letter to Can Grande della Scala distinguished four levels of allegory: the literal, the allegorical, or mystical, the moral and the anagogical. In other words the literal text can be interpreted figuratively in three different ways.[36]

The Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf (circa 1200) is a deservedly well-known rhetorical treatise. Although it includes a lengthy rhetorical show-piece which is scripturally based, to some extent it is free of a doctrinal mind-set. Much of the information comes from classical sources. Classical, too, is his definition of tropes in terms of similarity and also substitution: Take something resembling the subject, borrow it, and make a new garment.[37] Despite the fact that tropes are "difficult ornaments" he comes out in favour of classical clarity: One should not be obscure, should speak as the many, while thinking as the few.[38]

Part of the originality of the treatise lies in his taking his own admonition to relate style to context very seriously. He uses a great deal of figurative language to exemplify his remarks. For instance he writes metaphorically about metaphor:

> Do not let the word invariably reside on its native soil -such residence dishonours it. Let it avoid its natural location, travel about elsewhere, and take up a pleasant abode on the estate of another. There let it stay as a novel guest and give pleasure by its very strangeness.[39]

Another original feature is his explanation of tropes in psychological terms. For instance metaphor which transfers an animate term to the inanimate (Aristotle's "placing before the eyes" such as "the sea slumbers" gives pleasure, he says, because it becomes a mirror in which you see yourself.[40]

RENAISSANCE AND AUGUSTAN THEORY

According to Terence Hawkes[41] the figurative language of the Renaissance was characterized by the poet's wish to express an intelligible order beneath the surface differences of nature. The Renaissance poet's metaphors are conceptual and logical. They are not constructed by the laws of free association. They are artificial rather than sensuously vivid.

Figurative language and imagery is valued for its ability to instruct and to convey to the ignorant, more effectively than the discursive word, "true lively knowledge".[42]

In the 18th century, according to Hawkes, the neo-classical aesthetic of clarity and a belief that metaphor was a source of obscurity, led to a decline in the reputation of metaphor. Metaphorical works such as Donne's satires were rewritten to remove the ambiguities of language. When used, metaphor tended to deal in what was universally acceptable.[43]

ROMANTIC THEORY

The Romantic era witnessed the creation of a new kind of imagination by poets and an elevation of the role of metaphor to one central to language.

At the same time philosophers such as Rousseau and Herder were classifying tropical language as the vestigial primitive relic of the origins of speech. Giambattista Vico is a

representative exponent of the thesis that poetic language is an anachronism in an age of abstract reasoning and science. [44]

Vico postulated three ages of history: the Divine, the Heroic and the Age of Men. To each age belonged a corresponding type of language: sign language to the Divine, poetic or symbolic language characterised by images, similitudes and metaphors to the Heroic and the vulgar tongue to the Age of Men.

The Heroic Age with its poetic language could be compared metaphorically to the childhood of mankind. Now children, according to Vico , have vigorous imaginations based on strong memories, and weak reasoning powers. They are ignorant, limited in their vocabulary and consequently tend to transfer to unfamiliar objects the familiar names associated with their first experiences. They habitually project an animate spirit into the inanimate.

Similarly in the childhood of mankind all men were poets with vigorous imaginations. They spoke quite naturally in tropes because tropes were necessary modes of expression arising from semantic lacunae in the vocabulary. Tropes became "figurative" only when words were invented to fill the gaps in meaning.

Metaphor is the most luminous and necessary of the tropes according to Vico. It occured naturally in primitive language because men's ignorance of natural causes led them to ascribe human characteristics to inanimate objects, to describe, for example, a magnet as "loving" iron.

Now Vico claimed that imagination was a mode of memory, that is, a passive reproduction of images of perception, and a primitive mode of apprehension. But in contradistinction, some sixty years later, poets such as Shelley, Coleridge and Wordsworth were elevating imagination into an active universal principle based on the synthesis of similarities, that was at work in the spheres of metaphor, language, art and indeed all branches of life. The elevation of the imagination arises

partly in response to mechanistic theories of perception such as Hartley's Associationism, and seeks to demonstrate that not only does the world impress itself upon the mind, but mind actively structures the world.

Shelley's A Defence of Poetry is the archetypal document expressing

this elevation of
the imagination. There he argues that imagination is the supreme creative principle of the world and that language is vitally metaphorical, discovering relations, creating meaning, enlarging the mind and renewing the world.

In determining the nature of the Romantic imagination, imagery, symbols and tropes, our best recourse is to Coleridge and Wordsworth. One can hardly discuss the Romantic imagination
taking into consideration
without Coleridge's description.[45] Coleridge acknowledges that there is a kind of imagination at work in the act of perception but he makes a crucial distinction between this imagination and the imagination of art. The former is involuntary, it enacts the effect of the world upon man, the latter is volitional and comprises the action of man's mind upon the world. The former involves the reception of images from nature; the latter the modification of those images by synthesising them with feeling or thoughts, and images awakened by feeling, to form a unity that speaks to us of an Ideal sphere. The synthesising process reconciles opposite qualities to form the unity: the idea with the image, similitude and dissimilitude, general with concrete, feeling and order.

The association of one image or idea with another on the basis of similitude, is, the reader will immediately observe, a definition of metaphor, and in Romantic poetics the imagination tends to realize itself in metaphor. We can be yet more specific and note that the images and ideas that are combined, in many cases derive from the feelings of man interacting upon nature.

It is important to emphasize that Coleridge denies poetic validity to images which are copied from nature; the image must be recreated, there must be some difference in quality, a difference which, as we have said, often consists in the impingement of human feelings upon an image of nature. Wordsworth would probably subscribe to the same poetic since

he described his subject matter as the feelings of men (and their occupations) and nature.[46] In his Preface to Poems (1815)[47] Wordsworth confirms and elaborates on Coleridge's concept of the imagination. I will discuss his comments in detail as they are very pertinent to the concerns of this chapter as a whole. Wordsworth quotes a definition which describes imagination in terms of the ability to form ideas of sense impressions. While Wordsworth does not dispute the importance to the poet of sensibility and accuracy in observation, and the power to describe with fidelity, he regards these as inferior achievements. Imagination is not making copies of external objects but a higher power which involves the operation of the mind upon those objects. He quotes verses to exemplify what he means. From these examples we understand that the imagination is identified with the use of figurative language, and particularly with metaphor (including synecdoche - whole for part, or part for whole type of metaphor).

In the imaginative/metaphorical process images are endowed by the mind with alien properties, a process that gives a fresh existence to things dulled by custom, and gives gratification to the mind through daring combinations.

Wordsworth analyzes one of his own metaphors in detail to illustrate what he means. This is the analogical metaphor (A is to B as X is to Y) in his poem "Resolution and Independence". which describes the Leech-Gatherer as "not all alive or dead", rather like a huge stone that resembles a sea-beast. In this metaphor the imagination endows the stone with some life while abstracting some from the sea-beast. The man is divested of some life to compare him with the composite image of the stone/sea-beast.

Wordsworth differentiated between imagination which endows and modifies, as in the above example, and that which shapes and creates. He gives as an example of the latter the verse "Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints/he onward came:far off his coming shone" where numbers are consolidated into unity.

In the Wordsworthian metaphor the images modify each other: Here we find the genesis of the modern theory of interaction in metaphor (See below under Metaphor).

To summarize: The Romantic imagination answers Plato's objections that art deals with the illusory images of the sensible world - Wordsworth categorically states in the 1815 Preface that imagination incites and supports the Eternal part of our nature. It does not reproduce the real world but is a means to apprehend an Ideal state. Man is not simply a receptor and manipulator of sense impressions as in the philosopher Hartley's schema, but a mind that impresses itself on the world metaphorically.

In the previous chapter the Romantic attitude to figures was discussed and I do not wish to repeat what was said there in my comments on tropes. One might mention though that the Romantics privileged metaphor and the symbol. Metonymy is criticised by Wordsworth on at least one occasion as an abuse of language (see his comment on Cowper's epithet "the church-going bell").[48] Both Wordsworth and Coleridge reject personification on the grounds that it does not form part of natural conversation, and on the grounds of "good sense". Coleridge regards a personification such as "And reddening Phoebus lifts his golden fire" as a type of metonymy which confounds cause and effect and which substitutes a representative for the real thing.[49]

Since allegory includes personifications and is not the real language of men, it is inferior to the symbol. Allegory deals in abstractions manipulated by Fancy, the symbol is concrete and the product of imagination which fuses and reconciles in it such opposite qualities as the general in the especial and the eternal in the temporal.[50] The construction of a symbol is a way of intuiting truths of the unconscious mind, as opposed to allegory which is elaborated by the conscious mind.

It takes some specious reasoning to conclude that allegory, which includes works like the Divine Comedy, is inferior in adumbrating the eternal in the temporal, but however that may be, the Romantic privileging of symbol over allegory continues to this day.

VICTORIAN THEORY

I wish to raise only a few points here, which refer to features anticipating the Modern period.

Firstly the loss of faith in worlds beyond the senses and the growing influence of science leads to a shifting of the imagination back to the process of perception. Poets are praised for precise observation, distinct images. A.N. Furbank quotes G.H. Lewes as stating that "an artist produces an effect in virtue of the distinctness with which he sees the object he represents" and that in good poets "we see great accuracy in depicting the things themselves or their suggestions, so that we may be certain the things presented themselves in the field of the poet's vision and were painted because seen." [51]

Another trend that pointed to modern poetry was the increasing structural weight placed upon the image. Matthew Arnold, a proponent of classical form, complained of this trend. He criticised Keats' Isabella as being a treasurehouse of "vivid and picturesque turns of expression, by which the object is made to flash upon the eye of the mind and which thrill the reader with a sudden delight" but of neglecting the dramatic action. [52] The story, great human actions which appeal to the primary human affections, these are the real objects of poetry, Arnold thought, not the detached images occuring along the way; expression should be subordinated to that which it is designed to express.

This concludes our very brief survey of critical thought on our subject prior to the modern age. We can now proceed to a discussion of contemporary imagery, symbolism and tropes.

THE MODERN PERIOD

IMAGERY

We have already spoken of imagery in the introduction. Here we can simply state that an image in language is a psychological reaction, in the form of a mental picture of varying distinctness, called up by a word.

Unprecedented in the previous history of literature is the importance of the image as it occurs in modern verse. In the previous chapter we described the modern distrust of rhetoric and attempts by poets to return to the sources of language and vitalize the connection between word and thing described. To these poets the image seemed to offer one way of realizing their aims. Primitive picture language seemed to be a more direct and true mode of communication and iconic meaning both more concentrated and more suggestive than discursive rhetoric, so that a poet like C. Day Lewis can, without any ironical intention, remark that "the force of images may be increased by an occasional rhetorical statement". [53]

The dominance of the image also arises from sociological phenomena such as the cinema and, latterly, TV. The Freudian description of the mechanics of the Dream, in which abstract thoughts are converted into concrete images, has exerted its influence too. P.N. Furbank argues that because the transcendental has become unfashionable, the image, which is associated with the concrete and the phenomenal world, has become popular. [54] This reasoning has some validity, but is qualified by the fact that imagery is not necessarily limited to the depiction of the phenomenal world.

TYPES OF IMAGES

What kind of images should the poet use? According to Aristotle the poet should use beautiful images: it makes a difference whether the Dawn is described as rosy-fingered or purple-fingered.[55] But a contemporary poet such as William Carlos Williams in a poem entitled "Item" has used an image of an old woman beaten by soldiers "with a face like a mashed blood orange", an image true perhaps, but hardly beautiful. And this type of image is not unusual in modern poetry. Does there still obtain then a decorum of imagery such as neo-classical criticism conceived of it? Are some objects or images unfit for higher styles?

Some poets hold by decorum of imagery, many do not. T.E. Hulme insisted that good poetry could be made out of the precise observation of any object, no matter how ordinary or banal.[56] and William Carlos Williams equally emphasised that poetry could be made out of anything at all. If one's subject matter is indiscriminate it follows that decorum cannot obtain. On the other hand poets like Eliot and Pound correlate their images with their style. A manure-machine may make an appearance in Theodore Roethke's poem "Big Wind", but Eliot would be unlikely to make use of its services even to redeem his Wasteland.

We will make a division further on, following William Blake's distinction:

> We are led to Believe a Lie
> When we see /with/ not Thro' the Eye
> "Auguries of Innocence"

That is, a distinction between poets who see with the eye and poets who see through the eye, those whose province is the world of the senses and those who transform the empirical world in some way. For the former every image is potentially material for poetry since a description of the phenomenal world is their aim; for the latter the choice is more restricted since they require more intensity and resonance. The latter type of poet

would probably agree with C. Day Lewis who argues that novel images from the contemporary world should not be introduced into poetry until they have sent down roots into the collective unconscious and will evoke an imaginative response.[57]

IMAGERY AS STRUCTURE

The eminent position accorded the image in modern poetry has meant that poems have been written which are structured through imagery rather than organized through discursive speech. For instance the images may grow organically one out of the other or images may develop through a process of association. This kind of structure is based on organic functional imagery.

Some of Robert Frost's poems are constructed upon an image which undergoes modification or transformation in the course of the poem. For instance in "Mending Wall" the basic image of the two neighbours picking up stones with the wall between them becomes, in turn, an image of hunters uprooting the stones of the wall, an "outdoor game" "one on a side" and "an old-stone savage armed". His poem "Birches" is also structured upon a single image of birch trees which undergoes successive metamorphoses in the course of the poem. The basic image does service on different levels, the natural, human, and abstract/metaphysical, in an ascending value scale.

Some poets construct their poems round images through a process of association. This association technique derives from psychology and owes much to a reformulation of the concept of poetic inspiration in terms of a descent into the Unconscious. According to Jung events in the psyche emanate either from God or from the Unconscious but we are unable to distinguish between them or indeed to know whether there is any distinction

at all.[58] Consequently whereas once poets directed their gaze upward for inspiration they now look downward and inward to the Unconscious.

The favoured medium of the Unconscious is images (according to psychology; though, as some have noted, there is no real experimental proof that an Unconscious even exists) and it is usually an image that the poet receives as a donnée. The poet interrogates this image, creating other images by a process of association. The meaning of the poem itself is only finally revealed to the poet through the images drawn up from the unconscious.

Randall Jarrell has testified to using this process. He has analysed the technique used in his own poem "The Woman at the Washington Zoo"[59], identifying the woman protagonist as a composite image such as appears in dreams, derived from the poet's experiences of a number of people and from himself.

Images structure the poem. It begins with the image of a dress. Then, by way of association, the dress turns into a body, the body into an insubstantial "reflection" in water. This image is then contrasted with solid architectural images and thence to the woman's image as reflected in the eyes of animals. The following image of animals in a cage is associated with an image of her body as a cage. Another poet who describes this psychological poetic technique is C. Day Lewis.[60]

Some modern poets have used the image to structure the final lines of the poem. For instance both Pound and Eliot have used the image as method of closure instead of a discursive peroration.

SEEING WITH OR THROUGH THE EYE

Always bearing in mind that any kind of rigid categorization is almost imevitably an oversimplification of reality, we will impose such a frame upon modern poets in order to bring to the fore the different techniques used by them in respect of imagery..We will categorize poets as those who are in flight from the One to the Many, and those who are in flight from the Many to the One,[61] in brief a distinction between poets who depict appearances and those seeking to depict essences.

Up until the modern age poets who believed that one should not use raw unmediated images, the untreated particulars of reality, were in the majority. It was generally regarded as sanctioned by authorities that images of experience recorded by the senses should not be reproduced without any imaginative transformation, that the mirror held up to Nature is always, in some sense, a transforming mirror. For authorities they could turn, for example, to Sir Philip Sidney who, in his Defence of Poesy assured them that the images of the poet depicted a golden world, a world above nature.

There are contemporary poets who do not depart from tradition in their use of imagery. Through their imagination they try to convey the essence rather than the sense, to fuse imagery with thought and feeling, to apprehend, it may be, the ideal or transcendental to achieve some spiritual illumination.

But a strong countertrend has come into being this century - a century which has seen the falling from grace of the idea of the transcendental - created by poets who locate the imagination in the empirical world of the senses. These poets understand the imagination in terms of its ability to decontextualize the sensory image, separating it from the matrix of the inessential, and intensifying it into a universal.

SEEING WITH THE EYE

Analogous to an empirical imagery technique are cultural trends like photographic realism and Impressionism. Both Pound and Williams had an informed interest in modern painting and a painterly way of apprehending objects, an awareness of colour, light and form as they impressed themselves on the senses which is sometimes carried over discernibly into their poetry.

Another cultural factor conducing to an empirical technique is the prestige of scientific method, the neutral observant eye, which has set a value upon the process of apprehension and description of phenomena which was previously regarded as the province of the lesser powers of the mind. Elizabeth Bishop, for example, writes in a letter of her admiration for Darwin:[62] "one admires the beautiful solid case being built up out of his endless heroic observations..."

Marianne Moore, who considered a doctor's career, records "I like to describe things"[63] and Theodore Roethke, most revealingly, writes:[64]

> When is description mere? Never. A freshness in the seeing, an innocency in the vision, the angle of perception, the bringing together of details, not necessarily as metaphors, even, just as objects. Be one of those on whom, as Lawrence said, nothing is lost. Don't strain for arrangement. Look and put it down and let your sensibility be the sieve.

Again, it is possible that this objectification of phenomena is a response towards a felt destabilization of reality. For a poet like Wordsworth reality was stable enough to form a fusion with the mind. For Walter Pater language invests objects with solidity, while they derive from a world which is a flux of evanescent impressions. He writes, for example,"And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impression, unstable, flickering, inconsistent...."[65] And T.E. Hulme, one of the modernist theorists, praises the artist for making a fixed model of one of the elements that are in a

state of continuous flux in our minds.[66] So that the contemporary poet aims, not to fuse mind with reality, but to stabilize reality.

T.E. Hulme's ideas on poetry incorporate much that these poets who see with the eye would agree with. He spoke out against Romantic poetics, what he regarded as a preoccupation with the infinite and the abstract, in favour of the "neoclassic". The "neo-classic" poet's aim should be the accurate, precise and definite description of the object, no matter how trivial. The object is end not means. Poetry is good in so far as it demonstrates a physical and visual zest in the object. The poet must try to hand over impressions and sensations bodily - since language deals in generalities not particulars his or her best resource is the image and metaphor.[67]

The movement called "Imagism" which flourished briefly in the first decade of the century is archetypical of the empirical approach to the image. An Imagist poem was, as the name suggests, built up around an image or a metaphor without discursive comment. As such, it was usually brief. The image itself was objectively presented, in clear, precise, sensory, often visual terms.[68]

William Carlos Williams' frequently anthologised Imagist poem uses a single vivid image.

<u>The Red Wheelbarrow</u>

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens

For this poet poetry is imaginary gardens with real wheelbarrows in them.

Pound also wrote Imagist poetry but soon found the Imagist form too limited. Of the efficacy of the concrete image, however, he remained convinced. The Cantos he described in a letter to James Joyce in 1917 as "image-making" and as late as 1937 he was still contending that "a presented image might be the perfectly adequate expression or exposition of any urge, whatsoever its nature."[69]

Pound built up The Cantos out of discrete particular concrete images, intermingling what he distinguished as casual, historical and mythical levels. These particulars he hoped would combine in the mind of the reader to form more general concepts and patterns, as a magnet forms a rose-like energy pattern from particles of steel filings. In this he was no doubt influenced by Ernest Fenollosa's credo in the vivid, concrete and particular image and the potential in these material images to combine and suggest immaterial relations.

In The Cantos it sometimes seems doubtful whether any electrical energy leaps the gap between phenomenon and concept. Yet there are some images in The Cantos which seem to combine metaphorically to suggest a meaning beyond the actual words:

> Like a lone ant from the wreckage of the anthill of Europe
> Ego scriptor
> Canto:LXXVI

> if calm be after tempest
> that the ants seem to wobble
> as the morning sun catches their shadows
> Canto LXXX

> When the mind swings by a grass blade
> an ant's forefoot shall save you
> Canto LXXXIII

These images of the ant - what Pound would call a natural symbol, an image whose symbolic function does not obtrude - seem to work by combining and suggesting feeling, the dawning of a precarious hope in Pound's mind after the storm of fortune that stranded him in a Pisan detention centre at the end of World War 2.

An uncompromising devotion to the world of appearances is reflected in William Carlos Williams' credo "No ideas but in things". For him the mundane, phenomenal sensory world is the site of poetry and the imagination. In images of the reality which surrounds the poet, in the local, lies the true universal. To image a woman as a princess as Yeats might do, is to "dress up" reality, to postulate some special "poetic" sphere as the provenance of the imagination.[70] The aesthetic sphere is no longer the sphere of the Beautiful, but of Truth; at its best Beauty is only Truth incompletely realised.[71] Thus Williams may describe:

> a concrete disposal tank at
> one end, small wooden
> pit-covers scattered about - above
> sewer intakes, most probably - "A Bastard Peace"

We are far removed from an Ideal world here. The only images of the Ideal that this poet can lay claim to are the inflated icons of the advertising world, likewise with Philip Larkin - see his poem "Essential Beauty".

Williams rejects the Romantic concept of the imagination and its incarnation in metaphor. The imagination, according to Williams, should not diffuse and recreate, but should preserve intact.[72] The image should not be blurred by associating it with something else in metaphor, simile or symbol to form a beautiful illusion. It is the uniqueness of a thing that counts, not its associational value, its dissimilarities not its similarities.[73] The interaction effect of metaphor is anathema to Williams.

Overall, Williams does clean up the image. Yet sometimes in his work the poem itself is a metaphor and the images may be taken as an analogue for an implied subject. For instance the poem "By the Road to the Contagious Hospital" images the tentative beginnings of Spring as plant life hesitantly awakes in a cold, dead landscape. But the poem can also be read as emblematical

of the role of the imagination in renewing the world:

> One by one objects are defined-
> It quickens: clarity, outline of leaf
>
> But now the stark dignity of
> entrance - Still, the profound change
>
> has come upon them: rooted, they
> grip down and begin to awaken.

— I would suggest that in this poem the implicit metaphor does not blur the image but increases its resonance.

Williams ascribes great value to the imagination. The imagination takes familiar, simple things and detaches them from the inessential matrix.[74] This imagination is metonymic - it is an eye to draw out the detail which is in itself the thing.[75] It refines and intensifies the thing, compacts the image into vividness.[76] Through imagination the common is dignified into the uncommon.[77] and the individual raises himself out of the flux of sensation.[78] Art is mot the mirror, it is the life transmuted to a tighter form. Art educates the reader's or viewer's perceptions.[79]

A type of image which is somewhat different from the imagist variety, but is still located within sensory parameters is that kind produced by a poet like, for example, Elizabeth Bishop. This imagery appears sometimes in description, sometimes in metaphor or simile. It is the product of those powers of the mind that Wofdsworth located in the areas of perception and description. Poets like Bishop, and Seamus Heaney as well, excell in the registering of vivid sensory impressions, usually visual. They have both the meticulous scientific and the intense aesthetic eye. They also have the ability to translate their perceptions into words which will call up an equal response in the reader. To illustrate what I mean here are some examples from Bishop's poems:

> Like a first coat of whitewash when it's wet,
> the thin gray mist lets everything show through
> "Twelfth Morning;or What You Will"

(We stated in our introduction that to divide poets into two rigid categories inevitably involves oversimplification. In this respect Prof. John Baxter of Dalhousie University, Canada, has commented that the title of the above example evokes some conceptual response in addition to the sensory since Bishop is, in effect, doing some of her seeing through someone else's eyes.)

On parked cars:
The tin hides have the iridescence
of dying, flaccid toy balloons.
"Going to the Bakery"

The waterwagon throws
its hissing, snowy fan across
peelings and newspapers. The water dries
light-dry, dark-wet, the pattern
of the cool watermelon.
"Love Lies Sleeping"

Oil has seeped into
the margins of the ditch of standing water

and flashes or looks upward brokenly,
like bits of mirror - no, more blue than that:
like tatters of the Morpho butterfly.
"Under the Window:Ouro Preto"

In these examples one experiences that shock of recognition when the thing is brought vividly before you in an image. Elements of meaning are transferred to the unknown subject from the known analogue which resembles the subject, but is a simplification and intensification of it. The object is not presented but re-presented in an image, so that we conclude that there is a kind of imagination at work here although it does not lift us above the sensory world to a higher level.

The effect on the reader is that joy which we experience when precise meaning is communicated and that pleasure in imitation which Aristotle regards as the fundamental principle of art. The poet removes from our eyes that veil of familiarity that custom has stretched across the senses.

One sees this effect of precision of meaning and freshness of sensation in Robert Frost's poetry when he writes of wheels that "freshly sliced the April mire" or when he describes a swimming buck as pushing the "crumpled" water. Frost has indicated that precision in imagery is what makes poetry the exact, not inexact, companion to science, and that it is based on his own observation and experience of nature. "I don't like to write anything I don't see."[80]

I cannot resist giving one more example of this type of image from Seamus Heaney's "Gifts of Rain":

> A man wading lost fields
> breaks the pane of flood:
>
> a flower of mud -
> water blooms up to his reflection
> like a cut swaying
> its red spoors through a basin.

SEEING THROUGH THE EYE

Some of the best modern poets have resisted the pervasive scientific empiricism of this century and have sought the technical means to embody in their imagery the resonance of the immaterial, the suggestion of worlds of the spirit.

As this section comprises an investigation into imagery I do not wish to go into detail about tropes which will be discussed individually; nevertheless it is obviously not possible, when discussing images which speak beyond the literal, to avoid mention of figurative constructions such as the symbol, allegory and some kinds of metaphor. But they will be subordinated to my main concern here, which is the distinction between "physical" and "metaphysical" imagery.

A poet like Allen Ginsberg has achieved "metaphysical" imagery of hallucinatory quality through derangement of the senses by drugs. He wrote Howl after he "got high on Peyote, saw an image of the robot skullface of Moloch in the upper stories of a big hotel glaring into my window..." [81] The present writer should, of course not be regarded as endorsing this procedure unilaterally. It may be sufficient for the poet to use an exotic location, under the influence of which, the senses are dislocated. For instance in Bishop's "Crusoe in England" the tiny volcanoes on the castaway's island cause Crusoe to perceive himself as a

Gulliver-like giant and unfamiliar waterspouts to be seen as "sacerdotal beings of glass".

The use of imagery in a discursive allegorical manner so as to convey in narrative form a spiritual meaning is not a popular technical resource, but has been used by Eliot in "The Journey of the Magi" and in sections of Ash Wednesday and Four Quartets.

Some modern poets use metaphoric imagery in such a way as to give the image a resonance beyond the purely photographic. This may be brought about through the infusion of thought or feeling with the image. Ted Hughes describes the imagery in "Wuthering Heights" by Sylvia Plath as of this kind.

> The grass is beating its head distractedly.
> It is too delicate
> For a life in such company;
> Darkness terrifies it.

Here the image both projects some details of the scene and defines the way you are to feel about it, in the same way as cinema images are accompanied by a musical score which works on our feelings.[82] Here metaphoric lines fuse images from nature and images from the human sphere evoked by emotion.

Few poets, however, achieve what Wordsworth thought the image capable of - to shadow forth an eternal world. Eliot achieves this in Four Quartets. In this work he confronts the problem of using imagery, originating in impressions of the sensory world, to describe a world beyond the senses. He manages to suggest the immaterial through the material by way of paradox, extended oxymoron, a suggestion of a world beyond nature in images of nature.

Thus in Little Gidding the intense glow of sun reflected in the "watery mirror" of winter ice images "pentecostal fire", water, a generative symbol, is transformed by light, a spiritual symbol. Similarly "the hedgerow...blanched...with transitory blossom of snow" images a chastity beyond the generative world.

Another image of this kind occurs in Burnt Norton where "invisible" presences are "reflected" in "water" created by "sunlight" in an empty pool. Everything is insubstantial here - the pool which is empty seems full, the water seems water but is s sunlight, a visible reflection of invisible presences is cast on the impalpable water. The transcendental meaning mocks the evidence of the imagery and the senses.

Eliot shows a fine concern for the associative power of the image. He regards the poetic image that is already a part of the literary tradition as superior in intensity, feeling and evocative power to the fresh, original image, rather as if it were a kind of literary archetype that can activate patterns of recurrent cultural experience. Shelley was aware of this power in the literary image and used the technique in "Adonais", appropriating and transforming from the elegaic tradition, images reaching right back to the classical period.

Eliot has used in his work an image that can, in some form or other, be traced back to classical times. It appears in tenuous form in The Iliad and is cited by Aristotle:[83]

> The bear alone,
> Still shines exalted in th'aetherial plain,
> Nor bathes his flaming forehead in the main.

The Roman Seneca borrowed this image[84] which was in turn filched by the Elizabethan Chapman who wrote in Bussy d'Ambois:

> fly where men feel
> The burning axeltree, and those that suffer
> Beneath the chariot of the Snowy Bear.

Finally it was taken up by Eliot in "Gerontion":

> De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs Cammel, whirled
> Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear
> In fractured atoms.

Images from myth have been much resorted to by contemporary poets in order to expand reference beyond the mundane present.

Examples will immediately occur to the reader such as the images from fertility myth in The Wasteland. On a smaller personal scale I could mention, from a host of possibilities, a poem like "Alcestis and the Poet" by Peter Porter. It will be remembered that Alcestis was the faithful wife who chose to die, to descend into Hades, in place of her husband King Admetus. Porter embeds in myth what appears to be the speaker's own guilt feelings on the death of his wife and gives the image of the woman the power of the archetype. In this extract the dead wife speaks through the persona of Alcestis:

> Sited in great art, but tearful still,
> The creatures that we are make little gestures, then
> Go to nothing. The wind urges the trees to sigh
> For us: it is not a small thing to die,
> But looking back I see only the disappointed man
> Casting words upon the page. Was it for this
> I stepped out upon the stairs of death obediently?

Mention of the archetype leads us to a consideration of the resources that the poet may derive from Jungian and Freudian concepts of the Unconscious and I will give several examples of how psychology has proved an asset to the poet.

Poets may give an extra dimension to their imagery through the conscious manipulation of Freudian symbolism as Allen Ginsberg does in "Kaddish", an elegy on his mother in which he uses Oedipal imagery in certain verses, or William Carlos Williams in Paterson or John Berryman in the Dream Songs.

One way in which psychology has proved a resource to the poet has been through a derivative, Surrealism. The influence of Surrealism, at its height in the thirties, can be seen in poets such as Dylan Thomas, who uses images that appeal to the irrational layers of the psyche. In his"Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait" a fisherman casts into the sea a girl-bait with a hook through her lips. Through this image of desire he confronts "the crab-backed dead on the sea-bed", his forefathers, and reels in

> a garden holding to her hand
> With birds and animals
>
> With men and women and waterfalls....

The poem ends with the fisherman standing alone at the door of his home "With his long-legged heart in his hand."

One wonders what Coleridge would have said about the final image. It was he who reacted to an unfortunate poet's line "round my heart's leg tie /love's/ galling chain" with a crushing comment on "moderns" who used a "broken and heterogeneous imagery" or rather "an amphibious something, made up half of image, and half of abstract meaning."[86]

Poets have also exploited the concept of the archetype derived from Jungian psychology. Yeats and Ted Hughes, for example, have made use of archetypes to lift the image above the occasional but I will discuss this in more detail in the next section on Symbolism. I will merely note here that Jung, an exponent of the archetypal image, believed that "whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices" and "lifts the idea he is seeking to express out of the occasional and the transitory into the realm of the ever-enduring."[87]

Images from dreams have a symbolic reference that psychology has taught poets to value. Elizabeth Bishop uses dream material "whenever I am lucky enough to have any... /Dreams/ catch a peripheral vision of whatever it is one can never really see full face but that seems enormously important."[88]

The imagery of Eliot's Wasteland has features in common with the imagery of dreams as described by Sigmund Freud. As occurs in dreams, figures in The Wasteland may be composite constructions assembled from the characteristics of several personalities. Eliot has said in the Notes to the poem that "the one-eyed merchant ...melts into the Phoenician sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman," Likewise all the rivers are linked through the principle of association, the dynamic of the Unconscious mind. The illogical, surreal character of some of the imagery is dream typical. The American Stetson has companioned someone in the ships at Mylae and Tiresias coexists with a modern typist.

in his"Preface to Shakespeare", Time, in these images, is, in Dr. Johnson's trenchant phrase, "obsequious to the imagination".

I will conclude this section with a comparison between two poems that illustrates some of the points I have made above. Eliot's Wasteland and Pound's Mauberley are similar poems, in that both image the disintegration of a civilization, though in Mauberley the cause of the collapse is seen as usury and philistinism, whereas Eliot traces the causes mainly to the unredeemed psyche and abused sexuality. But if we compare their imagery it seems to this writer that Eliot's imagery has more resonance and is more memorable than Pound's. Through the use of myth and dream Eliot gives his imagery a metaphysical dimension. It is that phantasmagorical quality that is so haunting in The Wasteland. It may be that Pound deliberately eschewed such suggestive techniques, regarding them as the outworn reflexes of an idealist tradition, doomed to give way to a more scientific, phenomenalist outlook. But if the poet agrees with Pound s/he will surely have to ask him or herself what other method can be found to give the imagery an imaginative resonance equal to that achieved by Eliot.

We will now turn our attention to specific particular forms that an image takes on when it depicts a meaning beyond the literal.

SYMBOL

Images transferred to a higher level of abstraction become symbols. A symbol is a word or image, usually concrete, which signifies both itself and a cluster of associated signifieds, usually ideas. Symbols are related to tropes in that they refer to a meaning beyond the literal but are usually regarded as occupying a special category.

In the trope metaphor, for example, elements of meaning are

transferred from the principal image to the subject (in a "golden canary" an element of colour is transferred from the concept "gold" to "canary"). In the symbol, the image contains elements of meaning belonging to and referring to a larger subject (Yeats' "Golden Bird"in his poem "Byzantium" contains elements of meaning of and refers to, among other things, the eternal world of Art.) The association between the image and the subject is contingent, one-off in metaphor, and recurrent in the symbol. With repeated use of the same image by a poet it may become symbolic. Symbols may be archetypal and therefore universal (such as those occuring in dreams and myths), cultural (confined to members of a particular culture, for example the British Lion), or private (a system constructed by the poet personally).

According to Ferdinand de Saussure a symbol is a kind of natural language and unlike the signifier in ordinary language is not arbitrary and does not have a relative value. In other words it has some natural resemblance or correspondence to the concepts it expresses. [89]

The philosopher A.N. Whitehead defines symbolism as follows: [90]

> The human mind is functioning symbolically when some components of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions and usages, respecting other components of its experience. The former set of components are the "symbols" and the latter set constitute the "meaning" of the symbols.

Whitehead's definition in its broad generality shows that the symbolical function is a fundamental activity of the human mind. In fact Piaget states that this function comes into existence one and a half to two years after birth in the human being and enables imagery and a range of activities such as play, memory and language. [91]

Whitehead considers that the process of perception is symbolical, insofar as a coloured shape refers to, for example, a chair through the transformation of perception. Language itself is

symbolical. In the use of language in poetry there is a double symbolic reference: For a poet visual sights and sounds refer symbolically to words and for the readers the words refer symbolically to the sights and sounds. Whitehead considers that a symbol usually refers to more primitive elements in our experience.

Many modern poets have a predeliction for the symbol. This trend, originating in Romanticism and peaking in the Symbolist Movement has been strengthened by, or is part of, intellectual disciplines such as Psychology and Anthropology.

Anthropological research into so-called "primitive" cultures has opened up the field of myth as a source of symbols for poets. In this respect poets as diverse as Eliot, Graves, Heaney and Hughes have used symbolism deriving from fertility myth or the ancient Nature Goddess.

In the discipline of psychology the work of both Freud and Jung has promoted the use of symbols. Freud has described symbols as characteristic of the Unconscious imagination and appearing in dreams.[92] His work has familiarized poets with the idea of an image standing by way of association for a repressed equivalent and they have adopted this type of symbol into their poetry.

A pertinent example is the poem "The Man-Moth" by Elizabeth Bishop. The manifest level of the poem describes a phantasy creature which lives underground in the subways, emerging at full-moon to scale up skyscrapers towards what he thinks is a hole in the sky. On a latent level the poem maps out a topography of the psyche through symbolism. The convolutions of the brain (like subway tunnels), the unconscious and conscious levels of the mind, sexual drives, are symbolized in Freudian imagery and in surrealistic imagery which, in its combination of the geometrically precise and dream-like mystery surely owes something to the painter Giorgio di Chirico.

Here above,
cracks in the buildings are filled with battered moonlight.
The whole shadow of Man is only as big as his hat.
It lies at his feet like a circle for a doll to stand on,
and he makes an inverted pin, the point magnified to the moon.

The poem as a whole rises above mere transcription of a dream through fusion of thought with the imagination, the idea with the image.

Symbols have been revitalized in a new guise as archetypal images. In this respect the work of Jung on archetypes has had a great influence on poets, for instance the poet Ted Hughes. Jung defined the archetypal image as an

essentially mythological figure or process that constantly recurs in the course of history and creative work. These images are the psychic residue of innumerable experiences of the race. As we mentioned in the previous section, Jung thought the archetypal image most powerfully evocative. The creative process consists in the unconscious activation of this image and its conscious elaboration into art. Jung saw in this process the social function of art: the artist intuitively senses the psychic inadequacies of his/her age and calls up compensatory symbols bringing them into relation with conscious life and effecting a healing process in the minds of contemporaries.[93]

The poet Ted Hughes uses symbolic technique with a social intent which surely derives from Jung. Hughes considers that Western Civilization has repressed the spiritual and given itself over to rationalism, materialism and scepticism which has resulted in a critical malaise. The vital archaic energies of Nature, symbolized in the figure of the Great Goddess of the primeval world, are restorative of this spiritual sickness if invoked, but also dangerous unless channelled through symbol or myth. The poet's evocation of symbol and myth make him or her the natural mediator between civilization and the spirit world. The role of the poet is similar to that of a healer-Shaman who can communicate with the spirits, often in the form of animal familiars, and through whom the forces of Nature speak. Psychic contact with symbols of the forces of Nature are therapeutic for the reader, setting free repressed energies. Hughes regards symbols such as Blake's Tyger or Yeats' Beast in "The Second Coming" as images of this kind which have a spiritual summoning force directed against the oppressive elements in civilization. His own image of the Jaguar is a lineal descendant of Blake's Tyger.

This Jaguar carries his head "like a brazier of spilling embers", "the weight of his fangs hanging the mouth open". The Jaguar is a "Gangster", "muttering some mantrah, some drum-song of murder" and "hurrying through the underworld, soundless."

Hughes describes this symbol as "descriptions of a jaguar... invocations of the Goddess...invocations of a jaguar-like body of elemental force, demonic force."[94] and he has described the powerful multivalency of this symbol, the several different aspects - nature spirit, demon, forces of the id, symbol of Dionysus etc - which can be activated, depending on the reader.

Many of Hughes' poems illustrate his idiosyncratic use of symbolism. In "Wind" the human organism, perhaps even the mind and civilization as symbolized itself, by the Freudian symbol of the house,[95] appears to be on the point of disintegrating under the onslaught of the divine energy, symbolized by the Jungian archetype of the wind.[96]

The house

> Rang like some fine green goblet in the note
> That any second would shatter it.

The primal forces of energy that the occupants have carefully shut out cry to be allowed in; if ignored they threaten to tear up the whole structure of civilization or the psyche by the roots.

Yet the prospect of connecting up with an energy circuit of such power threatens to annihilate the individual, this force arouses fear: "we grip/Our hearts". Only through the ritual of a poem created by the Shaman poet can this energy enter into our consciousness.

The symbol of the Wind is a particularly rich one with associations which range from the Hebrew "ruah" as a synonym for the spirit or God, to Shelley's Wind of inspiration and imagination. This poem demonstrates how the symbol may co-exist most effectively with metaphor.

> The woods crashing through darkness, the booming hills,
> Winds stampeding the fields under the window.

The type of metaphor used here is, most fittingly, for the theme, that which animates the inanimate, and through it the rooted becomes capable of movement, the mute capable of speech.

An examination of Yeats' poetry gives one the most comprehensive idea of the technique of using symbols. If one could divide poets into poets of the sensory world like William Carlos Williams and poets who combine the sensory and the world of the spirit like Wordsworth, then Yeats would fall into the category of those who strive singlemindedly to interpret the spirit through the image or symbol.

Historically his work is related to the French Symbolist Movement which exploited the resources of the symbol, the dream, and the musical possibilities of language to achieve a suggestiveness beyond rational consciousness. But he is also akin to William Blake who sees imagination as the first emanation of divinity and superior to a reason based on the observation of the senses. For Yeats the return to the possibilities of imagination and vision as opposed to the entire rationalist picture of the world that had grown up since the 19th Century was of prime importance.

For a poet who sees through the eye like Yeats, reality is a distorted picture thrown upon the senses by eternal forms. Yeats phrases it as the contrast between "unmeaning circumstance and the ebb and flow of the world" and "that far household where the undying gods await all whose souls have become simple as flame..."[97] We often see this contrast in his poems. His poetic technique is related to his conception of the poet's mission. He might well have agreed with Sir Philip Sidney's words that the poet's aim is to "lift up the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying his own divine essence "[98], or, as Yeats

in his own words expressed it, "Poet, bring the soul of man to God."[99] This is not to posit a total identification between Yeats and Sidney, since Sidney's discourse, unlike that of Yeats, was declaredly Christian. It is merely to indicate some points of contact.

If images are the memories of sensory experiences and the poet has rejected the sensory world, where should s/he turn for images? Not to the natural world, but to worlds where the image

exists in the greatest degree of abstraction, the worlds of Magic, Dreams, the Unconscious and Myth. Symbols can also be created out of a real person or landscape by refining the image and liberating it "from the bonds of motives and their actions, causes and their effects" so that it becomes perfected and part of the Divine Essence associated, not with the passions of the everyday, but the infinite emotions in the Great Memory.[100]

A key statement by Yeats on his poetic technique occurs in an essay on tragic drama but which also has application to his poetic technique and is revelatory of the manner in which a symbolist poet creates his images.[101]

> ... in mainly tragic art one distinguishes devices to exclude or lessen character, to diminish the power of that daily mood, to cheat or blind its too clear perception. If the real world is not altogether rejected, it is but touched here and there, and into the places we have left empty we summon... images that remind us of vast passions, the vagueness of past times, all the chimaeras that haunt the edge of trance and...we shall express personal emotion through ideal form, a symbolism handled by the generations, a mask from whose eyes the disembodied looks, a style that...escapes contemporary suggestion; or we shall leave out some element of reality as in Byzantine painting where there is no mass, nothing in relief...

In this passage Yeats mentions several methods of "cheating the daily mood" in the creation of images and we will examine these more closely.

One of the methods was magic. Yeats believed in magic, the evocation of spirits and the power of creating magical illusions, He was a serious hermetic student, avid for arcane lore and an experimenter in the rituals and imagery of magic and mysticism. He took some of his imagery from this source, notably his elemental imagery of fire and water.

Dreams were also a fruitful source of images that cheated the daily mood, both his own and those of his friends. According to his own testimony Yeats had the unusual ability to

descend,like Virgil's Aeneas into the Underworld,that is, of his own unconscious, through the horn and ivory gate of dreams. He has described an incident during the composition of a poem in which meditation upon the images led him into a trance state during which his conscious life became erased and he inhabited the world of his dreams of many nights.[102] What is unusual is his seeming ability to expose the unconscious to the conscious for examination, since usually the dream censor intervenes when we try to recall unconscious material.

Magic is based on,and dreams form part of,the Unconscious; a greater resource for Yeats in cheating the daily mood was the Unconscious itself, in particular the Collective Unconscious. He thought of the Collective Unconscious as existing in the present and the past; The present in the form of a Great Mind into which flow many lesser minds and the past in the form of a Great Memory into which personal memories flow, the Mind of Nature herself. This Great Mind and Memory can be evoked through symbols.[103]

Symbolism is a very useful technique for the poet because of the associative power and semantic multivalency of symbols. Symbols are associated in the Great Memory with certain events and moods and persons. The passions of men have gathered about symbols and this makes them evocative. Yeats conceives of imagination in terms of the symbol, through which the poet escapes "from the barrenness and shallowness of a too conscious arrangement into the abundance and depth of Nature."[104]

Another way of cheating the daily mood is to use the symbolism inherent in myth. In the early years of his career Yeats explored the hitherto unexploited poetic resources of Irish myth and fairy tale. He thought the Celtic legends "a new intoxication for the imagination of the world".[105]

A more lasting resource he found in Greek myth, for instance in the figures of Leda and Helen.

In "Leda and the Swan" the particular excellence of the symbolism lies in the suggestions, beyond the dramatic reality of events that seem present, of superhuman and supernatural forces creating human history through a passionate encounter with the particular.

Yeats was a syncretist in myth and took symbolical elements from many sources, Roman, Japanese, Chinese and Byzantine. He also evolved a private system ofsymbolism as described in his work "A Vision".

A Vision is a system taken down by Yeats' wife through automatic writing under the prompting, ostensibly, of instructor spirits, although Yeats believed that the system originated actually in his own and his wife's psyche. The system has astrological, historical and spiritual ramifications but has for foundation the belief that reality for human beings is experienced through antimonies and is basically cyclical. Hence a key archetypal image is the Wheel which is structured by the phases of the moon and seeks to formulate recurring phases of character. There is an interconnection between the symbolology of A Vision and some of the symbols in his poems.

Symbols in Yeats' poetry were also pressed into the service of self-transformation. Yeats developed the concept of the "Mask" in his life and his poetry, in the sense of the adoption of an antithetical character in order to expand consciousness, using personae as Crazy Jane, Ribh, and the Fisherman with his freckled face and clothing of grey Connemara cloth.

In this he was adopting a method recognised by psychology

and anthropology. Jung sees the use of the Mask, among so-called "primitive" people, as an aid to development of the personality. The choice of the Mask is dictated by unconscious needs. It separates the individual from the collective psyche and brings the wearer magical prestige. [106]

In Yeats' poem "Ego Dominus Tuus", in a dialogue between "Hic" and "Ille", Ille defines a poetic which is based on the search for an image of Mask:

> By the help of an image
> I call to my own opposite, summon all
> That I have handled least, least looked upon.

The speaker takes as an example Dante, through whose cult of the Lady, the anti-self Beatrice, the poet was enabled to cast off his original character as lecher and climb the stair of psychic development.

The Dantean or Petrarchan cult of the Lady provided Yeats with a framework for the development of one of his most elaborated symbols. His friend, Maud Gonne appears in his poetry in many guises, but although poems naturally originate in real occasions and real life, Yeats transforms the raw material and she never, as far as I can discern, appears in her everyday reality, the "daily mood" of the woman is discarded. What Yeats presents is "an image of air", the spiritual essence, the ideal, the symbol. Yeats' Lady takes on the symbolical form of the queen before whose feet the chivalrous knight casts his cloak, the Muse of the imagination, the unattainable, evoking verse that tries to woo and win, the spirit of Ireland, Cathleen ni Houlihan, the image that teaches the poet love of mankind, the immortality of love "though Dan and Jerry Lout/ change their loves about", the soul as elemental as fire, the Helen looking for a new Troy to burn, the divine goddess who makes peace by simply walking into a room, who has a form full "with magnanimity of light", the "superhuman" and "supernatural", the "tomb-haunter" with the "bird's round eye" of a Byzantine fresco.

Similarly in his other presentations of friends and relatives, some dimensions of reality are removed from the real person, leaving the archetypal essence.

Special attention should be paid to the symbols used by Yeats when he was writing at the height of his powers. I refer particularly to the Byzantium poems, but also to poems like "The Long-legged Fly" and "The Second Coming". The images in these poems seem to inhabit a universe that we have never seen before, they exist outside of nature, purged of mortality. They seem neither animate, nor inanimate, breathing an atmosphere beyond the common. They have a surreal clarity and simplicity and at the same time a troubling eeriness. In Byzantium the spinning shade in the mummy-cloth, neither living nor dead, the "Miracle, bird or golden handiwork" "Planted on the star-lit golden bough", the "Flames that no faggot feeds", the spirits riding the dolphins through a "gong-tormented sea", these enigmatic symbols haunt the imagination.

This review of symbolic technique should convey to the reader and poet some of the many resources available in symbols. For the remainder of this chapter we will be speaking of the major varieties of tropes.

TROPES

When we use tropes in poetry we are using language which signifies something beyond the literal meaning, in a manner that gives aesthetic pleasure. The grace of this figurative language is situated within the semantic not the physical syntactical sphere, in other words tropes transform the meaning, not the material structure of language as other figures do. In the phraseology of classical rhetoric tropes are figures of thought as opposed to figures of words or language; in modern parlance, to use the phraseology of the anthropologist Sapir, they "operate on the meaning (the signified) rather than the form (the signifier) of words."[107]

The question arises then, how do we know that the language in question is figurative? Leach suggests that figurative meaning is expressed by some kind of formal deviation. The term figurative implies that an item has been given a referential meaning outside its normal range of meanings.[108] Other authors argue that the absurdity of a literal interpretation signals another level of meaning.[109] The figurative is also signalled by contradiction, incompleteness or an enigmatic quality that invites elucidation. The context may provide the stimulus for a non-literal interpretation, or clues given by the poet.

I will briefly remind the reader that we have already described the Classical, Medieval and Romantic conception of tropes in the section on critical history.

Contemporary attitudes to tropes inherit something from Romantic theory. Moderns continue to be interested in the way tropes may arise out of and convey emotion. The theory that tropes are a primitive mode of expression has proved attractive to poets returning to linguistic grass roots. Poets have been interested in the way tropes may compress information. The most distinctive contemporary trend, however, is the contention that tropes may create meaning.

In the earlier half of this century poetry was often thought of in musical terms. An analogy between the musical combination of two tones to create a new sound may have suggested to poets that a combination of words in a trope could create a new meaning. Again, the emphasis on meaning may have arisen out of surrealism and the idea that juxtaposition of words may stimulate a meaning in the unconscious.

Tropes used by poets working on these lines may depart from classical ideals of clarity and glory in the ambiguous and the obscure.

The modern trend in tropes has been to narrow down the entire field to one single type: metaphor. This trend continues

a process in contemporary thought whereby the entire field of rhetorical figures has been narrowed down to tropes. This reductive process should be resisted by the poet.

Hereunder I will describe the tropes of allegory, personification, irony, hyperbole, catachresis, synecdoche, metonymy and metaphor. It is obviously not possible within the confines of this work to give other than a synoptic description of the main tropes. Within this limitation I hope to give the reader an idea of the variety of forms language can take on when it departs from the literal and to indicate how these forms relate to each other.

ALLEGORY

The contemporary idea of an allegory is of a narrative, usually adventurous, representing on at least one other level an unstated framework of alternative meaning and conveying some moral or theological truth.

Allegory has been used in major works by major poets - the poet of the Romaunt of the Rose, Dante, Chaucer and Spenser. These poets actually created the trope as we understand it today and as I shall demonstrate. This fact is important for the poet to bear in mind: Tropes are not fixed unchangeable categories but are obsequious to the creative mind.

The classical definition of allegory as, for instance, given in the Rhetorica ad Herennium,[110] is "denoting one thing by the letter of the words, but another by their meaning", which is too broad to indicate anything but its figurative status. The author states that allegory assumes three aspects: 1) Comparison when metaphors originating in a similarity in the mode of expression are set together, for example "When dogs act the part of wolves to what guardian are we going to entrust our herds of cattle?" 2) Argument, when a similitude (the name of some famous person) is used to magnify or minify, for example "Drusus is a faded reflection of the Gracchi." 3) Contrast, for example "To call a spendthrift "frugal". Both types 1 and 3 can also use "argument" that is, the name of a person famous for some virtue or vice.

← Now in modern terms we should say that example 1 is a parable or fable using metaphor, example 2 is a metaphor and example 3 irony. Metaphor is, of course, a component of allegory, as is the parable or fable but the discursive, narrative or epic element so prominent in later allegory is absent, while categories like irony are included which have now become independant.

Similarly Bede[111] includes under allegory the forms of irony, sarcasm, euphemism, enigma (similar to metaphor) and proverb (likewise similar to metaphor). In Bede we meet the concept that allegory may admit of historical, figurative, moral and analogical explanations that was to provide a framework for Dante.

Dorothy Sayers has pointed to the innovativeness of Dante's allegory in the use of "symbolic personages", that is actual historical figures who symbolize some truth, rather than personified abstractions, a more flexible and imaginative method.[112] In Dante's work, indeed, we find those features which have become identified for us with the trope: the moral and theological framework, the prophetic elements, the guide who accompanies the protagonist, the pageantry, the extended adventure narrative.

During the Renaissance allegory was regarded by Puttenham in Book 3 of his Arte of English Poesie as the master trope or "the chief of all figures".

Coleridge regarded the origin of narrative allegory as a Christian substitution for the mythology of polytheism, but its origins could not persuade him to approve it. He summarily states that if allegory interests us we cease to think of it as allegory; if it does not interest us, we had better leave it.

We have mentioned in a previous section that Coleridge regarded allegory as inferior on the grounds that the relation between the manifest and latent content was a mechanical production of Fancy. He did however admit that the manifest level was

engendered through imagination: His definition of allegory incorporates the description that in allegory "the difference /manifest content/ is everywhere presented to the idea or imagination while the likeness /latent content/ is suggested to the mind."[113] Indeed he could hardly do otherwise, since the allegorical vehicle has often been regarded as an extended metaphor, metaphor the Romantic imaginative trope par excellence. In fact, as an extended trope, allegory may include many other tropes, such as personification to mention but one.

Because of the crumbling of accepted universal standards in this century, because of the eclipse of the rational in favour of the irrational forces of the mind, allegory has been neglected by poets who prefer, in Eliot's phraseology, the Dream to the Vision.[114] Allegory is popularly regarded as one-dimensional and rigid, which is naturally only the case in the more primitive forms.

Robert Frost uses allegory very naturally and effectively in his poem "The Road Not Taken". The poem narrates how a traveller is confronted with two diverging, almost identical, paths in a wood. He chooses the "one less travelled by", hoping he will be able to explore the other as well some time, though doubting he will ever return to do so. He foresees that on looking back one day he will realize that his choice of road has been of momentous significance in his life.

The poem is thus very simple, almost commonplace, on a literal level. We realize however that it may be interpreted figuratively. How do we know? well, we who share the same Western cultural heritage with Frost recognise images such as "path", "wood", "traveller" and "autumn" as archetypal symbols that have been repeatedly used by European and other poets to convey metaphysical ideas. There are other cues as well. The fact

that such a commonplace situation is recorded in the first place. We argue that there must be more to the narrative otherwise the poet would not go to the trouble of relating it. Then the fact that he will remember this choice as momentous alerts us to the existence of a figurative meaning.

So we could perhaps interpret the path in terms of the direction a life may take and the diverging paths as a crisis of choice. The fact that there is a choice may represent a, possibly illusory, plenitude of potentiality in the present. The paths are similar - life choices often do not offer clearly marked out alternatives. The direction once chosen, the more adventurous, exploratory life, it will come to seem almost predestined - we are confined by the boundaries of a path - and leading to a momentous outcome. One can never return to follow the other path - Time is a one-way traffic and one's past life unredeemable.

We see here how allegory works through narrative extension, using concrete imagery of the literal level to refer to abstract concepts of the figurative. It has something of the quality of the riddle, offering an intellectual pleasure in explication.

PERSONIFICATION

Personification occurs when something inanimate is imagined as animate. The transformation may be effected through synecdoche, metonymy or metaphor.[115]

Vico gives an example of metonymy of cause for effect in which the cause is imagined as a woman clothed with her effects: ugly Poverty.[116]

Personification also exists in metaphor, the Aristotelian metaphor that "sets before the eyes" (see History):

> The way the moon dashes through clouds that blow
> Loosely as cannon-smoke...
>
> Philip Larkin: "Sad Steps"

← This personification takes form from a perceptual illusion in which moving clouds are perceived as the unmoving ground, and the still moon is perceived as a moving figure.

Personification as popularly conceived is a being created from an abstract quality, for instance pity. Pity may be imagined as a woman, Lady Pity or simply Pity. An author of the medieval period might elaborate the figure through conceits, for instance s/he might envision Pity as wearing a necklace of brilliant tears and attended by maidens named Charity, Comfort and so forth, creating an allegorical picture. The process of elaboration is a form of intellectual wit, based on reason.

Personification was brought into discredit in the 18th century when it became the recourse of unimaginative writers who, by crowding their lines with formal dummy figures of Pride, Virtue, Pomp and so on, attempted to browbeat the reader into that awe which they could not compel through genius.

The Romantic poets subsequently were brought to regard it as an abuse and not forming part of natural speech. The elevation of an abstract virtue into an abstract representation of a being they regarded as a mechanical act of Fancy, not of genuine imagination. This, of course, is not the last word on this trope.

IRONY

A trope in which the figurative meaning is a contradiction of the literal. The contradiction is made manifest through tone or verbal cue or context. Irony is a discursive trope more often than it is one of single terms, though the latter exists: for instance, to call someone "Friend", which nearly

always betrays some submerged hostility.

Irony is a sophisticated trope often looked upon with suspicion by Simplicity. The etymology from the Greek means "dissembling". Vico severely describes it as a "falsehood which wears the mask of truth" and as the latest of the tropes, unthinkable in an ingenuous Heroic Age,[117]

Bakhtin, on the other hand, approves irony as an example of rich double-voiced discourse which serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneaously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking and the refracted intention of the author.[118]

The section om "Mr. Nixon" in Pound's Hugh Selwyn Mauberley is an example of irony. The reader will remember Mr. Nixon's specious literary advice: "Follow me, and take a column,/ Even if you have to work free", "Butter reviewers", "And give up verse, my boy,/There's nothing in it."

Mr. Nixon advocates expediency, calculation, materialism and philistinism. We know that Pound does not mean us to take this at face value, primarily from the context of the entire poem which is an indictment of such values, but also from verbal clues such as exist in the advice to "butter" reviewers, something which in the Western code is regarded as meretricious and degraded behaviour. The reader is meant to take Mr. Nixon's advice in a sense opposite to that conveyed by the surface meaning. We must construe ourselves the implicit tenor of this extended vehicle based on dissimilarity.

HYPERBOLE

Hyperbole exaggerates and magnifies something. Hyperbole may be effected through comparison or metaphor. When metaphor is

involved there is not only a logical absurdity in the conjunction of tenor and vehicle, as is a characteristic of metaphor, but also an absurdity of exaggeration or hype. A trope much in use in the Epic and High Style. To use this trope is to make a mountain out of a molehill, as Dylan Thomas acknowledges in "After the Funeral".

> dead humped Ann
> Whose hooded fountain heart once fell in puddles
> Round the parched worlds of Wales and drowned each sun
> (Though this for her is a monstrous image blindly
> Magnified out of praise...

CATACHRESIS

A type of metaphor which involves a "misuse" of a term, as its etymology from the Greek indicates. A term belonging to one semantic sphere is inexactly used in another. The Rhetorica ad Herennium gives the example "The power of man is short". René Wellek cites the phrase "a beautiful voice".[119] In the former example a term usually used to describe a physical object is used to describe a metaphysical; in the latter example a term used in connection with the visual sense is transferred to the auditory sense.

Catachresis is thought by some critics to derive from the inadequacy of existing vocabulary, that it is a stopgap or make-shift word that remedies a semantic gap. This was the origin, it is thought, of dead metaphors such as "the leg of the table". One recalls here Vico's example of "the mouth of a river" and his contention that figurative language is in origin a necessity created by ignorance and works through the transference of known terms to unknown spheres. It should be remembered, however, that the creation of meaning and the filling of a semantic gap is a function of metaphor in general. The unique feature of catachresis is the combination of heterogeneous semantic domains.

Catachresis may also be used out of choice, not necessity. Geoffrey of Vinsauf refers to it as an "urbane imprecision"[120] conveying that sense of strangeness and sophistication that the trope gives.

> Some day I will go to Aarhus
> To see his peat-brown head,
> The mild pods of his eye-lids.
> His pointed skin cap.
>
> Seamus Heaney: "The Tollund Man"

SYNECDOCHE

Synecdoche is a trope in which we understand a more general term from a more specific, or a specific from a more general term, both from the same semantic domain. This occurs when we use a part for a whole, whole for a part, species for genus, genus for species, species for individual, individual for species, one for many, many for one, material for thing, thing for material, abstract for concrete, concrete for abstract and so forth.

The most widely occuring is the part for whole synecdoche of which many authorities instance the phrase "all hands on deck."

We might mention here that some modern writers on tropes, I am thinking particularly of anthropologists, prefer to conceive of tropes not as fixed categories but as subject to movement, interpenetration. They see tropes as transforming one to another in a fluid process.[121] We can illustrate this approach with synecdoche which some writers prefer to metaphor as a master trope.

Synecdoche may be regarded as a more specific kind of metonymy, the difference being that synecdoche is always part of the whole (or viee-versa) while metonymy is associated in some other way with the term it replaces. Roman Jakobson in his essay on Aphasia identified synecdoche and

metonymy as a single trope lying on the linguistic axis of contiguity and taking place through syntagmatic replacement.[122] (See Metaphor below for a fuller discussion).

A combination of two synecdoches has been argued to construct a metonymy. For instance in the phrase "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world", "cradle" is a metonymy of container for contained. In its enactment "cradle" is first generalized (part to whole) into a combination of container and contained and then the whole container and contained is particularized (whole to part) into the contained i.e."baby".[123]

Synecdoche may also be regarded as related to metaphor which may also be described as a double synecdoche. Metaphor develops via a synecdoche that reduces an initial term to shared features (whole to part, genus to species), then enlarges via another synecdoche to the second term (part to whole, species to genus).[124] Take for instance the metaphor of the fog as a cat in Eliot's Prufrock. Some qualities of the fog, for example, its sinuousness,(whole to part) are part of the qualities of a cat (part to whole).

Synecdoche also has a relation to the symbol. If a symbol refers from a part to a whole, then a synecdoche of the part to whole variety has a resemblance to a symbol and in fact Coleridge identified the phrase "Here comes a sail", which one would normally construe as a synecdoche, as a symbolical expression.[125]

Again, Freudian symbolism may work through synecdoche, for instance in fetishism, the transference onto the shoe of the significance of the foot, onto the foot of a part of the body, and onto that part of the body of the whole body.[126]

The Longman Dictionary of Poetic Terms[127] gives the following example of a synecdoche:

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.
T.S. Eliot: Prufrock

← And many more examples of fragmented synecdochic terms can be found in this poem.

William Carlos Williams has written much verse characterised by realistic synecdochic details.

METONYMY

Metonymy substitutes an associated word suggesting the intended subject for the subject itself. Poetic ingenuity will suggest many ways of doing this, but the most commonly cited are to substitute cause for effect or effect for cause, container for content or content for container, the agent for the act, the instrument for the agent, the material for the object and so on.

An example is this line from Yeats' "The Man Who Dreamed of Faeryland": "His heart hung all upon a silken dress."
← This is quite revolting if we take it literally, but of course we are never for even a moment in danger of taking these metonymies other than figuratively.

Another example is Seamus Heaney's phrase the "man-killing parishes" ("The Tollund Man") which substitutes "parishes" for some of the people living in them. This example demonstrates why it has been suggested that a process of personification is involved in metonymy. Adopting a broader interpretation, one can regard this kind of metonymy also as a metaphoric process, endowing the inanimate with animation.

Metonymy is a principle of language active in the process of displacement in the Freudian Dream. Sharpe gives an example of a dream in which the destruction of a piece of silk is the figurative or manifest image for a latent hostility to a lawyer.

To become a lawyer is "to take silk", hence silk is associated sign substituted for the real signification.[128]

I will mention briefly here, and go into greater detail in the section on metaphor, that metonymy is regarded by some - structuralists in particular - as a figure of contiguity taking place on the syntagmatic axis of combination, in contrast to metaphor which is regarded as a figure of similarity taking place on the paradigmatic axis of substitution.

The terms derive from the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who understands words as involved in two domains: the syntagmatic or syntactical or contextual i.e. words in a chain in a sentence, and the paradigmatic i.e. words in the mind in a network of association and similarity.

Metonymy, structuralist theorists argue, works on the principle of contiguity not similarity. In other words Yeats' "silken dress" is not similar to the woman but is something close to her.

These writers further argue that metonymy (and synecdoche) is the dominant trope of a classic, realistic, even prosaic style. Lodge instances Philip Larkin's predominant use of metonymy in his readerly realist poems.[129]

I question the premise that metonymy is always the hallmark of a realistic, prosaic style and instance Ezra Pound's

LIU CH'E

The rustling of the silk is discontinued.
Dust drifts over the courtyard,
There is no sound of footfall, and the leaves
Scurry into heaps and lie still,
And she the rejoicer of the heart is beneath them:

A wet leaf that clings to the threshold.

The poem works through imaginative suggestion effected by auditory, visual, tactile and kinaesthetic metonymies. An image of clothing is substituted for the woman herself, the effect (dust) for the cause (the woman's death), the act (footfall) for the agent, scurrying leaves for the winds of Autumn.

The effect of this oblique method is to cause the reader to interrogate the images and construct larger entities and imaginative inferences.

The last line is a metaphor, but the entire poem is metaphoric of the woman's death in the way that the several energies are converted into entropy. Thus metonymy and metaphor interpenetrate.

METAPHOR

William Carlos Williams may have regarded metaphor and the seeking of similarities as pertaining to a low order of the imagination and resulting in "confusion"[130], Marianne Moore might have exclaimed impatiently about the process, "As if, as if, it is all iffs; we are at much unease"[131], but metaphor has remained a popular language game among modern poets, even if they have not gone as far as believing the poet should be "Malachi Stilt-Jack: All metaphor" like Yeats.[132]

Since classical times metaphor has been regarded by many as the master trope and this predominance is reflected in the emphasis given the figure in these pages.

There has been considerable critical interest in metaphor this century but also considerable diversity of opinion.

Metaphor presents special problems since it is a metalanguage resistent to interpretation through metalanguage. Then it involves the most fundamental processes of perception, psychology and language at a point where they interpenetrate, which makes it more difficult to perceive, understand and speak about the phenomenon.

Then again there are different types of metaphor and a description of one kind is not always valid for another kind. For example metaphor can be classified on the basis of the type - various critics differentiate various types but in my experience these can usually be reduced to Aristotle's classification (see History) and most commonly the species to species and the

analogical metaphor. Metaphors also differ according to the grammatical or syntactical form which accommodates them (verb, noun, entire sentence). They also differ epistemologically, that is in the kind of knowledge or information they incorporate, whether sensory, conceptual, ideal, rational or irrational. A further distinction can be made between literary and non-literary metaphor, these often differing substantially from one another.

Again, metaphor can be distinguished as "live" or "dead". There is a kind of generational spectrum, at one end of which, because of some semantic hiatus, metaphorical words are being born through the parturition of poets, a middle register in which the imaged figurative elements of meaning are becoming transparent and fading into literal words which fill the semantic gap, and words at the final end which are becoming coffins of meaningless clichés before dropping off into the dark of the racial unconscious.

Then abuse of metaphor is known as a special type: the mixed metaphor, in which the images are heterogeneous, incongruous and incoherent:

> No one sets out to make a lousy film
> But when the knife hits the bone you realize
> That your child is not the homecoming queen you visualised.
> How do you tell someone his daughter is homely,
> Especially when you're the date?
> Besides, you've already bought the dress.[133]

It is well for the poet to bear in mind the variety of metaphor when composing unless s/he wishes to make a virtue of consulting only the Unconscious in an intuitive selection of metaphor.

Metaphor is often regarded as a compressed simile and most definitions of metaphor include reference to an expression of similarity. My own definition, for which I do not claim any exceptional validity, takes into account this factor but

conceives of it in a different way. Subsequent to my definition I will describe briefly how other modern theorists have described metaphor and give some examples from modern poetry.

But first of all I must dissent from several items in Vico's theory of metaphor, firstly because an attitude, which could be ascribed to Vico, that regards the poet as something less than a normal rational adult is pernicious though it might find adherents among the philistines, and secondly because it enables me to formulate my ideas in opposition as it were. Consequently I must state that the poet, as creator of metaphor, is not a primitive or a child or even a psychological degenerate but a representative of his or her race, and one of the most highly developed too. Metaphor is created through the imagination which is not uncouth and barbarous but a most basic yet most subtle and differentiating and urbane mode of apprehension. Figurative expressions arise consciously, even among so-called "primitive" people. We know when we are not being literal. (Except in the sense that since our knowledge of reality is always partial our language must always be unwittingly figurative.) Metaphor is not an ignorant projection of the human onto nature but is consciously called into existence by the need to express a meaning.

Although I hold the standpoint provisionally I think there is a lot to be said for the view that meaning exists prior to language and we, and poets in particular, have to struggle to find words to express it. This is where metaphor is so useful.

Meaning exists prior to language. Firstly, because words are a relatively recent phenomenon in human development - much of our most important social communications are made without words, and very effectively too, through body language, for instance, or projection of emotion or thought. Then, for pragmatic reasons, because time and memory are limited and we cannot carry an immense vocabulary around to cover every conceivable experience. Here

flexible metaphor is our answer, making connections between the elementary words we do possess to express more complex things or to describe essences for which there are no words. How do we describe the aroma of coffee, for instance? This is a problem Wittgenstein posed. Why can't it be done? he asked. Do we lack the words? Yet don't we feel that the description must be possible?[134] The answer - on the literary level - is that it is possible, through metaphor.

When we wish to express the meaning through language however, a problem arises. In the transformation of immaterial meaning into material language, a distortion is caused by the inadequacy of language or the poet's lack of skill. In this sense language and metaphor influences or constitutes meaning, but it is an influence to be resisted as far as possible.

And finally, a definition of metaphor, one among many:

A metaphor consists of elements of meaning, usually existing in an image which we can call the analogue, which are transferred to and combined through imagination with a subject. The elements of meaning match, in a familiar, simplified and intensified way, the meaning in the poet's mind which he wishes to be understood in the subject.

If all the elements of meaning in the analogue match the subject the two are synonyms; if very few elements match, the metaphor is irrational or depends on unconscious elements. For instance the examples "The tramp is a vagrant", "The tourist is a rubber-neck", "He was a lobster on his rollerskates" range from the synonymous through the median to the irrational.

A metaphor is like a miniature poem and may vary in complexity. I take at random two metaphors for comparison. When Dylan Thomas writes:

> Pale rain over the dwindling harbour
> And over the sea wet church the size of a snail
> With its horns through mist...
>
> "Poem in October"

the metaphor is a relatively simple visual-concrete one, its aim descriptive. On the other hand John Ashbery's has a more complex effect:

> How many people came amd stayed a certain time,
> Uttered light or dark speech that became part of you
> Like light behind windblown fog and sand,
> Filtered and influenced by it, until no part
> Remains that is surely you.
> Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

← It is more dynamic and suggestive (no slur intended on Thomas), perhaps because of the interplay between the physical and the more abstract, or else because of the kinaesthetic elements. Ashbery's metaphor is also more complex because it is an analogical, not a species to species metaphor. Wordsworth's metaphor of the seabeast/stone/old man (see History) is another example of a complex metaphor. In these particular cases complexity is concomitant with excellence.

A flexible trope like metaphor has many uses. If the elements of meaning are concrete and sensory the image imparts vividness which, again, is decorative and a source of pleasure to many readers.

Should the poet imagine the subject in a sublime way s/he will necessarily choose a metaphor the meaning of which will raise the subject or embellish it. Thus in Elizabeth Bishop's poem "The Fish" many of the metaphors are neutral descriptive, but in the final section of the poem they are value-bearing. The broken fishing lines hanging from the fish's jaw are

> Like medals with their ribbons
> frayed and wavering,
> a five-haired beard of wisdom...

← Metaphor here raises or embellishes the subject.

A metaphor is a stylistic device used for defamiliarization. It springs naturally from content, from the fact that poetry makes more extensive demands on meaning than ordinary speech. Where meaning can be expressed literally in many words but not a single word, metaphor is useful for concision.

The images which form part of metaphor make it memorable

and suggestive. The new elements of meaning that are added to the tenor through metaphor cause familiar things to be perceived in a fresh or unusual light. Metaphor may proverbialize or generalize experience. It is a mode whereby the poet may reach a sphere beyond the senses by fusing sensory elements with qualities of the mind as Wordsworth suggested. In René Wellek's phrase, metaphor can be "revelatory of the imperceptible." [135]

As I have noted I intend to offer the reader more than my own description of metaphor, which must necessarily be partial.

Most contemporary writers on metaphor follow a line of thought that has its origins in Romantic theory, for instance in regarding all language as essentially metaphoric. Nevertheless the supposedly "classical" approach to metaphor still finds some supporters. This approach, we recall, regards metaphor as a deviation from ordinary linguistic usage, a borrowing of a word and a comparison with and substitution for some existing literal word.

The philosopher Max Black regards the substitution and the comparison view of metaphor as separate. Under the substitution rubric he describes metaphor as a figurative word or sentence replacing a set of literal sentences. Metaphor is an entertaining stylistic decoration. It is a riddle. Thus when Sylvia Plath in her poem "Metaphors" writes:

> I'm a riddle in nine syllables,
> An elephant, a ponderous house,
> A melon standing on two tendrils...

she is illustrating this view of metaphor. (The answer to the riddle is, of course, a pregnant woman).

The comparison standpoint Black classifies as a special case of the substitution view. From this point of view metaphor is regarded as an analogy, a condensed simile. [136]

Among anthropologists, whom I mention because they have been active in formulating theories on the topic, Naomi Quinn has argued that metaphor only rarely constitutes understanding, in most

cases it is selected to fit a pre-existing and culturally shared model. Metaphor is normative rather than exploratory.[137] (However anthropological criticism is based more on "folk" than literary metaphors so I will not expand on her theory here.

More representative of contemporary trends of thought are those theorists who assign an unprecedented importance to metaphor. Metaphor is not regarded as an applied embellishment but as organic to language, it is not a deviant use of language but the creative principle of all language, and a principle of all art. Metaphor constitutes and extends reality. If metaphor is endemic to all language, however, the distinction between literal and figurative becomes a matter of degree not kind.

Almost all contemporary writers regard metaphor as creative of meaning. This is a corollary to the view held by Wittgenstein and others, that words do not have a single correct meaning but accrete meaning from context and use. Consequently metaphor is not a case of a "correct" word being replaced by a word that is not the "proper" meaning. It is a case of juxtaposition of words in which a new context creates new meaning, or a case of interaction of words in which the meaning of both words changes. The meaning created in this way by metaphor may be ambiguous or multiple, it may be "revelatory of the unconscious"[138] and not amenable to paraphrase in literal words.

The literary theories of Ernest Fenollosa and T. E. Hulme give a very prominent place to metaphor. Both laud metaphor as a way of counteracting the abstract generality of language through the embodiment of sensory particulars. Hulme regards metaphor as fostering precision, in the sense that it conveys a fresh physical sensation. He is traditionalist in regarding metaphor as analogy, contemporary in regarding metaphor as the highest aesthetic criterion - the more exact the analogy, the more excellent the poetry.[139]

In confining metaphor to sensory observation and description Hulme gives a limited and partial account and is, quite rightly, taken to task for this by I.A. Richards in his The Philosophy of Rhetoric. An example of the Fenollosa /Hulme type of metaphor is Pound's "In a Station of the Metro".

> The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
> Petals on a wet, black bough.

←Here we have juxtaposition and interaction of subject and analogue contributing to a vivid visual sensation. The analogue is a simplification and intensification through concrete impressionistic particulars of the subject. The metaphor could be described as creating meaning in the form of some feeling about beauty.

Although more pertinent to folk than literary metaphor, mention might very briefly be made of theory within the discipline of anthropology since it has had some influence on literary theory. Anthropologists tend to describe tropes, including metaphor, as dynamic and transformatory. They also emphasize the role of culture in the formation of metaphoric models.

Johnson and Lakoff have been influential on anthropological theory. They describe metaphor as a mapping from a source domain onto a target domain. Target domains are abstract and conceptual. Source domains are familiar ones of the physical world, rooted in early fundamental bodily experiences. For instance the experience of crawling towards something is mapped onto purposes to produce a metaphor of purposes as physical destinations. Thus we impose our own meaning on reality. Metaphor, they argue, is constitutive of understanding in offering unconsidered inferences to be drawn from the source domain.[140] This empirical approach to metaphor has some validity but is too narrow to cover all kinds of metaphor, particularly the literary.

The interaction theory of metaphor originates with I.A.Richards

but has also been defended by Max Black who describes the analogue or vehicle of the metaphor as projecting "associated commonplaces or implications" onto the subject or tenor. In this way the vehicle organizes our view of the tenor and imposes an extension of meaning on it, which goes beyond any literal paraphrase we could make.[141]

The most influential proponent of the interaction view has been I.A. Richards in his Philosophy of Rhetoric. Metaphor for Richards is two thoughts of different things interacting together and resulting in meaning. Rather than one word substituted for another, metaphor is a transaction between contexts: accordingly most sentences outside the scientific sphere are metaphorical. The relative importance of tenor and vehicle may vary. Where they are equally important the metaphor may be bi-directional as in H.D.'s "Oread":

> Whirl up, sea -
> whirl your pointed pines,
> splash your great pines
> on our rocks
> hurl your green over us,
> cover us with your pools of fur.

This metaphor can be equally interpreted as describing sea in terms of pine or pine in terms of sea. Rather than description, there is a merging, in which each brings to each a change: the metaphor creates a kind of sensory disturbance.

Richards identifies a peculiar type of modern metaphor, the placing together of two disparate things to create a semantic tension. Surrealist poets exploit this technique, and more recently Allen Ginsberg in an attempt to create "mystical" metaphor.

> who dreamt and made incarnate gaps in time & Space through
> images juxtaposed, and trapped the archangel of the soul
> between 2 visual images and joined the elemental verbs
> and
> set the noun and dash of consciousness together jumping
> with sensation of Pater Omnipotens Aeterna Deus
> "Howl I"

According to Richards a metaphor need not exploit common characteristics between two things for the metaphor to work. One reason for this may be, I presume, that there is an unstated unconscious connection between tenor and vehicle.

Eliot's work offers not a few examples of this type of metaphor. In "Rhapsody on a Windy Night", for example, we find the lines

> Every street lamp that I pass
> Beats like a fatalistic drum...

←Hart Crane has pointed out that there is ostensibly no grounds of similarity between the two images. But there is an implicit emotional logic traversing the great distance between subject and analogue. If we accept the author's comparison and assume that the streetlamp is perceived as throbbing, we must seek the cause in distraught emotion. This is a metaphor in which the grounds of similarity lie in unstated feeling, the vehicle is a pointer to emotions.[142] Many of Eliot's early metaphors are of this kind, such as the famous opening metaphor of Prufrock to name only one other. This type of metaphor could probably be linked to Eliot's attempt to counter a dissociation of sensibility by fusing thought with feeling.

Another influential strand of Richards' thought is his expansion of the concept of metaphor to include processes in spheres other than the literary. Other thinkers have expanded on this hint, as for instance Roman Jakobson and Jaques Lacan.

And now as we move towards the conclusion of this chapter we must mention the work of Jacques Lacan and Roman Jakobson on metaphor. Both writers, the latter in particular, demonstrate how the principle of metaphor is operative in spheres beyond the literary.

Roman Jakobson's contribution to thought on metaphor is expressed in an article upon the language disturbance of Aphasia.[143] In the linguistic model formulated by Ferdinand de Saussure language exists simultaneously in two domains, the domain of syntax which takes place along the syntagmatic or combination axis of language and the domain of word associations and substitutions which occurs along the paradigmatic or substitution axis of language.

In his article Jakobson attemts to prove, through a description of two types of aphasia that metaphor and metonymy, though in the past regarded as similar, actually belong to two opposing principles of language and pertain to opposing axes of language: metonymy to the syntagmatic and metaphor to the paradigmatic axes.

He describes two opposing types of aphasia: selection deficiency aphasia, in which the sufferer cannot enunciate synonyms but is able to construct syntax and context, and combination deficiency aphasia in which the sufferer's speech is metaphoric, but telegraphic, that is s/he cannot form word order or construct sentences. This clinical profile indicates, according to Jakobson, that there are two mutually exclusive spheres of language, synonymic selection and metonymic combination.

Jacques Lacan in his writing on metaphor acknowledges Jakobson's influence.[144]

For Lacan metaphor is first of all coterminous with poetry, "A definition of poetical style could be to say that it begins with metaphor, and that where metaphor ceases poetry ceases also."[145] Metaphor occurs in the identification of two signifiers. Metaphor is a paradoxical form of language in which meaning can only be created when meaning is undone, that is when the signifier is deflected by the metaphor and a meaning other

than a dictionary meaning comes into being. For Lacan metaphor takes place on the paradigmatic axis of language but equally needs the syntagmatic axis to sustain it. He points out that the dimension of syntax is necessary before metaphor can take place, that is, words must be in the same syntactical position before similarity or substitution can operate, for example, both the subject of the sentence.

Following Jakobson's work on aphasia Lacan saw a selection deficiency in the interrupted speech of hallucinatory psychotics.

Both writers see the dichotomy between the principles of metaphor and metonymy as manifesting itself in all forms of human behaviour: in painting we find metaphorical surrealism and synecdochic or metonymic cubism, in the cinema we find metaphoric montage and synecdochic close-ups, in Freudian dreams and nervous disorders we discover the mechanisms of metonyms and homonyms; literary schools yield the examples of metaphoric Romanticism and Symbolism and metonymic Realism, genres yield metaphoric lyrics and metonymic epics, individual writers have preferences which may lie with one mode or the other; in the most primitive layers of language, in the verbal associations of children, which are either metaphoric or metonymic, and even in words created by chimpanzees whom scientists have taught sign language, the principles of metonymy and metaphor operate so that one can say, adapting the words of a contemporary poet that language, and all signs, are dialects of metaphor and metonymy.[146]

CONCLUSION

We have ranged widely and probed deeply in this long chapter which we now conclude.

We have shown the importance of understanding the basic processes of perception, the nature of the image, and the roles that the imagination can play.

We have distinguished between two diverse ways in which imagery can be used in poetry, that is, to observe and describe the empirical world of the senses or to adumbrate the transcendental. The latter is properly the sphere of figurative language.

In discussing the creation of figurative meaning we have investigated symbols and tropes.

We have described the versatility of the symbol and shown, through an analysis of Yeats' use of symbolism, how a poet can go about creating symbols that intimate worlds beyond the senses.

We have given a brief exegesis on the principal kinds of tropes and gone more fully into the phenomenon of metaphor. The reader will have understood from these passages that tropes are flexible forms, they are interrelated one to the other and responsive to moulding by the creative and original mind.

In summing up, we can say that whereas the chapters on Rhyme and Diction dealt very largely with the language of poetry on the material plane, in this chapter we have tried to understand the modes of the literal and the figurative, the various ways in which the imagination informs language (and consequently imagery) and how thought and meaning are incarnated in words.

Notes to Chapter 4

[1]I.A. Richards, for example, implies that there is an imagination which structures perception in his comment, "The processes of metaphor in language... are super-imposed upon a perceived world which is itself a product of earlier or unwitting metaphor." The Philosophy of Rhetoric (London: Oxford University Press, 1936) 108-9.

[2]Much of the following discussion is based upon information drawn from relevant chapters in Allan Paivio's book Imagery and Verbal Processes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston,1971).

[3]Mike Samuels and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye: The History, Techniques and Uses of Visualization (New York: Random House, 1975) 39.

[4]Paivio 3, 7.

[5]Samuels 43.

[6]Samuels 103.

[7]Paivio 53.

[8]Mary Warnock, "Imagination and Perception", Imagination (London: Faber, 1976) 17.

[9]Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978) 18.

[10]Paivio 7.

[11]Paivio 80.

[12]Paivio 27.

[13]Paivio 164-65.

[14]Paivio 80-83.

[15]Paivio 26.

[16]Warnock 16-17.

[17]Warnock 26-30.

[18]Susanne K. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art 3rd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942) 94.

[19]M.D. Vernon, The Psychology of Perception 2nd ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) 161.

[20]Vernon 143,

[21]Vernon 143.

[22]After having myself pursued a connection between the Gestalt figure and metaphor, I noticed a similar approach in Paul Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor:Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language (Toronto:University of Toronto Press, 1977) 173-215.

[23]Vernon 41.

[24]Richards 117. "The common characteristics are the 'ground' of the metaphor".

[25]Wittgenstein 193-207.

[26]Vernon 27.

[27]Vernon 27.

[28]Plato, The Republic trans. H.D.P. Lee (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955) Book X.

[29]Aristotle, On Rhetoric (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 3.10.244-45.

[30]Aristotle, On Rhetoric 3.11.248.

[31]Longinus 15. 121-24.

[32]Terence Hawkes, Metaphor (London:Methuen, 1972) 13.

[33]Rhetorica ad Herennium Book IV. XXXI.

[34]Hawkes 18.

[35]The Venerable Bede, "Concerning Figures and Tropes" ("De Schematibus et Tropis") trans. G.H. Tannenhaus in Readings in Medieval Rhetoric ed. J.M. Miller, M.H. Prosser, T.W. Benson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1973).

[36]Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Poetria Nova (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967).

[37]Geoffrey 43.

[38]Geoffrey 54-55.

[39]Geoffrey 42-43.

[40]Geoffrey 44.

[41]Hawkes 18-23.

[42]Sir Philip Sidney, "An Apology for Poetry", Sidney: An Apology for Poetry; Shelley: A Defence of Poetry ed. R.A. Needham (London: Ginn, n.d.) 17.

[43]Hawkes 32-33.

[44]Giambattista Vico, The New Science trans. T.G. Bergin and M.H. Fisch (New York: Cornell University Press, 1948)Books I & II.

[45]Coleridge, Biographia Literaria XIII, XIV.

[46]Wordsworth, "Preface to Lyrical Ballads", Selected Prose 295.

[47]William Wordsworth, "Preface to Poems (1815)", Selected Prose 372-86.

[48]Wordsworth, "Appendix to Lyrical Ballads", Selected Prose 306.

[49]Coleridge, Biographia Literaria XVIII.

[50]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Statesman's Manual", Lay Sermons ed. R.J. White (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972) 30.

[51]P.N. Furbank, Reflections on the Word "Image"(London: Secker & Warburg, 1970) 31.

[52]Matthew Arnold, "Preface to First Edition of Poems (1853)", Selected Prose ed. P.J. Keating (Harmondsworth:Penguin, 1970) 49-50.

[53]Cecil Day Lewis, The Poetic Image (London: Cape, 1947)93-94.

[54]Furbank 82.

[55]Aristotle, On Rhetoric III.

[56]T.E. Hulme, "Romanticism and Classicism", Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art (London: Kegan Paul, 1924) 138.

[57]Lewis 90-91.

[58]Carl Gustav Jung, "Answer to Job", The Portable Jung ed. Joseph Campbell (London: Penguin, 1976) 647-48.

[59]Randall Jarrell, "The Woman at the Washington Zoo", The Poet's Work 230-39.

[60]Lewis 69-71.

[61]This succinct formulation appears in Carl Rapp's article "William Carlos Williams and the Modern Myth of the Fall", Southern Review Winter20(1) (1984): 82-90.

[62]Anne Stevenson, "Letters from Elizabeth Bishop", Times Literary Supplement (7 March 1980): 261-62.

[63]Moore, Collected Prose 505.

[64]Theodore Roethke, Straw for the Fire: From the Notebooks of Theodore Roethke 1943-63(Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980) 200.

[65]Walter Pater, "Conclusion" to The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry ed. D.L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) 187.

[66]Hulme, "Bergson's Theory of Art", Speculations 150.

[67]Hulme, "Romanticism and Classicism", Speculations.

[68]For further information the reader is referred to the article on Imagism in the Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press,1974).

[69]Ezra Pound, "Harold Munro", Polite Essays (New York: Books for Libraries, 1937) 13.

[70]Williams, "Conversations with John C. Thirlwall", Interviews with William Carlos Williams 60-61.

[71]Williams, "A Note on the Recent Work of James Joyce", Selected Essays 75.

[72]Williams, "Introduction, Charles Sheeler", Selected Essays 233.

[73]Williams, "Prologue to Kora in Hell", Selected Essays 11,16.

[74]William Carlos Williams, Spring and All (Dijon: Contact,1923).

[75]Williams, "Introduction Charles Sheeler" 233.

[76]Williams, Spring and All.

[77]William Carlos Williams, "Charles Sheeler", A Recognisable Image: William Carlos Williams on Art and Artists ed. Bram Dijkstra (New York: New Directions, 1978) 143-44.

[78]Williams, Spring and All.

[79]Williams, "Against the Weather: A Study of the Artist", Selected Essays 197-98.

[80]Frost, Interviews in 1953 and 1962, Interviews with Robert Frost.

[81]Allen Ginsberg, "Notes for Howl and Other Poems", Poetics of the New American Poetry 319.

[82]Hughes, Poetry in the Making 81.

[83]Aristotle, "On the Art of Poetry /Poetics/",Classical Literary Criticism:Aristotle, Horace, Longinus 71. He cites The Iliad 18.489.

[84]T.S. Eliot, The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England. (London: Faber,1933) 146-48.

[85]See the article by D. Hurry, "The Use of Freudian Dream Symbolism in William Carlos Williams' Paterson," Literature and Psychology 31 (1) (1981): 16-20.

[86]Coleridge, Biographia Literaria I.

[87]Jung, "Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry", Portable Jung 319-21.

[88]Stevenson, Letter March 1963.

[89]Anthony Wilden, "Lacan and the Discourse of the Other", Jacques Lacan: The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1968) 232.

[90]A.N. Whitehead, Symbolism: its Meaning and Effect (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928).

[91]Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder, The Psychology of the Child (New York: Basic Books, 1969).

[92]Freud, The Basic Writings 365.

[93]Jung 319-21.

[94]Faas 8-9.

[95]Sigmund Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams":"dream imagination has one particular favourite way of representing the organism, namely as a house."Quoted by D. Hurry in his article "The Use of Freudian Dream Symbolism in William Carlos Williams' Paterson".

[96]Carl Gustav Jung, "Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious", The Portable Jung ed. Joseph Campbell (London: Penguin, 1976) 82-3. Jung draws a parallel between wind as an archetypal image, and the spirit, or an archaic idea of the deity.

[97]William Butler Yeats, "The Philosophy of Shelley's Poetry", Essays and Introductions (London: Macmillan, 1961) 95.

[98]Sidney 13.

[99]"Under Ben Bulben".

[100]Yeats, "Symbolism in Painting", Essays and Introductions 148-49.

[101]Yeats, "The Tragic Theatre", Essays and Introductions 243.

[102]Yeats, "The Symbolism of Poetry", Essays and Introductions 159.

[103]Yeats, "Magic", Essays and Introductions 28.

[104]Yeats, "The Philosophy of Shelley's Poetry" 86-87.

[105]Yeats, "The Celtic Element in Literature", Essays and Introductions 186.

[106]Jung, "Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious", The Portable Jung 97, 105.

[107] J. David Sapir, "Anatomy of Metaphor", The Social Use of Metaphor:Essays on the Anthropology of Rhetoric ed. J.D. Sapir and J.C. Crocker (n.p.:University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977) 3.

[108] G.N. Leech, "Linguistics and the Figures of Rhetoric", Essays on Style and Language: Linguistic and Critical Approaches to Literary Style ed. Roger Fowler (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966) 135-56.

[109] For instance Jerrold M. Sadock in his article "Figurative Speech and Linguistics", Metaphor and Thought ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1979) 46-63 states that all tropes rest on a clash between what is said and what is intended.

[110] Rhetorica ad Herennium IV.XXXI.42.

[111] "Concerning Figures and Tropes".

[112] Dorothy Sayers, Introduction to The Divine Comedy:I:Hell (Harmondsworth:Penguin, 1949) 12.

[113] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Allegory", Miscellaneous Criticism ed. T.M. Raysor (London: Constable, 1936) 28-32.

[114] Eliot, "Dante", Selected Essays 242-43.

[115] Ricoeur 59.

[116] Vico II.II.117.

[117]Vico II.II.118.

[118]Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel", The Dialogic Imagination 324.

[119]René Wellek and Warren Austin, "Image, Metaphor, Symbol, Myth", Theory of Literature rev. ed. (London:Cape,1966) 198.

[120]Geoffrey 53.

[121]See for instance the article by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney "Embedding and Transforming Polytrope: The Monkey as Self in Japanese Culture", Beyond Metaphor: The Theory of Tropes in Anthropology ed. J.W. Fernandez (Stanford:Stanford University Press, 1991) 158-89.

[122]Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances", Selected Writings II:Word and Language (The Hague:Mouton, 1971) 239-59.

[123]Sapir 20.

[124]Sapir 19.

[125]Coleridge, Miscellaneous Criticism.

[126]Ella Freeman Sharpe, Dream Analysis:A Practical Handbook for Psychoanalysts (London: Hogarth, 1949) 50.

[127]Jack Myers and Michael Simms eds. Longman Dictionary of Poetic Terms (London: Longman, 1989).

[128]Sharpe 23.

[129]David Lodge, The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy and the Typology of Modern Literature (London: Edward Arnold,1977).

[130]Williams, "Prologue to Kora in Hell", Selected Essays 16.

[131]See her poem "Elephants".

[132]See his poem "High Talk".

[133]Quoted by The New Yorker (nov. 28 1994) 132. This mixed metaphor originally appeared in The Los Angeles Times and is rewritten here in free verse by this author.

[134]Wittgenstein 159.

[135]Wellek 197.

[136]Max Black, "Metaphor", Models and Metaphors:Studies in Language and Philosophy (Ithaca: Cornell University Press,1962) 25-47.

[137]Naomi Quinn, "The Cultural Basis of Metaphor", Beyond Metaphor 56-93.

[138]Wellek 193.

[139]Hulme Speculations.

[140]Quinn 56-93.

[141]Black, "Metaphor" and Max Black, "More about Metaphor", Metaphor and Thought ed. A. Ortony 19-45.

[142]Hart Crane, Letter to Harriet Monroe, Poetics of the New American Poetry 80-83.

[143]Jakobson 239-59.

[144]Jacques Lacan, "Metaphor and Metonymy", The Psychoses: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan (London: Routledge, 1993).

[145]Lacan 218.

[146]Adrienne Rich, "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning", "The Language is a dialect called metaphor."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

> And having now eftablifh'd the good and whole-fome Laws, what remains but that all true Moderns with their utmoft Might do proceed to put the fame in execution?
>
> Alexander Pope: Peri Bathos

> An awareness of poetic technique is a prerequisite to a mastery of technique, and a mastery of technique is an element in the mastery of the art.
>
> Ezra Pound: Treatise on Metre

And now in this final section I must briefly remind the reader of the road we have travelled together and try to draw some general conclusions from the discoveries we have made.

In all three sections of this work a conflict between traditional and new techniques has been identified.

As far as rhyme is concerned poets are faced with the decision as to whether they should use rhyme or not. Those that do use rhyme usually mute their rhymes in some way by using one or more of a greatly diversified range of approximate rhymes. This century has seen a noteworthy reconception of the technique of rhyme, both in the wider range of words used and in the exploitation of the semantic value of rhymes.

In the sphere of diction we showed how the traditional stylistic theories of rhetoric, theories of decorum, figures and word usage, are taken into account by some poets, but rejected by many others, some of whom develop alternative stylistic strategies, in particular strategies connected with natural speech.

We also explored the contrast between contemporary poets

who adopt an empirical approach to the image and imagination and those who adhere to a more traditional poetic in raising the image beyond the sensory level, either through the use of symbolism or tropes.

Thus we have described some of the technical innovations introduced by modern poets. But in this final section it behooves us to attempt to grasp some of the cultural trends of this century which have influenced their adoption or rejection. It is important for the poet or critic to be aware of these, and in being aware, understand that techniques may not have an absolute value but may be historically relative and therefore open to development, improvement or outright change.

However to describe various technical phenomena is one thing, to discern more tenuous influences and causes a far more perilous undertaking in which one risks errors of emphasis and reductiveness. Nevertheless, it must be attempted.

During the course of this research, my attention has been continually drawn to the potent role played by the irrational in poetry this century. Theodore Roethke was certainly not unique among poets when he exclaimed, "Reason? That dreary shed, that hutch for grubby schoolboys!"[1]

I connect the role of the irrational with a cultural preference for dissonance over harmony, unconscious over conscious thought processes, irregularity over symmetry, and fractured over conventional form. One can instance many examples of poetic technique influenced by this trend, for example the deliberate and dissonant combination of rhyme words of unequal length, or, for example, the dec-entering of stanza patterns within a poem so that at least one stanza will differ from the pattern of the others.

This trend is also associated with the influence of psychology on poetry this century. The repugnance to symmetry and conventional form, for example, has been specifically attributed by poets to the influence of psychology. Robert Duncan, to name but one, has said that "After Freud, we are aware that unwittingly we achieve our form."[2] Others have implied that form should reflect the unconscious structure of the poet's mind, which has no beginning and no end.

I do not wish to repeat here the points I have already made in previous chapters on the ways in which poetic technique has been influenced by psychology, but merely add that in my reading I have come across poet after poet who has testified in some way to his or her belief that poetry arises from the unconscious mind. Even the post modernist concept of "the death of the author" disseminated by Roland Barthes, the idea that an author can no longer pretend to be responsible for his work, that it is language itself which speaks, can be seen to be a late development of the belief in the demonic power of the unconscious.

The poet and critic should be aware however that no major poet has ever resigned responsibility for his or her work or has neglected to subject the material of inspiration to conscious artistry. A dream is not a work of art, otherwise we should all turn into Shakespeares the moment our heads hit the pillow.

For Freud every word spoken by the patient had a hidden reason, which could be traced by the analyst. The popularization of this obsessive verbal functionalism is perhaps one reason among others why rhetoric, seen as discursive and ornamental, has encountered hostility in many modern poets. But I would like to suggest that rhetoric (and indeed all the

knowledge embodied in the poetic tradition) has much to offer poet and critic. The benefit a poet's style may derive from this discipline is evident in Eliot's work as we have demonstrated. Equally, rhetoric offers a precise terminology for the critic seeking to describe a stylistic form.

Another cultural trend which has influenced poetic technique is empiricism. Under the influence of the scientific spirit some poets understand their art as an observation and description of immanent reality. For them art is not a transforming mirror but life itself, only intensified. This type of poet may eschew rhyme, try to reproduce actual speech patterns and be intent on capturing the concrete particulars of existence in sensory images. Some of the best poets, however, as we have demonstrated, are actively opposed to this trend and strive to invest their work with significance beyond the empirical through means ranging from metaphor to myth. Poets should be aware of these two divergent possibilities in order to develop their technique appropriately.

The desire to revitalize the poetic language, a recurrent phenomenon in poetic history, has preoccupied several poets of this century and has exerted its influence on the techniques used. Thus the impulse to scrap an effete abstract language and return to a more vital primitive picture language could be said to have influenced Fenollosa's ideogrammatic method and be one of the causes of the predominance of the image in general in poetry of this century. Again, the propensity of modern poets to favour the colloquial everyday language derives from a desire to renew language and can be compared with Wordsworth's project for the renewal of poetic diction through the use of the natural language of men.

Another facet of this renewal of language is the wish to infuse an enervated language with energy. The manner in which this is

achieved may be through the intensity of baroque syntax as in Berryman's or Thomas' poems, through a mimesis of the energies and flux of nature, as in Williams' and Cummings' verse, or through archetypal symbols which serve as conduits for primeval energies as in Hughes' poetry. Ultimately, each poet will develop his or her own way of vitalizing poetic speech.

This century is surely unprecedented in the history of poetry for the amount of experimentalism that has taken place. Pound's battle cry "Make it new!" set the tone of modern poetry and was productive of much creative experimentalism among poets. Some, however, experimented with more enthusiasm than judgement, a fact noted by Robert Frost:

> It may come to the notice of posterity (and then again it may not) that this our age, ran wild in the quest of new ways to be new. The one old way to be new no longer served. Science put it into our heads that there must be new ways to be new. Those tried were largely by subtraction-elimination. Poetry, for example, was tried without punctuation. It was tried without capital letters. It was tried without metric frame on which to measure the rhythm. It was tried without any images but those to the eye; and a loud general intoning had to be kept up to cover the total loss of specific images to the ear, those dramatic tones of voice which had hitherto constituted the better half of poetry. It was tried without content under the trade name of poesie pure. It was tried without phrase, epigram, coherence, logic and consistency. It was tried without ability....[3]

Frost's comment is aimed at irresponsible innovators who, in the quest for novelty and "new ways to be new", allow their technique to suffer shipwreck. His remarks do not invalidate responsible technical research. An interest in technique remains essential to poet and critic. This preoccupation will not necessarily indicate a good poet, but all good poets are technically aware, and usually technical innovators.

And now it remains but to close this work by reminding the reader that the poetic techniques described here should be intelligently mined by the poet in order to extract the gold ore. That is, while some techniques may be suitable for direct imitation, others should be adapted. Overall, the reader should not play the sedulous ape by approaching these examples

in soulless and mindless fashion, but should regard them as examples of creativity encouraging him or her to take up similar creative attitudes to language. They are intended to foster an awareness of the limits of poetic language - that is, that there are no limits except those that lie in the capacities of our own imaginations.

Notes to Chapter 5

[1]In his poem "I cry, Love! Love!"

[2]Robert Duncan, "Pages from a Notebook", The New American Poetry, 400.

[3]Robert Frost, "Introduction to King Jasper", Robert Frost on Writing, 117-18.

APPENDIX A

Byzantium

The unpurged images of day recede;
The Emperor's drunken soldiery are abed;
Night resonance recedes, night-walkers' song
After great cathedral gong;
A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains
All that man is,
All mere complexities,
The fury and the mire of human veins.

Before me floats an image, man or shade,
Shade more than man, more image than a shade;
For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth
May unwind the winding path;
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath
Breathless mouths may summon;
I hail the superhuman;
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.

Miracle, bird or golden handiwork,
More miracle than bird or handiwork,
Planted on the star-lit golden bough,
Can like the cocks of Hades crow,
Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud
In glory of changeless metal
Common bird or petal
And all complexities of mire or blood.

At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit
Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,
Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,
Where blood-begotten spirits come
And all complexities of fury leave,
Dying into a dance,
An agony of trance,
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,
Spirit after spirit! The smithies break the flood,
The golden smithies of the Emperor!
Marbles of the dancing floor
Break bitter furies of complexity,
Those images that yet
Fresh images beget,
That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.

Lapis Lazuli

(FOR HARRY CLIFTON)

I have heard that hysterical women say
They are sick of the palette and fiddle-bow,
Of poets that are always gay,
For everybody knows or else should know
That if nothing drastic is done
Aeroplane and Zeppelin will come out,
Pitch like King Billy bomb-balls in
Until the town lie beaten flat.

All perform their tragic play,
There struts Hamlet, there is Lear,
That's Ophelia, that Cordelia;
Yet they, should the last scene be there,
The great stage curtain about to drop,
If worthy their prominent part in the play,
Do not break up their lines to weep.
They know that Hamlet and Lear are gay;
Gaiety transfiguring all that dread.
All men have aimed at, found and lost;
Black out; Heaven blazing into the head:
Tragedy wrought to its uttermost.
Though Hamlet rambles and Lear rages,
And all the drop-scenes drop at once
Upon a hundred thousand stages,
It cannot grow by an inch or an ounce.

On their own feet they came, or on shipboard,
Camel-back, horse-back, ass-back, mule-back,
Old civilisations put to the sword.
Then they and their wisdom went to rack:
No handiwork of Callimachus,
Who handled marble as if it were bronze,
Made draperies that seemed to rise
When sea-wind swept the corner, stands;
His long lamp-chimney shaped like the stem
Of a slender palm, stood but a day;
All things fall and are built again.
And those that build them again are gay.

Two Chinamen, behind them a third,
Are carved in lapis lazuli,
Over them flies a long-legged bird,
A symbol of longevity;
The third, doubtless a serving-man,
Carries a musical instrument.

Every discoloration of the stone,
Every accidental crack or dent,
Seems a water-course or an avalanche,
Or lofty slope where it still snows
Though doubtless plum or cherry-branch
Sweetens the little half-way house
Those Chinamen climb towards, and I
Delight to imagine them seated there;
There, on the mountain and the sky,
On all the tragic scene they stare.
One asks for mournful melodies;
Accomplished fingers begin to play.
Their eyes mid many wrinkles, their eyes,
Their ancient, glittering eyes, are gay.

APPENDIX B

HIGH, MIDDLE, POWERFUL & LOW STYLES

HIGH STYLE

This style can be exemplified with an extract from T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets, Burnt Norton II

> The inner freedom from the practical desire,
> The release from action and suffering, release from the inner
> And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded
> By a grace of sense, a white light still and moving,
> Erhebung without motion, concentration
> Without elimination, both a new world
> And the old made explicit, understood
> In the completion of its partial ecstacy,
> The resolution of its partial horror.
> Yet the enchainment of past and future
> Woven in the weakness of the changing body,
> Protects mankind from heaven and damnation
> Which flesh cannot endure.

← The grandeur of construction is notable: the entire section consists of only two sentences. The first sentence in particular is distinguished by the Figures of Isocolon and Parison, Anaphora and Antithesis (see Figures, Appendix B). The words used are formal and impressive without being pedantic or eccentric, except for the exotic"Erhebung". The nobility of the metaphysics expressed contributes not a little to the effect of contemplative seriousness.

The fault of the High Style, bombast, can be illustrated from the work of an otherwise fine poet, Ted Hughes who falls into this error in "The Man Seeking Experience Enquires His Way of a Drop of Water."

> This water droplet, charity of the air,
> Out of the watched blue immensity -
> (Where, where are the angels?) out of the draught in the door,
> The Tuscarora, the cloud, the cup of tea,
> The sweating victor and the decaying dead bird -
> This droplet has travelled far and studied hard.
>
> Now clings on the cream paint of our kitchen wall.

← Here the piling up of phrases, the use of epithet, rhetorical question, and Epizeuxis give a sense of strain when applied to

the trivial subject. The pompous diction ends in the bathos of the kitchen wall.

THE POWERFUL STYLE

The peroration of Canto LXXXI of the Pisan Cantos by Ezra Pound is an extremely powerful piece of writing. Regretably, only a section can be quoted here.

> What thou lovest well in thy true heritage
> What thou lov'st well shall not be reft from thee
>
> The ant's a centaur in his dragon world.
> Pull down thy vanity, it is not man
> Made courage, or made order, or made grace,
> Pull down thy vanity, I say pull down.
> Learn of the green world what can be thy place
> In scaled invention or true artistry,
> Pull down thy vanity...

← The forcefulness of this passage is created by the vehemence and emphasis of the diction, the use of imperatives, of Anaphora and of the short phrase (known to the Ancients as the Comma). Here Parison reinforces rhythm. The archaism derives from an Ethical or Biblical style and is prestigious here, not repulsively artificial. The gnomic utterance "The ant's a centaur in his dragon world" elevates the style.

The faults of this style can be observed in the work of the same author. The poet should refer to Canto XIV of The Cantos which describes a Hell peopled by profiteers, perverters of language and suchlike. I do not intend to violate decorum by quoting from this passage, but merely observe that the poet has here failed to preserve both the overbalance of pleasure that is essential in poetry and the proper distance between himself and his material. A comparison with Dante's Inferno will convince of the superiority of poetry which is not distorted by personal disgust or other emotions.

THE MIDDLE STYLE

This style, according to Demetrius, was particularly characteristic of Sappho; a modern Sappho is Marianne Moore.

TO A SNAIL

If "compression is the first grace of style",
you have it. Contractility is a virtue
as modesty is a virtue.
It is not the acquisition of any one thing
that is able to adorn,
or the incidental quality that occurs
as a concomitant of something well said,
that we value in style,
but the principle that is hid:
in the absence of feet, "a method of conclusions";
"a knowledge of principles",
in the curious phenomenon of your occipital horn.

The faults of slackness and affectation combine to obfuscate clarity in this passage from "The Pangolin" by the same author:

To explain grace requires
a curious hand. If that which is at all were not
forever,
why would those who graced the spires
with animals and gathered there to rest, on cold luxurious
low stone seats - a monk and monk and monk - between
the thus
ingenious roof supports, have slaved to confuse
grace with a kindly manner, time in which to pay a
debt,
the cure for sins, a graceful use
of what are yet
approved stone mullions branching out across
the perpendiculars?

Moore has asserted that "we must be as clear as our natural reticence allows us to be" (Collected Prose, 396); in this passage a garrulous reticence has retired the poet into obscurity. It is not so much a sentence as a crime.

THE LOW STYLE

"Speech, not images, not ides, not music, but people talking is the material from which poetry is made" - Thus the contemporary poet Josephine Miles, as quoted by David Perkins in his book A History Of Modern Poetry: v2, Modernism and After (Cambridge, Mass:Harvard U.P., 1987). 510-511. This poetic credo is

reflected in the style of

REASON

Said, Pull her up a bit will you Mac, I want to unload here.
Said, Pull her up my rear end, first come first serve.
Said, Give her the gun, Bud, he needs a taste of his own
bumper.
Then the usher came out and got into the act:

Said, Pull her up, pull her up a bit, we need this space, sir.
Said, For God's sake, is this still a free country or what?
You go back and take care of Gary Cooper's horse
And leave me handle my own car.

Saw them unloading the lame old lady,
Ducked out under the wheel and gave her an elbow,
Said, All you needed to do was just explain;
Reason, Reason is my middle name.

This passage in Robert Lowell's conversational style verges on meagreness:

FATHER'S BEDROOM

In my Father's bedroom:
blue threads as thin
as pen-writing on the bedspread,
blue dots on the curtains,
a blue kimono,
Chinese sandals with blue plush straps.

I include an example of bathos from T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets, The Dry Salvages IV, to prove that even Homer can nod. The bathos is inadvertent, needless to say:

Pray for all those who are in ships, those
Whose business has to do with fish...

FIGURES

The definitions of figures given here are based on descriptions in Book IV of the Rhetorica ad Herennium, Book 3 of George Puttenham's The Arte of English Poesie, and Brian Vickers' Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry.

FIGURES OF SPEECH

DISJUNCTION

Each clause has its own special verb.

> April is the cruellest month, breeding
> Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
> Memory and desire, stirring
> Dull roots with spring rain
>
> T.S. Eliot: The Wasteland I

CONJUNCTION or MEZOZEUGMA:

The verb qualifies phrases or clauses both before and after the verb. Mezozeugma fosters balance and concision.

> Fish, flesh or fowl, commend all summer long
> Whatever is begotten, born and dies.
>
> W.B. Yeats: "Sailing to Byzantium"

ADJUNCTION: PROZEUGMA

A verb at the beginning of a sentence qualifies several phrases following after it.

> Will the veiled sister pray for
> Those who walk in darkness, who chose thee and oppose thee,
> Those who are torn on the horn.
>
> T.S. Eliot: Ash Wednesday V

ADJUNCTION: HYPOZEUGMA

A verb at the end of a sentence qualifies several phrases or clauses going before it.

> Those who sharpen the tooth of the dog, meaning
> Death
> Those who glitter with the glory of the hummingbird, meaning
> Death
> Those who sit in the sty of contentment, meaning
> Death
> Those who suffer the ecstacy of the animals, meaning
> Death
>
> Are becomeinsubstantial...
>
> T.S. Eliot: "Marina"

Also an example of Anaphora and Parison.

ISOCOLON

Phrases or clauses of equal syllable length or sound.

As loss could not ever alter Socrates'
tranquillity, equanimity's contrived

by the elephant.

Marianne Moore:"Elephants"

PARISON

Parallelism of grammatical or syntactical structure.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the windowpanes,
The yellow smoke that rubs it muzzle on the windowpanes...
T.S. Eliot:"The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrook'

ASYNDETON

Suppression of conjunctions. Imparts concision or forcefulness to the style.

Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still.
T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets. Burnt Norton V

POLYSYNDETON

Repetition of conjunctions. One effect is emotional emphasis.

Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices...
T.S. Eliot:"Journey of the Magi"

Also an example of Anaphora.

ANAPHORA

Repetition of the initial word or words of phrases, sentences or lines.

Because I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn
T.S. Eliot:Ash Wednesday I

Also an example of Polysyndeton and Parison.

ANTISTROPHE or EPISTROPHE

Repetition of the final word or words of phrases, sentences or lines.

A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
T.S. Eliot:The Wasteland I

SYMPLOCE

A combination of Anaphora and Antistrophe.

> Do
> You know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember
> Nothing?
>
> T.S. Eliot:The Wasteland II

Also an example of Parison and Interrogatio.

EPANALEPSIS

The same word begins and ends the line.

> Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,
> Lilac and brown hair...
>
> T.S. Eliot:Ash Wednesday III

ANADIPLOSIS

The final word of a line is repeated at the beginning of the next. A linking device. Also used for emphasis.

> Here is no water but only rock
> Rock and no water and the sandy road
> The road winding above the mountains
> Which are mountains of rock without water,
> If there were water, we should stop and drink...
>
> T.S. Eliot:The Wasteland V

"Silence" by Marianne Moore also notably uses this Figure.

PLOCE

Repetition of a word.

> theatre of war...
> "theatre" is good. There are those who did not want
> it to come to an end.
>
> Ezra Pound:The Cantos LXXVIII

ATANACLASIS

Repetition of a word used in two different functions. Imparts wit and brilliance.

> The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
> And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin...
>
> T.S. Eliot:"Prufrock"

EPIZEUXIS

Ploce with no words intervening between the repetitions.

> O dark dark dark. They all go into the dark
> The vacant interstellar spaces...
>
> T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets.East Coker III

HOMOEOTELEUTON

Similar word endings, but not, strictly speaking, rhyme.

> Not on the sea or on the islands, not
> On the mainland, in the desert or the rainland
> T.S. Eliot: Ash Wednesday V

PARONOMASIA

Similar words which express dissimilar things. Word-play. Graceful, but not powerful. To be used with discretion, or otherwise may appear childish.

> Terminate torment
> T.S. Eliot:Ash Wednesday II

> forever in our ears (arrears)
> W.C. Williams:Paterson II

TRADUCTIO

Words having the same root, but in different form.

> Let the whiteness of bones atone to forgetfulness.
> There is no life in them. As I am forgotten
> And would be forgotten, so I would forget
> T.S. Eliot:Ash Wednesday II

SYNONYMY

Repetition of words of synonymous meaning. Each subsequent synonym adds increasing conviction.

> but a bit obtuse;
> At times, indeed, almost ridiculous -
> Almost, at times, the Fool.
> T.S. Eliot:"Prufrock"

ALTERATION OR CREATION OF INDIVIDUAL WORDS

Achieved through contraction, expansion, alteration of accent, or neologisms. Defamiliarizes and elevates language and yet, with the possible exception of neologisms, maintains clarity. Sometimes used for metrical purposes.

> Sudden in a shaft of sunlight
> T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets.Burnt Norton V

> rolls himself into a ball...strongly intailed
> Marianne Moore:"The Pangolin"

> In which sad light a carvèd dolphin swam
> T.S. Eliot:The Wasteland II

> Henry in trouble whirped out lonely whines
> John Berryman:Dream Songs 114

VULGARISMS

Colloquial words that are startling or forceful. Longinus considers them to be vividly expressive when used metaphorically, for example, "He swallowed the insult". (On the Sublime 21)

tusks like those two horns which when a tiger
coughs are lowered fiercely
and convert the fur
to harmless rubbish
Marianne Moore:"The Buffalo"

I'm cross with god who has wrecked this generation
John Berryman:Dream Songs 153

ANTONOMASIA

Epithets, Amplification or Periphrasis for embellishment.

Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks,
The lady of situations.
T.S. Eliot:The Wasteland I

ANTITHESIS

Words, phrases or clauses of antithetical meaning are opposed to each other. Imparts balance to a style or a sense of paradox. Marianne Moore has asserted that "We employ antithesis as an aid to precision." (Collected Prose, 396)

Lady of silences
Calm and distressed
Torn and most whole...
T.S. Eliot: Ash Wednesday II

Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you
T.S. Eliot:The Wasteland I

Also an example of Parison, Anaphora and Antistrophe.

In order to possess what you do not possess
You must go by the way of dispossession
T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets.East CokerII

ANTIMETABOLE

The transposition of two words or thoughts.

I call it death-in-life and life-in-death
W.B. Yeats:"Byzantium"

till nightfall, which is for man the basilisk whose look
will kill, but is
for lizards men can
kill, the welcome dark
Marianne Moore:"The Plumet Basilisk"

HYPERBATON

Disruption of normal word order. Appropriate as an expression of passion or emphasis. Also facilitates rhyme. This Figure is not easy to locate in the works of Eliot, Pound or Yeats, which indicates the importance of natural word order amongst these poets.

> Also I love him: me he's done no wrong
> for going on forty years - forgiveness time.
> John Berryman: Dream Songs 145

FIGURES OF THOUGHT

INTERROGATIO or EROTEMA

Familiarly know as the rhetorical question.

> Then how should I begin
> To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
> And how should I presume?
> T.S. Eliot: Prufrock

RATIOCINATIO

Reasoning by question and answer. Catches and holds the reader's attention. A Figure suited to a conversational style. Rapid alternation of question and answer may indicate passionate speech.

> Would it have been worth while
> .....
> No! I am not Prince Hamlet
> T.S. Eliot: Prufrock

APOSTROPHE

An address to someone or something. Expressive of emotion.

> "You! hypocrite lecteur! - mon semblable, - mon frère! "
> T.S. Eliot: The Wasteland I

> O white-chested martin, God damn it,
> as no one else will carry a message,
> say to La Cara : amo
> Ezra Pound: The Cantos LXXVI

APOSIOPESIS

The sentence is broken off abruptly. This Figure gives an impression of sincerity. An exploitation of the power of the unexpressed, of speaking silence.

After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that
trail along the floor -
And this, and so much more ? -
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
T.S. Eliot: Prufrock

I had a friend...
let it pass.
W.C. Williams: Paterson III

PARENTHESIS

An explanatory qualification marked off by brackets. Marianne Moore quotes Ezra Pound as remarking that the Parenthesis (thinking of Henry James, for example) is an American art form. (Collected Prose,658).

Here, said she,
Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor,
(Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)
T.S. Eliot: The Wasteland I

DEFINITION

A description of the nature of a thing. Often fosters lucidity and brevity, but may be paradoxical, as in this example.

What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning III
T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets.Little Gidding,

CORRECTION or METANOIA

A Figure in which words are retracted and replaced with others, by so doing emphasizing the choiceness of the substitute words. The Figure gives the impression that the speaker is sincere and is searching for the mot juste.

But to apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time, is an occupation for the saint -
No occupation either, but something given
And taken... V
T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets.The Dry Salvages

SENTENTIA or MAXIM

A concise saying, encapsulating wisdom. An eternal verity upon which the mind can rest.

Go, go, go, said the bird : human kind
Cannot bear very much reality
T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets.Burnt Norton I

Tout dit que pas ne dure la fortune
Ezra Pound: The Cantos LXXVI

MERISMUS

A brief concept expanded on in great detail. A Figure used for amplification and elegance.

> To communicate with Mars, converse with spirits,
> To report the behaviour of the sea monster,
> Describe the horoscope, haruspicate or scry...

(And so forth for eleven lines, describing or refining upon modes of fortune-telling.)

T.S. Eliot:Four Quartets. The Dry Salvages V

GRADATIO

Words in order of ascent, with constant repetition of the preceding word, leading to a climax.

> Leadership passes into empire; empire begets insolence; insolence brings ruin.
>
> W.C. Williams:Paterson I. IV.

CONCISION

Much in little.

> ...Highbury bore me. Richmond and Kew
> Undid me.
>
> T.S. Eliot: The Wasteland III

The prototype for this is of course Dante's lines from the Purgatorio: "Siena mi fe; disfecemi Maremma."

POLYPTOTES

Startling turns of sense.

> - What happen then, Mr. Bones?
> - I had a most marvellous piece of luck. I died.
>
> John Berryman:The Dream Songs 26

PROSOPOPOEIA

Personification of an absent or dead thing or person. Prototype of the Dramatic Monologue. For examples of the latter see T.S. Eliot's work.

APPENDIX D

BAROQUE STYLE

As an example of this style I have selected a stanza from John Berryman's Homage to Mistress Bradsheet in which Anne Bradsheet gives birth to her first child. Simon is her husband. Figures are identified for the convenience of the reader.

hide me forever I work thrust I must free	Asyndeton
now I all muscles bones concentrate	Hyperbaton
what is living from dying?	Rhetorical Questio
Simon I must leave you so untidy	Apostrophe
Monster you are killing me Be sure	Epithet, Exclamatio
I'll have you later Women do endure	Maxim
I can can no longer	Epizeuxis
and it passes the wretched trap	Polysyndeton
whelming and I am me	Metaphor
drencht & powerful I did it with my body!	Exclamation

The intensive use of Figures is characteristic. Notice how the Hyperbaton is used to emphasize the important verb. The dissonance and energy of the style relates functionally to the subject matter.

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