HULME, THE VOICE OF IMAGISM

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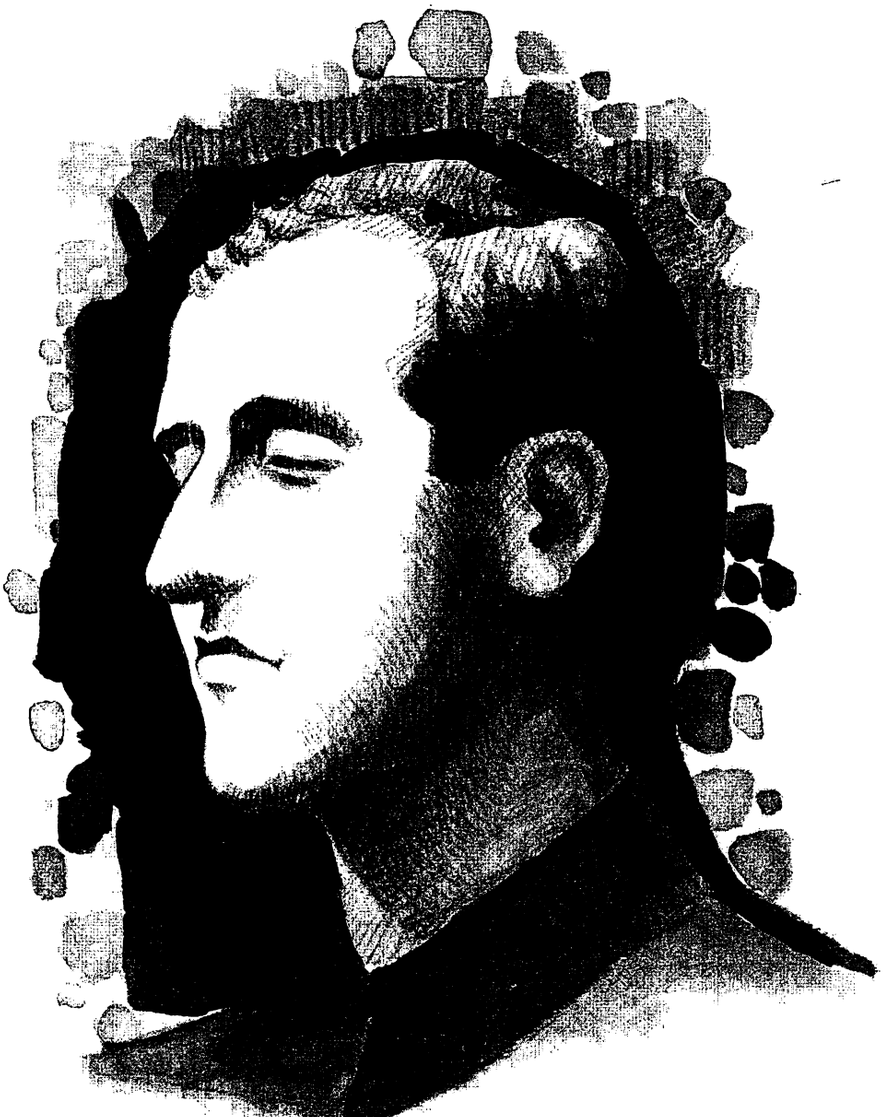

T.E. Hulme

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Chapter 

THE LITERARY MOVEMENT ABOUT 1909 AND THE EMERGENCE OF IMAGISM

Imagism sees the light at the beginning of this century. It marks a new concept of poetry since it strives against the old models, the "clichés" that had governed English poetry in the past. Imagism is not deceived by the old formula which maintains that good poetry is that which has a strict rhyme scheme and follows the old rhythms of a deadened language. It openly opposes the conventions of thought and behaviour that had prevailed in the late Victorian period. It attacks the view of the poet as a man of sentiment, a moralist and a prophet. Imagism rejects standard poetical phrases because their abuse had brought about a cheapness of emotion expressed in a moribund language. All in all these "clichés" had become abstract words. Thus Imagism no longer admits the molds of traditional rhetoric. It marks the breakdown between public and poet: "it is the poet's task first to write good poems, and only his second task to please an audience"(1).

It would be true to say that Imagism is associated from the beginning with remarkable poets: Hulme, Pound, Yeats, and Eliot among others, who are to achieve an important place in what is now called modern poetry. Their poetry expresses the modes of modern life and the complexities of the modern mind.

The year 1909 is considered as an example of what is happening in the literary circles of England: 1909 marks perhaps the lowest point of a long decline in the quality of English poetry. The aesthetic movement of the nineties has long since collapsed with the trial of Wilde when, as F. M. Ford puts it: "Poets die or flee to other climes, publishers also flee, prosateurs are fished out of the Seine or reformed and the great public said: 'Thanks heavens, we need not read any more poetry' "(2).

When the aesthetes disappear they are followed by the physical force school, which according to F. M. Ford is mainly concerned with "a violent swing of the political pendulum to the right"(3).

In June 1909 the English Review announces Swinburne and Meredith's death: "Mr. Meredith follows Mr. Swinburne into the shadows; and now indeed the whole Round Table is dissolved"(4). After hearing the bad news, Yeats exclaims in a blend of pity and mockery, "and now I am king of the cats"(5). At this time Yeats is publishing his Collected Poems, and new volumes by Kipling, Noyes, Watson and Newbolt are printed. These volumes serve to demonstrate the insufficiency and general decline of the English poetic scene. We see in them "a rather spiritless Yeats, and a collection of public spirited versifiers"(6).

On the other hand, the year 1909 announces the beginning of a new poetic movement which is unrecognized at the time but which

later on will be acknowledged as the "resurgence of poetry in the twentieth century"(7). The Imagist movement springs up when it is needed. To Yeats the movement represents the abandonment of the incantation and the hypnotic rhythms which he had carried on in his earlier work. The Imagist movement leads to a more robust poetry. It is also in 1909 that Pound's "Personae" appears and an important, valuable association between Pound and Yeats is formed. Eliot, as if he wished to contribute to this movement, writes his earliest poems, but does not publish them until 1915.

The year 1909 is a period of confusion in English poetry. Many reviewers deceive themselves when they praise and even welcome the poetry that they think is the best for the literary public. These reviewers are firmly convinced that they are reading and publishing the best that poetry can offer. As an example of this phenomenon we have an issue of the Times Literary Supplement published in 1909: "... we may say boldly that poetry is being cultivated at the present day with an energy, a varied range of emotions, and a technical skill of which we may be proud... There is no universal model, no acclaimed or accredited school. Everyone is free to use the manner that suits him, with nothing to fear from academic criticism..."(8).

On the other hand, reviewers are not willing to accept the development of a more realistic poetry; on the contrary, they insist that the best poetry is the one that sticks to the old formula. A review

of new books by William Watson, Alfred Noyes, and Henry Newbolt gives a thorough acceptance to their work: "The three poets whose names are here joined, different as they are from each other, are alike in this; that they all belong to the centre of poetical tradition. Neither (sic) of them insists on any new formula for the definition of poetry. The compass of the old instrument is, in their view, still wide enough to contain modern music. They aim at a quality of beauty in expression which demands no violent readjustment of sympathy or taste on the part of the reader"(9).

With this in mind it should not surprise us that Pound's "Personae" should be rejected for lacking the quality of beauty for which the publishers are looking. A review dated May 20, 1909 reads as follows: "...Ezra Pound is fond of medieval and Latin themes, and he effects the eccentric and the obscure; but these qualities do not, in these pages at any rate, leave much room for beauty"(10).

Ford Madox Ford, both a distinguished writer and critic, shakes momentarily the depressed state of poetry in England in 1909 when he tries to give an impulse and new vigour to poetry. By this time he is mainly concerned with imaginative literature. It all begins when he learns that every review in London has rejected a new poem by Thomas Hardy called: "A Sunday Morning Tragedy".

In December 1908, Ford publishes his first volume of "The English Review" which has a mixed selection of writings. The review

opens with Hardy's poem, followed by works of Henry James and Joseph Conrad as well as of others. Ford's interest is to publish serious literature, and though by this time he announces that "verse writing is the Senior Service"(11), he does not take poetry seriously until he gets acquainted with Ezra Pound who is to become his outstanding influence. Pound acknowledges the importance of the review since it unites a select group of writers.

While "The English Review" is in Ford's hands it maintains a high quality, and a good reputation, but by 1912 it becomes mediocre because it is no longer in his charge. However, "The English Review" marks an important step in English Literature and its appearance causes an impact because "it is clear that it has standards, and as a result it makes a definite impression"(12). We can say that "The English Review" inspires new movements and is ultimately responsible for Imagism and Vorticism.

After Ford leaves "The English Review", a new school appears: Georgianism.

Georgianism appears in a period of decadence. Poets are still influenced by Victorian patterns. It is then that Edward Marsh, in an effort to develop a new approach to poetry, publishes the first Georgian anthology in 1912. He announces it as follows: "This volume is issued in the belief that English poetry is now once again putting on a new strength and beauty"(13). Georgianism differs from other

literary movements of the time mainly because of its rejection of the "outmoded diction"(14) that predominated in literary England. Georgianism is also important because it marks a "significant change in a literary scene, otherwise virtually static"(15). Edward Marsh includes in his volumes poets like D. H. Lawrence, Rupert Brooke, John Masefield and others. The Georgians break with old standards in poetry and bring up new themes. For instance, D.H. Lawrence in his poem "The Snapdragon" deals with "sexual phenomena"(16). Rupert Brooke commits an act of "literary vandalism"(17) when he talks about sea-sickness.

In spite of these "revolutionary" themes, the Georgians do not succeed in their effort to change the literary mind of the public. They still try to educate public taste just as the Victorians had done. While the Georgians think of public reaction very highly, Ezra Pound and the Imagists will never do so. Ezra Pound rejects the public and exclaims in an outburst of fury, "the public can go to the devil"(18). Ezra Pound is aware of the corruption in which poetry remains. This corruption, he says, is due to the stupidity of literary critics who insist that poetry should be written in blank verse dealing with old themes. From this point of view, the Imagists will think of the reading public as "too degenerate in taste to deserve consideration"(19).

England, however, is lucky in having men with a real interest in poetry. Harold Monro, a literary man, settles down in London and opens the Poetry Bookshop. Monro plays an important role in English

poetry. He spends his life as an editor of poetry and as a critic. In March 1913 Monro began editing Poetry and Drama and he organized later the Monthly Chapbook series. According to F. S. Flint --another important poet and critic of the period and whose contribution to the Imagist movement is unquestionable-- Monro deserves to be considered one of the most active and remarkable critics of his period. "He did more", F.S. Flint comments, "to stir up an interest in poetry than any other man of his generation"(20).

In 1913, in his Poetry and Drama, Monro bitterly comments the lack of consideration that the English public has given to poetry. He accuses them of having neglected poetry just because the study of it requires effort; "therefore most people placidly and very deliberately leave poetry alone"(21). On the other hand, Monro recognizes that poetry has been debased and has lost popularity because "the average poet has made it so"(22). Monro is aware of the literary crisis of his time. He cannot help criticizing the English Review for publishing bad verse: "We would remind the English Review of the public responsibility of its reputation, and would suggest that it would be better not to print any poetry at all than to approach a wavering public with bad verses which may disgust it into withdrawing its attention from the real poetry of modern England"(23). It is important to notice that by this time Ford Madox Hueffer (Ford Madox Ford later on), had ceased managing "The English Review". Ford will be linked

to the Imagist movement in one way or another according to Ezra Pound.

Harold Monro's commentaries are quite similar to those of Sir Compton Mackienzie and D.H. Lawrence when they refer to "The English Review". "By 1912, according to Sir Compton Mackienzie, it had sunk to 'the bottom of mediocrity' and by 1913, D. H. Lawrence sadly noted how 'piffling' it had become"(24).

Monro believes that English poetry has been spoilt mainly by the mediocre men of literature -editors, publishers and critics. Monro criticizes his contemporaries for following patterns that do not help to educate people to distinguish between good and bad verse. In a letter written in 1912, Harold Monro comments on why he is in charge of his review and the purpose of it: "We do not inted to make our paper nearly so much a medium for the publication of poetry as a stimulus towards appreciation. My contention is that it is no use providing the public with the thing to enjoy, until you have excited its power of enjoyment"(25). Monro's attitude is at any rate quite similar to that of the Georgians. He seeks to reconcile public and poetry. He thinks that one depends on the other. In March 1914, in his Poetry and Drama, Monro's keen mind throws light on the level of the critical integrity in which poetry is maintained: "...insipid critics are preferred so long as they have two or three hundred cliché phrases at their command... The criticism of poetry has been prostituted out of all recognition..."(26).

Monro is worth considering in the literary history of England as long as he carries on the responsibility of commenting upon and publishing any new poetry that appears during his time. According to Ezra Pound it is Monro who discovers "Prufrock". It is also Monro who helps the Imagists and publishes their poems though he disagrees with their revolutionary principles. This may be his greatest achievement.

When the Georgian movement appears, it is seen as a violent reaction against the established situation. But his was not at all true. The Georgians were still dependent on the approval of popular reviewers and the general public at this time. To be true writers it was necessary for them to do away with old traditions. By this, I mean that they had to fight against the conservatism that was at once academic and puritanical. "Poetry", says Professor Pinto, "was regarded as something inseparable from the worship of the classics and especially the Victorian classics--Tennyson, Browning and Arnold"(27).

Rudyard Kipling, William Watson, Henry Newbolt, Alfred Austin and Alfred Noyes belonged to the Imperialist school of Edwardians. They were the men from whom the general reading public of 1909 expected to receive its poetry. They, however, were mainly concerned with politics and social ideas. Their topics were old and tiresome. All they wanted was to gain public attention and to be praised. G. M. Travelyan gives an account of the

situation as follows:

"Such, in those days, was the close connection of poetry and politics, when poetry could serve the purpose of pamphleteering"(28).

Newbolt himself writes of his success and his delight for it:

"I've had in the last twenty years all the satisfaction that could be got out of the place- I've written and published in the Times, or on public monuments, all the Trafalgar Odes and commemorative verses that were wanted. 'What asketh a man to have'?..."(29).

The Imperialists were still claiming the same principles and themes that had prevailed for centuries in English literature. An example may be found in Sir William Watson's "Ode on the Coronation of Edward VII":

Sire, we have looked on many and mighty things
In these eight hundred summers of renown.
Since the Gold Dragon of the Wessex Kings
On Hastings field went down;
And slowly in the ambience of this crown
Have many crowns been gathered, till to-day,
How many peoples crown thee, who shall say?...(30).

Or to put it in Professor Pinto's words: "In spite of its technical dexterity this is a verse written in a dead language and in rhythms that bear no relation to those of contemporary English life. The language comes from the study of Tennyson, Arnold and Milton

and it has no contact with the speech that the Edwardians used in their streets... Nor has it the vitality of a literary diction that derives its origin from an enthusiasm for a great tradition..."(31).

Kipling, on the other hand, was accepted and tolerated for his imperialist ideas rather than for his genuine achievement as a poet. Kipling's best verse "was regarded as rather vulgar and not'poetry' "(32).

The Georgians issued their first volume of poetry in 1912. They attempted to show to the literary public of those days that poetry was not to rely upon over-used themes. They thought poetry should not be circumscribed to political, social and moral affairs. In their attempt to gain recognition from the public the Georgians maintained that it was their mission to write of common, and ordinary things. The rhetorical diction of the Imperialists will be put aside. The themes that they may draw from reality will be evoked in common language. The Georgians proposed to write only about things they had previously experienced. Arthur Waugh, a Georgian himself, makes a valuable comment upon the whole group: "We write nothing that we might not speak... We draw the thing as we see it for the God of things as they are. Every aspect of life shall be subject of our art, and what we see we shall describe in the language we use every day"(33). The Georgians speak of 'life' and 'poetry' as something real and attainable. 'Art' is not for them something delicate and remote from ordinary life as it had been for the Aesthetes of the 1890's. 'Life' is for them what they

experience. It is not involved with public affairs as it was for the Imperialists. Rupert Brooke, a Georgian, speaks for the whole group when he comments on his own personal attitude and his constant habit of mind: "It consists in just looking at people and things as themselves- neither useful nor moral nor ugly nor anything else; but just being"(34).

The Georgians claim honesty and a direct approach to life. They also struggle to liberate themselves from Victorian ideas. They, however, fall short of what they preach. Most of them turn back to the Romantic period, praising homely landscapes in smooth rhythms. The essential England of the suburbs is never found in their poetry. England, by this time, had grown into a complex, industrial country.

The Georgian poetry is full of imitations of the Romantic period. Likewise, they are mainly concerned with the feudal, rural England as were the Romantics. Professor Pinto comments upon the limitations of the Georgians: "It is a very insular collection"(35).

The Georgians achieved some notoriety at the beginning of this century mainly for what they tried to write and not for what they really wrote. They were incapable of rejecting the patterns that had prevailed throughout centuries of English poetry. In spite of all the efforts they made to offer a more vigorous poetry they continued lacking any direct contact with a living society. When Dr. F. R. Leavis refers to the Georgians and to two of their most notable poets, Mr. A. E. Housman and Rupert Brooke, he points out the failure of

their commitment: "... it was largely in terms of them that the Victorian bequest of habits and conventions was brought up to date"(36).

Rupert Brooke shows his craftmanship as a versifier when he writes his well known "Grantchester". This poem marks off the characteristics in which all "Georgian" verse abounds:

> Ah God! to see the branches stir
> Across the moon at Grantchester!
> To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten
> Unforgettable, unforgotten
> River smell, and hear the breeze
> Sobbing in the little trees.
> Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand?
> The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
> The yet unacademic stream?
> Is dawn a secret shy and cold
> Anadyomene, silver-gold?
> And sunset still a golden sea
> From Haslingfield to Madingley?
> And after, ere the night is born,
> Do hares come out about the corn?
> Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
> Gentle and brown, above the pool?
> And laugh the immortal river still
> Under the mill, under the mill?
> Say, is there Beauty yet to find
> And Certainty? And Quiet kind?
> Deep meadows yet, for to forget
> The lies, the truths, and pain?... Oh! yet
> Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
> And is there honey still for tea? (37)

In this poem Rupert Brooke describes the countryside of an unspoiled England. The situation in which he places his poem is that of the undisturbed, peaceful 'daydream' of a romantic landscape. Like the lesser Romantics he uses the words 'sweet, immortal, unforgettable' to create an atmosphere of fantasy. Also, like the Romantics, he

creates his own world in order to escape from the ugliness and drabness of an ordinary life. He emphasizes this escapism from reality in a melodious rhyme-scheme.

"Say, is there Beauty yet to find
And Certainty? And Quiet kind?
Deep meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, the truths, and pain? ..."

In the lines quoted above, Brooke reminds us of Keats's sensousness and melancholy, or to use the cruel phrase of Dr. F. R. Leavis, "The vulgarity of Keats with a public accent"(38).

At the end of the poem Brooke abruptly interrupts his languid vision of a voyage to a distant dreamland. It seems as if he had awakened from a fairy tale and had found relief from the effort and pain of the writing of his poem. He concludes it cheerfully, since he has arrived on time for tea.

"...Oh! yet
Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?"

Such was the situation in which English poetry remained at the beginning of this century. It is not without reason that Ezra Pound, on his arrival in London, accuses English poets of "debasing the literary coin to a point where it no longer deceives even the gulls"(39).

Chapter II

A HISTORY OF IMAGISM

Just before the outbreak of the First World War there was a small group of poets in London who were looking for ways of expressing poetry that would correspond to their modern consciousness. 'Des Imagistes' as they were called by Ezra Pound, were against the traditional techniques merely because they thought that poetry should no longer be written to satisfy the common public. It was their mission to formulate a more definite and compact expression so that the reader would have to make an effort to grasp its whole meaning. It was the Imagists' purpose to act according to principles "diametrically opposed"(1) to those of the Georgians. The Imagists were aware of the fallacy that surrounded Georgian principles. The Georgians believed than an upper middle class with a living poetic culture still existed and that this poetic culture would survive as long as they undertook small changes to revive the "classic English poetic tradition"(2). It was the Imagists' merit and especially T.E. Hulme's concern to show that this was no longer possible. T. E. Hulme announced at the beginning of the Imagist movement the necessity of a new form in verse that would be parallel to that of every new period:

> "A particular convention or attitude in art has a strict analogy to the phenomena of organic life. It grows old and decays. It has a definite period of life and must die. All the possible tunes get played on it and then it is exhausted: moreover its best period is its youngest.

> Take the case of the extraordinary efflorescence of verse in the Elizabethan period. All kinds of reasons have been given for this -the discovery of the new world and the rest of it. There is a much simpler one. A new medium had been given them to play with- namely, blank verse. It was new and so it was easy to play new tunes on it."(3).

The arrival of Ezra Pound in England in the autumn of 1908 is important, for it is due to him that the new poetic form as it is now called sees publication and is accepted in both England and the United States. A lot of credit must be given to Pound for the success of the Imagist movement. His role in it is of a great importance since he endowed it with his energy as a poet as well as with his efforts as a critic and publisher. Ezra Pound immigrated to England thinking that it was there that he could improve his knowledge of the discipline of poetry. To his own satisfaction he rapidly became acquainted with the most outstanding poets in England at this time. He cheerfully writes to William Carlos Williams, who happened to be one of his first literary influences in the field of poetry, about his impression of the importance given to poetry in England: "London, deah old Lundon, is the place for poesy"(4). Ezra Pound was right when he said so, for it was in London where a new mode of expression in poetry was being developed.

When William Carlos Williams asked Pound that were the "ultimate attainments of poetry"(5) in London, Pound would enumerate unreserverdly what he had learned from his new literary acquaintances.

He would also confess to his friend that he was just at the beginning of something new and important:

> "I, of course am only at the first quarter-post in a marathon! Of course they wouldn't agree, that would be too uninteresting. I don't know that I can make much of a list.
> 1. - To paint the thing as I see it.
> 2. - Beauty.
> 3. - Freedom from didacticism.
> 4. - It is only good manners if you repeat a few other men, to at least do it better or more briefly. Utter originality is of course out of question...
> I don't try to write for the public. I can't. I haven't that kind of intelligence"(6).

The years 1908 and 1909 are worth considering if one looks back at this period to find new paths taken by English poetry. In 1908 the principles of what is now called "modern poetry" are stated by Thomas Ernest Hulme. He was not satisfied with the poetry of his time and formed the Poets' Club. It was Hulme's endeavor "to read original compositions in verse"(7) and to have "a paper on a subject connected with poetry by a member or a guest of the Club"(8). Hulme was the leader of a group of young writers who wanted to display their inconformity towards the standards of English poetry. It was at this time that Hulme delivered his "Lecture on Modern Poetry"(9), and established the necessity of the search of the "Image". In January 1909, Hulme's poems "A City Sunset" and "Autumn" were published. They appeared in a small pamphlet of poems called "For Christmas 1908". It was printed under the auspices of the Club. According to

F. S. Flint, it was Hulme's friend, Edward Storer, who first published his Imagist poems under the title "Mirrors of Influence". The first poem in the book was called "Image":

> "Forsaken lover,
> Burning to a chaste white moon,
> Upon strange pyres of loneliness and drought"(10).

At the end of Edward Storer's book, Flint says: "there was an essay attacking poetic conventions"(11). It is easy to suppose that Storer's poems were based upon Hulme's theories and practice since Storer belonged to Hulme's group. There is also a letter written by Hulme in 1906 from Canada that tells us he was searching for "Images" at that time. Hulme's letter says:

> "I have got lots of ideas and experience and am very glad I came, even if it were only for a suitable image I thought of one day, working in the railway, for what I was talking to you about just before I left London"(12).

The Poets' Club, however, came to its end at the beginning of 1909. F. S. Flint, who had disliked Hulme's gatherings and had attacked its "after dinner ratiocinations"(13) and "suave tea parties in South Adley Street"(14), announced in "The New Age" that "The Poets' Club is Death"(15). As soon as Hulme had abandoned "The Poets' Club", he decided to form a new group in March 1909. Flint, who had by this time become Hulme's friend, joined the group. The Imagist group settled down in Frith Street in a Soho restaurant, with Hulme as leader. Flint records the event as follows:

> "I think what brought the real nucleus of the group together was a dissatisfaction with English poetry as it was then being written. We proposed to replace it by pure vers libre; by the Japanese tanka and haikai... by poems like T. E. Hulme's 'Autumn', and so on. In all this, Hulme was the ringleader. He insisted, too, on absolutely accurate presentation and no verbiage, and he and F. W. Tancred... used to spend hours in search of the right phrase. There was also a lot of talk among us about what we called the Image. We were very much influenced by French symbolist poetry"(16).

Hulme referred, in his lecture on modern poetry, to his search for new models in verse. He admitted that he had not found any that would be suitable to his purposes. To him, French symbolist poetry served only as an example of what might be achieved. If Gustave Kahn's study on free verse called his attention it was because he saw in it the "effect that an emancipation of verse can have on poetic activity"(17). On the one hand, Hulme was aware of the achievements of French symbolist poetry as a literary movement, but on the other, he perceived that it did not at all match with his own idea of poetry. His should be essentially "visual" and each "word must be an image seen, not a counter"(18). Imagist poetry, from this point of view, surpasses "Symbolist forms"(19). It no longer deals with "magic" or "mystic" concepts as symbolism does. Mr. Hough has pointed out the differences between "Imagism" and "Symbolism". Imagism, he says, has retained "certain aspects of Symbolist doctrine... but the nature of the attention is changed. Revelation becomes technique, incantation becomes a code of prohibitions..."(20). Afterwards he defines "Imagism" as

follows: "...Symbolism without the magic. The symbol, naked and unexplained, trailing no clouds of glory, becomes the image"(21).

Hulme must admittedly be called the forerunner of the Imagist poets. It was he who first attacked the limitations which followed dead poetry. His inconformity towards English poetry of the previous century and particularly that of the Romantics, which had dominated the English scene, led Hulme to state the principles of what has come to be called "Imagism". It was Hulme's concern to break free from prescriptive rules which seemed irrelevant to the twentieth century. From Hulme's reactionary attitude derived a new and bold manifestation. Hulme published only six poems during his lifetime, and though he used them only as a corollary to his theories on poetry, they demonstrate his maturity both as a poet and as a theorist of the "Image".

Though Hulme had abandoned "The Poets' Club" in January 1909, and had afterwards formed his own group from admirers and followers, he still maintained his connexion with it. Again, it was through "The Poets' Club" that his two other poems, "The Embankment" and "Conversion" were published. They appeared in another small volume of verses entitled "For Christmas 1909". This time his fellow contributors included F. S. Flint and Ezra Pound. These small books of verse did not achieve a wide circulation. They were printed in a small number of copies and given to friends. In January 1912, The New Age printed these four poems and added "Above the Dock".

Hulme's poems together with his "Lecture on Modern Poetry", his "Notes on Language and Style"(22) and his essay on "Romanticism and Classicism"(23), which were written when he was twenty-eight years old, reveal Hulme's dissatisfaction with English poetry as it was then being written. Throughout his work Hulme announces that a "dry, hard, classical verse"(24) is to arise. Ezra Pound understood him and so did F. S. Flint, Richard Aldington and T. S. Eliot among others. When Hulme turned his attention from poetry to metaphysical speculation, it was Pound who took the lead in the group. Actually, Ezra Pound began displaying his role as an organizer and publicist of the Imagist movement in 1912. When Ezra Pound arrived in London he had with him a volume of poems entitled "A Lume Spento". He had it published in Venice at his own expense. Pound's knowledge of poetry was quite limited at this time. He was full of his troubadours and as Flint put it "he could not be made to believe there was any French poetry after Ronsard"(25). However, Pound was quick to absorb Hulme's theories on poetry and those of his friends. In February 1909, just two months before Pound is introduced to Hulme and his imagistic group, he writes to William Carlos Williams in a lively letter about his first contact with "the crowd that does things here"(26). Pound's introduction into Hulme's group occurred on the 22nd of April of this same year. He was introduced by Margaret Sackville who happened to be a contributor to the first volume of poems issued by

"The Poets' Club" and in which Hulme's first poems had appeared. Margaret Sackville's work was considered second rate, but according to Pound it was "damned good"(27). Pound made his debut a memorable one. He read aloud his poem "Sestina: Altaforte" which he had published in "Personae" the previous week. From this time on, Pound began attending Hulme's weekly gatherings in The Eiffel Tower, a Soho restaurant. Pound himself gives an account of such visits:

> "Hulme. Strictly Soho. No kens... Hulme's dinner circle and Fitzroy Street evenings/quite different collections"(28).

When Pound joined Hulme's group he found himself among some of the most distinguished literary people in London at that time. The members of this group were, apart from Flint and Hulme himself, Francis Tancred, Edward Storer, Florence Farr and Joseph Campbell. Pound profitted in a number of ways from the influence of both Hulme and Flint. Hulme developed his theories on poetry and set the examples at which he was aiming. Flint's main contribution was his discussion of French Symbolist poetry of which he possessed a deep knowledge. Through their influence Pound soon reduced the element of rhetorical discourse in his poetry and began experimenting with epigrams and short lyrics. Pound's letter to William Carlos Williams serves as a testimony of his shortcomings in his own poetry:

> "I have sinned in nearly every possible way, even the ways I most condemn. I have printed too much... There is no town like London to make one feel the

> vanity of all art except the highest. To make one disbelieve in all but the most careful and conservative presentation of one's stuff. I have sinned deeply against the doctrine I preach"(29).

Pound quickly absorbed the ideas which were discussed in The Eiffel Tower and particularly those of Hulme. Although it was Hulme who stirred his friends' awareness of the poor level of English poetry and who supplied the theories which led to experiments in verse, both in subject matter and in treatment, it was not he but Pound who publicised them. Pound used his energy to disseminate Imagist theories throughout England and the United States.

It all began when Hulme apparently ceased writing poetry and focused his attention upon the field of philosophy. Hulme's interest in philosophy can be traced back to the year 1907 when he became acquainted with Henri Bergson. From then on, Hulme would undertake the task of propagating Bergson's theories in England. In July 1909, he began his series on "The New Philosophy" in "The New Age". His first article was entitled "Searches after Reality".

Strange as it may seem to us, a lot of what we know about Hulme will come through Pound. Whether or not it was because Hulme treated Pound with contempt and considered both Pound and his "Imagism" as a joke, the truth is that Pound's comments about Hulme reveal resentment and frustration. Here is one of many of Pound's statements:

> "Hulme stopped writing poetry. He had read Upward. His evenings were diluted with crap like Bergson and

> it became necessary to use another evening a week if one wanted to discuss our own experiments or other current minor events in verse writing"(30).

The sculptor, Jacob Epstein, who was a good friend of T.E. Hulme and whose work embodied Hulme's ideals on art, commented in his own autobiography on the success of Hulme's meetings and the heterogenuos, intellectual set found there. Epstein's memories of Hulme are of real value. They throw valuable light on these years of Hulme's life:

> "At this period (1912) I got to know T. E. Hulme very well. His evenings, always on Tuesdays, at a house in Frith Street, were gatherings that attracted many of the intellectuals and artists. Hulme was a large man in bulk, and also large and somewhat abrupt in manner. He had the reputation of being a bully and arrogant, because of his abrupteness. He was really of a candid and original nature like that of Samuel Johnson, and only his intolerance of sham made him feared.
>
> Personally, I think he was of a generous and singularly likeable character and with artists he was humble and always willing to learn. In his own subjects of philosophy and religion, he was a profound student, and he made short shrift of the pretentions when it came to discussing philosophy.
>
> The company, mostly workers in intellectual fields, included Ford Madox Hueffer as he was then called, later Ford Madox Ford (I remember him as a very pontifical person), Ashley Dukes, A. R. Orage, editor of The New Age, Douglas Ainslie, Rich Curle, Sir Edward Marsh, Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington, Ramiro de Maetzu, who later became Spanish Ambassador to the Argentine, and many others. Among artists, Charles Ginner, Harold Gilman, Gaudier Brzeska, and Spencer Gore, Madame Karlowska, and Robert Bevan... Hulme to attract so large and varied

> a company of men, must have had a quality, I should say, of great urbanity, and his broad-mindedness, I maintain, only ceased when he met humbug and pretension"(31).

Hulme liked to discuss all kinds of topics. He argued both endlessly and relentlessly. Conrad's friend and biographer, Richard Curle, speaks about Hulme's illuminating mind as follows:

> "His mind had so astonishing an originality, so basic a sanity, so powerful a drive that he affected everyone as a man of genius... To hear Hulme develop general ideas and abstractions was like studying an elaborate pattern whose inner lines and texture emerge gradually as you gaze. Nothing seemed beyond his range, and as he was a man of outstanding charm it is not to be wondered at that he gathered a salon around him"(32).

Thus, through Hulme and his friends, Pound came in touch with a great many people in London. Later on, some of them will be in Pound's orbit. Their names will be linked in one way or another with Pound's two movements: "Imagism" and "Vorticism".

In January 1912, Hulme's five poems, "Autumn", "The Embankment", "Mana Aboda", "Above the Dock", "Conversion", were printed in "The New Age", and were reprinted in the same year as an appendix to Ezra Pound's two volumes of poetry, "Ripostes" (April) and "Canzoni" (May). Pound was to acknowledge Hulme's contribution to what he called the "School of Images". As he published Hulme's "Poetical Works", he praised him "for good fellowship; for good custom out of 'Tuscany' and of 'Provence'... and for good memory, seeing that they recall certain evenings and meetings of

two years gone, dull enough at the time, but rather pleasant to look back upon". Pound remarks that Hulme "...has set an enviable example to many of his contemporaries who have had less to say..." and "as for the future, 'Des Imagistes', the descendants of the forgotten school of 1909, have that in their keeping"(33).

In Pound's short preface the term "Imagism" is first officially used and rightly associated with Hulme. Obviously, Pound coined the word "Imagism" to classify Hulme's work and only afterwards did his idea of propagating Imagist theories come from the publication of Richard Aldington and Hilda Doolittle's poems. It is precisely in 1912 when the first notions of the Imagist school are first mentioned. Harold Monro, who was the editor of the "Poetry Review" and whose first number had appeared in London in January of this same year, commented to Harriet Monroe, who was by this time trying to secure poems for publication in her Poetry Magazine in Chicago, the importance that was given to poetry in England: "It has become a matter of duty now in England to awaken people to the existence of poetry"(34); and adds that he had been "working on very definite principles. I have taken a good deal of trouble with them. This free verse is a curious medium that nearly as often completely fails as succeeds..."(35).

In September 1912, Ezra Pound submitted a poem to Harriet Monroe which he claimed to be "an over-elaborate post-Browning 'Imagiste' affair..."(36). One month later Pound sent poems by

Richard Aldington, including the beautiful "Choricos". Aldington's poems were printed in the Poetry magazine's second number. Pound proclaimed Aldington's work as purely "Imagist". However, it was not until Hilda Doolittle brought her poems to Pound that the name "Imagist" was definitively employed. Pound was so struck by her craftmanship that he immediately sent them to Harriet Monroe for publication in her magazine. Pound described Hilda Doolittle's poems as being "...in the laconic speech of the Imagistes, even if the subject is classic... It's straight talk, straight as the Greek..."(37).

The "School of Images" had given way to the "Imagist" movement. If it became a successful movement it was because there was behind it a Pound whose energy never declined in spite of being criticised for carrying out ideas which were not of his own invention. Pound himself never claimed to have formulated Imagist principles as has been said. If Pound revived and systematized the ideas current in 1909, it was because he found them too interesting to be left unnoticed. Pound wrote that:

> "The name was invented to launch Hilda Doolittle and Aldington before either had enough stuff for a volume. Also, to establish a critical demarcation long since knocked to hell. T. E. Hulme was an original or pre"(38).

It was through Pound that the Imagist movement was shaped. Pound had undoubtedly recognized the valuable principles which had been discussed by the former group to which he had belonged and

which he had called "The School of Images". As a Foreing Correspondent of the Poetry magazine founded in Chicago, Pound displayed his energy to secure poems which, according to his judgement, deserved to be named "Imagist". After he had sent poems of his own and those of Richard Aldington and Hilda Doolittle, he thought that the new school should be explained in statements which would give it a definite meaning and so ensure its success in the United States and in England. Two essays were written, one by F. S. Flint and another by Pound himself. These essays represented the first serious attempt toward a statement of Imagist principles. Flint's and Pound's articles appeared in the March, 1913 issue of Poetry. Flint's article was entitled "Imagisme" and the other by Pound was called "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste". They were printed as much to clear up the ideas held by the Imagists as to satisfy "many requests for explanation"(39) and to demonstrate that "Imagism is not necessarily associated with Hellenic subjects, or with vers libre as a prescribed form"(40). Flint's essay marks off the direction of the Imagists as he lays down, for the first time, the three rules drawn up by the group, which are:

> "1. - Direct treatment of the "thing", whether subjective or objective.
> 2. - To use absolutely no word that did not contribute to the presentation.
> 3. - As regarding rhythm: to compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome"(41).

The further accomplishments of the Imagists were to come from the application of these three rules which had never been outlined before, although Flint has claimed that it has been the Imagists' ideal "to write in accordance with the best tradition, as they found it in the best writers of other times, in Sappho, Catullus, Villon"(42). Though it was Flint who first spelled out the viewpoints held by the Imagists, he did not do so fully, but left out a certain "Doctrine of the Image" in order for it to be defined and publicized by Pound along with his "Don'ts". Pound's definition of the "Image" and his prescriptive rules are worth mentioning for they help to clarify the term "Imagism", for he states:

> "An 'Image' is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.
>
> It is the presentation of such a 'complex instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art.
>
> It is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works"(43).

Later on, Aldington would write certain rules on the Image, but these were merely a repetition of Pound's doctrine. Aldington wrote his statements in protest against Pound's publicity of his anthology of "Des Imagistes", and in which he included some poets who, according to Aldington, did not deserve to be called Imagists. Those poets whom Aldington refused to acknowledge as Imagists were

Cournos, Upward, Hueffer, Joyce and Cannéll. To Aldington, the remaining and admittedly Imagist poets were himself, Hilda Doolittle, F. S. Flint, Amy Lowell, William Carlos Williams and Pound.

To clear up forever the confusion associated with the name Imagist, Aldington committed himself to list the rules under which they were working. Aldington's summary is no more than the expression of many of Pound's opinions and it is likely that they came to him directly from Pound. Aldington's statements appeared in a review which he wrote for "The Egoist" in June 1914. In it he lays down the fundamental doctrine of the group. They are practically all stylistic:

> "1. - Direct treatment of the subject. This I consider very important. We convey an emotion by presenting the object and circumstance of that emotion without comment...
> 2. - As few adjectives as possible.
> 3. - A hardness, as of cut stone...
> 4. - Individuality of rhythm...
> 5. - A whole lot of don'ts, which are mostly technical, which are boresome to anyone except those writing poetry, and which have been already published in Poetry.
> 6. - The exact word..."(44).

Regardless of the disagreement between some of the Imagists, it is notable to see how soon the movement had become established as a lively, different school of poetry in both England and The United States. Though in The United States many Imagist poems were published as well as many of its principles, it was in England that the headquarters of the movement was to be found. Amy Lowell went to London with a

letter written by Harriet Monroe in which she was recommended to Ezra Pound. Pound introduced Amy Lowell to his group and published some of her poems in his anthology "Des Imagistes". When Amy Lowell proposed that they should publish an Imagist anthology every year, Pound refused to join the group out of fear of dilution. Pound considered that the movement he had formed was no longer Imagism but had been converted into "Amygism".

Amy Lowell took over the leadership of the Imagists and published in Boston three annual anthologies, in the years 1915, 1916 and 1917 under the title "Some Imagist Poets". In these anthologies appeared poems written by Aldington, Hilda Doolittle, F. S. Flint, D. H. Lawrence and John Gould Fletcher. Another Imagist anthology appeared late in 1930 in which were included poems by Richard Aldington, John Cournos, Hilda Doolittle, John Gould Fletcher, F. S. Flint, Ford Madox Ford, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence and William Carlos Williams.

Throughout the time that Imagist poetry was being written and the movement was achieving recognition under the direction of Ezra Pound, Hulme's presence was always felt. There is evidence that Hulme had ceased writing poetic theory but his ideas were used by the Imagists when they undertook to publish their principles. John Gould Fletcher has recorded that Hulme was upset when he knew that Pound was exploiting ideas on the French Symbolist poets which he

had developed himself and which Pound had decided to write about as if they were his own. Fletcher points out the rivalries that existed between Hulme and Pound and says that "the queerly complicated alliance between the young English student of philosophy and the American expatriate was already at an end, though neither spoke of the fact and always remained outwardly polite to the other"(45). Epstein's comments about the relationship between Hulme and Pound at this time are both amusing and illustrative: "Someone once asked him (Hulme) how long he would tolerate Ezra Pound; Hulme thought for a moment and then said that he knew already exactly when he would have to kick him downstairs"(46). On the other hand, Pound felt he had made enough contribution to Hulme's cause by printing his poems as an appendix to his "Ripostes". Pound unsuccessfully tried to play down Hulme's contribution to the Imagist movement when he wrote his article "This Hulme business" in 1938. In that article Pound gives the honour to Ford Madox Ford. But Ford Madox Ford was mainly occupied in securing prose works rather than poetry to publish in his English Review. If Ford Madox Ford wrote poetry in Free Verse, it was because he was encouraged by Pound to try his hand at it. In later years and precisely in his already mentioned essay called "This Hulme Business", Pound's attitude towards the movement he managed to create is that of uneasiness and excuse:

> "Among the infinite stinks of a foetid era is that arising from the difficulty of not being able to do a man justice without commiting some sort of inflation. I attempted to do Hulme justice in the last pages of 'Ripostes'.
>
> Without malice toward T. E. Hulme it now seems advisable to correct a distortion which can be found even in portly works of reference. The critical LIGHT during the years immediately pre-war in London shone not from Hulme but from Ford (Madox etc.) in so far as it fell on writing at all"(47).

Pound's defection of the original Imagist group did not prevent him from publishing poetry. In 1915, Ezra Pound published an anthology of contemporary poetry in a volume entitled "Catholic Anthology" which, apart from five poems by T. S. Eliot and W. B. Yeats' poem "The Scholars", contained a poem entitled "Trenches: St. Eloi Abbreviated from the Conversation of Mr. T. E. Hulme". This was the last poem published during Hulme's lifetime. Though Pound reprinted it as his own poem in a volume of his poetry entitled "Umbra" (1920), the credit for it must be given to Hulme since it contains lines which were written by him on his "Notes on War".

Pound's reasons to minimize Hulme's role in the Imagist group have no real justification. Hulme's work speaks for itself and serves as a testimony to his contribution to modern poetry. After Hulme's death in 1917, his works began circulating and were read with great enthusiasm by notable literary men like T. S. Eliot and W. B. Yeats, among others. If Pound joined Hulme's group when he

arrived in London it was because he found it interesting and quite different from other schools of poets. At that time there was an active literary life in England. Aldington refers to the many potential influences on any poet in London and particularly to Ezra Pound, stating that he was: "a small but persistent volcano in the dim levels of London literary society"(48). Pound's residence in London had an enormous significance. By absorbing the current literary ideas, which were circulating by then, both his poetry and his criticism improved a great deal. If Imagist poetry became well known, the merit should not be given just to one person but to all those who were involved in it. T. E. Hulme, Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington, Hilda Doolittle, F. S. Flint and many other poets, who began experimenting in new verse models such as classical Greek lyric, Vers Libre or Free Verse, Chinese and Japanese forms. Aldington and Hilda Doolittle wrote their best poetry in the classical Greek style. Pound, who also tried his ability in these new forms, published in his "Ripostes", remarkable poems as his "Doria" and "The Return" and in the Japanese haiku style, his two line poems "In a Station of the Metro":

> "The apparition of these faces in the crowd:
> Petals on a wet, black bough"(49).

Hulme firmly states that poetry "must find a new technique each generation"(50) and remarks that every "age must have its own

special form of expression, and any period that deliberately goes out of it is an age of insincerity"(51). Hulme's attempt to "fix an impression"(52) in poetry led him to develop his theory of the "Image". "The poet", he says, "is moved by a certain landscape; he selects from that certain images which, put into juxtaposition in separate lines, serve to suggest and to evoke the state he feels"(53). It is the attainment of two visual images that create a "visual chord"(54) which is in essence a "new visual art"(55). When these two visual images become together they "suggest an image which is different to both"(56). Hulme emphasizes his point when he adds "that this method of recording impressions by visual images in distinct lines does not require the old metric system"(57). His opposition to the use of a "regular metre"(58) into his "impressionist poetry"(59) derives from the fact that it spoils the "delicate pattern of images and colour"(60) and takes away its effect merely because it "introduces the heavy, crude pattern of rhetorical verse"(61). According to Hulme, good poetry and particularly impressionist poetry should be read with a certain degree of difficulty to grasp its whole meaning: "It depends for its effect not on a kind of half sleep produced, but on arresting the attention, so much so that the succession of visual images should exhaust one"(62). When Hulme speaks of the image and of free verse he is conscious of the enormous effort of concentration the writer must make if he wants to succeed in his task: "It is a delicate and difficult art, that of evoking an image,

of fitting the rhythm to the idea, and one is tempted to fall back to the comforting and easy arms of the old, regular metre, which takes away all the trouble for us"(63). T. S. Eliot expresses Hulme's idea in other terms: "No vers is libre for the man who wants to do a good job"(64). The poet's mission, Hulme asserts, is that of to "continually be creating new images, and his sincerity may be measured by the number of his images"(65).

Hulme's death, in the war on the 28th of September 1917, passed unnoticed except for his friends who mourned him. Jacob Epstein would refer in his autobiography the loss of one of the liveliest minds at the beginning of this century: "Like Plato and Socrates, he drew the intellectual youth of his time around him. We have no one quite like him in England to-day"(66). It is true to say that Hulme's position in the contemporary intellectual field depends largely on his posthumous work. "The New Age", magazine for which Hulme had written most of his essays, printed in 1921 a number of Hulme's poems under the title " 'Fragments' (from the notebook of T. E. Hulme who was killed in the war) "(67). However, it was not until 1924 when Hulme's first important volume appeared. Herbert Read, who was responsible for the publication of it, entitled it "Speculations". It was through it that T. S. Eliot would become acquainted with Hulme's work. Because of Hulme's creative mind, which was accompanied by a rare ability to express the virility of his thinking, Eliot has placed him as

one of the most distinguished minds of the century: "When Hulme was killed in Flanders in 1917, he was known to a few people as a brilliant talker, a brilliant amateur of metaphysics, and the author of two or three of the most beautiful short poems in the language. In this volume he appears as the forerunner of a new attitude of mind, which should be the twentieth-century mind, if the twentieth century is to have a mind of its own. Hulme is classical, reactionary and revolutionary; he is the antipodes of the eclectic, tolerant, and democratic mind of the last century. And his writing, his fragmentary notes and his outlines, is the writing of an individual who wished to satisfy himself before he cared to enchant a cultivated public"(68). According to Pound, Hulme's absence in the post-war years had left an empty space in literary London and what was the worst of all, there was no one who could have replaced him: "I have no doubt that the bleak and smeary 'Twenties' wretchedly needed his guidance, and the pity is that he wasn't there in person to keep down vermin; God knows Messrs. Lewis and Eliot must have had a lonely time in your city during that fifteen year's interval"(69). Hulme's second volume was edited by Sam Hynes and published in 1955 under the title "Further Speculations".

Chapter III

HULME'S POETIC THEORY

It was the Imagists' concern to struggle against the English tradition prevalent in their time. They were conscious of the urgent need to change the concepts that had been maintained through centuries in England that all arts could only be kept alive in small groups of culture. It was this isolation, they thought, that had brought England back to a dark era of barbarism and vulgarity within which the arts could not develop. Thus, at the beginning of this century, the traditional living culture of England was doomed to collapse, and it was Thomas Ernest Hulme (1883-1917) who first proclaimed an urgent revolution in the field of art and poetry. Hulme distrusted the concepts and techniques that had been held out for four centuries in England and all over Europe. It was Hulme's merit to recognize the feebleness of all the arts, including poetry, during his lifetime. Hulme's success depended on the fact that he realized the incongruency of submitting poetry to an old, decadent tradition. Herbert Read discusses, in his introduction to "Speculations", Hulme's contribution to modern thinking and modern poetry: "He was, in one sense at least, a poet; he preferred to see things in the emotional light of a metaphor rather than to reach reality through scientific analysis. His significance is none the less real; he knew very certainly that we were at the end of a way of thought that had prevailed for four hundred years; in this, and

in his premonition of a more absolute philosophy of life, he had advanced the ideals of a new generation" (1). But here, it is necessary to refer to Hulme's concept of the Dogma of Original Sin, since it is from it that all his ideas towards art and poetry arise. When he speaks of art he makes a distinction between Renaissance and Mediaeval attitudes and the same thing occurs as he discusses both romantic and classical verse. For a better explanation, Hulme refers to the historical context of each period: "The first of these historical periods is that of the Middle Ages in Europe-from Augustine, say, to the Renaissance; the second from the Renaissance to now. The ideology of the first period is religious; of the second, humanist. The difference between them is fundamentally nothing but the difference between these two conceptions of man" (2). Hulme's importance in modern thinking lies in the fact that he has perceived the necessity of bringing back the concept of Original Sin. He uses it in all his works, particularly those on art and poetry. It is Hulme's attempt to re-state an attitude which has changed man's nature and has dominated his way of thinking from the Renaissance to the beginnings of this century. As Hulme deals with the Dogma of Original Sin, he establishes his position towards it: "I am not, however, concerned so much with religion, as with the attitude, the 'way of thinking', the categories, from which a religion springs, and which often survive it. While this attitude tends to find

expression in myth, it is independent of myth; it is, however, much more intimately connected with dogma" (3). Hulme's dogma serves to define his concept of both humanism and non-humanism. "Humanism", Hulme says, introduces "Perfection into man; man no longer endowed with original sin, but by nature good" (4); non-humanism is the exact opposite to this: "man himself is judged to be essentially limited and imperfect. He is endowed with Original Sin" (5). Before discussing Hulme's attitude towards art and poetry it is useful to mention his objection to humanist thought. While he recognises the inventions and discoveries of this long period, he criticises its attitudes as it contends 'that life is the source and measure of all values and that man is fundamentally good" (6). It is such an attitude, according to Hulme, which has led art to develop a classical feeling and in literature, a romantic view In both, he sees a failure as they confuse and mix up the divine with the nature of man. The former, he says, tries to represent God as a human while the latter speaks of man as being God. In all these, he finds a sentimentality which has spoilt both art and poetry and from which he wishes to escape.

Hulme contends that a return to geometrical art is near. The fact that arts like the Egyptian, Indian and Byzantine have been considered since the Renaissance as the representation of archaic art, represents a misconception. If the Egyptians, for instance, dealt with

geometrical shapes, it was not because they lacked technical ability but because they "had in view an object entirely different from that of the creators of more naturalistic art" (7). Hulme compares Greek art and modern art with other arts such as the Egyptian, Indian and Byzantine. The former, he maintains, is coming to its end, while the latter will emerge "accompanied by a certain change of sensibility, a certain change of general attitude" (8), and he adds that such an "attitude will differ in kind from the humanism which has prevailed from the Renaissance to now..." (9). Hulme announces that art will go back to its origins where "everything tends to be angular, where curves tend to be hard and geometrical... and distorted to fit stiff lines and cubical shapes of various kinds" (10) merely because this new attitude belongs to men tired of "the soft and natural representation of the body" (11). To make his point clearer, Hulme adds that contemporary thought will be modified by art. It is his contention that we shall go back to the Scholastic period and more specifically to the 'belief in the subordination of man to certain absolute values, the radical imperfection of man, the doctrine of Original Sin" (12). Man has shown for four centuries his inadequacy to grasp the real significance of the "Dogma of Original Sin" (13). Our mistake, Hulme says, is that "we introduce into human things the Perfection that properly belongs only to the divine, and thus confuse both human and divine things by not

clearly separating them" (14). It is possible to perceive this error throughout modern philosophy, literature and ethics, where man is conceived "as fundamentally good, as sufficient, as the measure of things" (15). It is Hulme's idea that as long as man does not realize that he is essentially limited and imperfect and submitted to "Order" by discipline, he will not be able to attain anything of value. To Hulme, then, "Order is thus not merely negative, but creative and liberating" (16). With this view in mind, Hulme firmly predicts that a new attitude is to come. It will be primarily manifested in art and afterwards in thought: "So throughly are we soaked in the spirit of the period we live in, so strong is its influence over us, that we can only escape from it in an unexpected way, as it were, a side direction like art" (17). To avoid any misunderstanding of what has been said it is important to mention here Hulme's view of the relationship between the medieval period and the one he expects to start. Hulme sums up his argument as follows: "The only thing the new period will have in common with mediaevalism will be the subordination of man to certain absolute values" (18). Hulme's sequence of thought is notable especially when he deals with abstract subjects. Though he has been accused of an excess of repetition in all his essays, no one can but recognize the vigour of his language as well as his remarkable facility to create analogies. In his Notes on Language and Style, Hulme defines the poet's way of

thinking as "merely the discovery of new analogies, when useful and sincere, and not mere paradoxes" (19). Jacob Epstein, Hulme's friend and a distinguished artist himself, refers to Hulme's way of thinking as follows: "My sculpture only served to start the train of his thought. Abstract art had an extraordinary attraction for him: his own brain worked in that way" (20). Hulme sees his first task as making a frontal attack on the liberal humanism of his time. It was his main purpose to make people realize the state of confusion in which they were living. He attempted to show them that they "were looking at things through one particular pair of glasses" (21). Michael Roberts states in his biography of Hulme that Hulme was firmly convinced "that the liberal romantic outlook coloured all philosophical thought in England and he claimed that this outlook was mistaken" (22). Hulme's essay on Romanticism and Classicism serves as a means to express his ideas about the necessity of a change in the field of poetry. This essay seems to be the core of what later on will be considered the principles of modern -- poetry or rather the 'School of Images", as it was called by Ezra Pound. In this essay, Hulme announces, on the one hand, the ending of the romantic outlook which has dominated English poetry for over a century, and on the other, the rebirth of a classical vision. Hulme's main contention is that "after a hundred years of romanticism, we are in for a classical revival, and that the particular weapon of this new classical spirit, when

it works in verse, will be fancy" (23). Before going into the heart of his argument, Hulme considers it necessary to establish a demarcation between the words "classic" and "romantic". He is aware that "they represent five or six different kinds of antithesis" (24) but to avoid any misunderstanding between them and for a further enlightenment in his thesis, he remarks that he will be "using them in a perfectly precise and limited sense" (25). His two concepts are: "One, that man is intrinsically good, spoilt by circumstance; and the other that he is intrinsically limited, but disciplined by order and tradition to something fairly decent. To the one party man's nature is like a well, to the other like a bucket. The view which regards man as a well, a reservoir full of possibilities, I call the romantic; the one which regards him as a very finite and fixed creature, I call the classical" (26). In Hulme's previous statement he establishes his definition of both the "romantic" and "classical" human attitudes. If Hulme shows his dislike of the romantic attitude, it is because he thinks it has gone in a wrong direction since it contends that "man, the individual, is an infinite reservoir of possibilities" (27). To Hulme this doctrine is a tricky and a ridiculous one. He sets against it his classical view which is nothing more than his Dogma of Original Sin: "Man is an extraordinarily fixed and limited animal whose nature is absolutely constant" (28). Hulme indicates that these two human attitudes arise from differing conceptions

of the relationship between man and the cosmos. The romantic poet, Hulme says, held a pantheistic view when he had accepted and had been ruled by Rousseau's social and political doctrine. Rousseau thought: "Man was by nature good, that it was only bad laws and customs that had supressed him. Remove all these and the infinite possibilities of man would have a chance" (29). The classical poet's attitude, Hulme states, is entirely different to this. He has always in mind that "man is an extraordinarily fixed and limited animal. It is only by tradition and organisation that anything decent can be got out of him" (30). Hulme sees in the romantic outlook a perverted religion. Because they have ceased in believing in God, they have thought" man is a god" (31). In their anxiety to fill the gap that exists between man and God, they have created a dream world. They no longer 'believe in heaven" (32) so they "begin to believe in a heaven on earth" (33). Hulme thus defines romanticism as "spilt religion" (34). The opposite occurs in classical thought. Man is aware of his imperfection and of his limitations. He realizes that he is part of earth. In regarding verse Hulme disagrees with that of the romantics because he finds it full of the word "infinite", something which, according to him, only serves to show their incapacity for defining beauty or the nature of art. Hulme believes that the romantics' misconception springs up from a "bad metaphysical aesthetics" (35). Here again, I bring up Hulme's definition of the "classical" and "romantic" view because it throws more light of his argument. The former, he says, ". defines it (beauty) as lying

in conformity to certain standard fixed forms", and the latter" drags in the infinite" (36). Hulme concludes his distinction between these two attitudes as follows: "The romantic, because he thinks man infinite, must always be talking about the infinite..." (37). In the classical world the exact opposite occurs: "... you never seem to swing right along to the infinite nothing. You never go blindly into an atmosphere more than the truth, an atmosphere too rarified for man to breathe for long" (38). Hulme stands for a classical revival in verse, not only because he is tired of the sentimentality which, he believes, all romantic verse is marred by, but also of its total inadequacy to grasp the meaning of the insignificance of man. Hulme proclaims a new kind of verse and calls it classical. As he does this, he warns us that he is not seeking a return to an Augustan period, but he is using it as an example of what he would like to see in verse. Hulme thinks romanticism has come to its end as it has exhausted its technique which depended on "a certain pitch of rhetoric" (39). It has also ceased convincing us, Hulme says, as it may be held that such kind of verse is the "expression of unsatisfied emotion" (40) which according to Hulme is inadequate for the modern mind. If Hulme attacks romantic poetry it is because he is aware of its inconsistency. He no longer believes in its vagueness and in the romantics' feeling that poetry "must lead them to a beyond of some kind" (41). Hulme's attitude towards romantic poetry

is violently reactionary: "I object even to the best of the romantics. I object to the sloppiness which doesn't consider that a poem is a poem unless it is moaning or whining about something or other" (42). By the time Hulme states "that accurate description is a legitimate object of verse" (43) he fears he will not be understood by his contemporaries who still consider that verse "always means a bringing in of some of the emotions that are grouped round the word infinite" (44).

Hulme anticipates a later generation. He states that "while the romantic tradition has run dry, yet the critical attitude of mind, which demands romantic qualities from verse, still survives. So that if good classical verse were to be written tomorrow very few people would be able to stand it" (45). Hulme considers that for every new period a "new efflorescence of verse" (46) is necessary and it has to be accompanied with a "new technique, a new convention, to turn ourselves loose in" (47). Hulme's dissatisfaction with poetry and particularly that of the romantics leads him to draw up certain rules which he thinks are "essential to prove that beauty may be in small, dry things" (48). Hulme attempts to break free from the romantic attitude in verse and to create a different one. Hulme maintains that the romantic view has come to its end and that is has exhausted its forms. He accounts for his reaction against romantic attitudes as

follows: "When I say that I dislike the romantics I dissociate two things: the part of them in which they resemble all the great poets, and the part in which they differ and which gives them their character as romantics. It is this minor element which constitutes the particular note of a century and which, while it excites contemporaries, annoys the next generation" (49). Hulme knows quite well that what he is trying to undertake is not easy. On the one hand, he has to strive against the romantic concept that thinks that poetry "always means a bringing in of some of the emotions that are grouped round the word infinite" (50) and on the other, he has to show that poetry can be confined "to the earthly and the definite" (51). Hulme fears that the kind of verse he wants to be written may not be understood by his contemporaries. Hulme has clearly perceived both the uncritical state of mind of his contemporaries when they try to judge the qualities of English poetry as well as the state of it. He comments upon what was happening at this time: "But while the romantic tradition has run dry, yet the critical attitude of mind, which demands romantic qualities from verse still survives" (52). When Hulme speaks of Keats's poetry he recognizes that some parts of it are typical of the romantic period while others are not. It is possible to assume here that Hulme has found in Keats's poetry qualities he admires. If Hulme seeks a new form in verse it is

because what he finds in romantic poetry seems to him perverted. His classical verse should have a precise form instead of a certain form of vagueness, which has been the characteristic quality in all romantic poetry. Hulme demands from his verse certain qualities which are quite different to those of the romantics. The kind of verse he wants to appear demands new techniques and this will be accompanied by a different way of looking at things. Hulme demands from his classical verse certain qualities: "The great aim is accurate, precise and definite description. The first thing is to recognise how extraordinarily difficult this is" (53). It is Hulme's contention that if the poet wants to succeed in his task he has to follow certain rules. They are all necessary if he desires to write fresh verse. For Hulme the term fresh denotes that the artist has been in an "actual physical state" (54). Hulme's poetry asks for a "concentrated effort of the mind" (55) on the poet's part. It is by such state of mind that the poet can accomplish two things and which according to Hulme are very important in the attainment of "accurate description" (56). Hulme has distinguished them as follows: ". first the particular faculty of mind to see things as they really are, and apart from the conventional ways in which you have been trained to see them. Second, the concentrated state of mind, the grip over oneself which is necessary in the actual expression of

what one sees" (57). In Hulme's poetry control of language acquires a new significance. The poet uses language as a tool to express exactly what he sees. The same thing occurs with the artist. If he wants to express "an object or an idea in the mind" (58) he has to use a certain kind of material. He chooses what he thinks is suitable to his own purpose. The relationship Hulme finds between a poet and an artist lies in their struggle with the thing they use as a medium to get out exactly what they see. An artist, for example, takes a piece of wood and gives it the shape he wants. To get the "exact curve of what he sees" (59) he must struggle with it. The originality of his work depends on the state of concentration of mind as he creates what he exactly wants. It is by this effort of the mind that the artist can get at something different and which goes beyond "the conventional curves of ingrained technique" (60). When Hulme states that "accurate description is a legitimate object of verse" (61), he realizes the poet faces difficulties in achieving this. He recognises that language is by "its very nature a communal thing: that is, it expresses never the exact thing but a compromise - that which is common to you, me and everybody" (62). On the other hand, the poet uses it "to get out clearly and exactly what he does see" (63). According to Hulme, the poet's originality and sincerity are measured by his state of concentration of mind as he

struggles with language to create new and "fresh epithets and fresh metaphors" (64). They are employed by the poet to express the exact curve of his vision. It is the poet's task to look always for new metaphors once he is aiming at an uncommon, individual mode of communication. In his essay on Bergson's Theory of Art" (65) Hulme has comments on language: "It is only the defects of language that make originality necessary. It is because language will not carry over the exact thing you want to say, that you are compelled simply, in order to be accurate, to invent original ways of stating things" (66). Thus if he is to state exactly what he wants to say the poet must constantly struggle against the ingrained habits of language. The poet is engaged upon a ceaseless search for new metaphors once he finds the old ones inadequate to his purpose, which is merely to 'convey a physical thing" (67). Therefore, if the poet refuses to use old metaphors it is because according to him, they have become "abstract counters" (68) that have been used over and over again. When Hulme refers to his classical verse he insists: 'It is not a counter language, but a visual concrete one" (69). Hulme attempts to show that words as they are used in prose are inadequate to poetry. He believes that in prose words are employed mechanically as if they were symbols quite similar to those which are used in algebra. Hulme opposes to this automatical arrangement of words

because it prevents the poet from visualising his experience. In Hulme's poetry the exact opposite will occur. It is the poet's concern to avoid using plain language if he wants to succeed in his task. Poetry is, according to Hulme, something which "always endeavours to arrest you, and to make you continuously see a physical thing, to prevent you gliding through an abstract process" (70). Hulme insists that it is the poet's mission to create new means of expression. Hulme gives a clear example of what he means: "A poet says a ship 'coursed the seas' to get a physical image, instead of the counter word 'sailed'"(71).

Hulme maintains that good poetry can only be written if one looks at a thing with great interest and a high degree of intensity. Here is Hulme's comment: ..it must be an intense zest which heightens a thing out of the level of prose" (72). The interest the poet gets from a certain particular thing runs parallel with the effect it produces in the poet's mind. It is this interest in the thing which compels the poet to search for the right epithet for it. Subject is of secondary importance: 'Subject doesn't matter.. it doesn't matter if it were a lady's shoe or the starry heavens" (73) but all that counts is the accuracy the poet lends to his verse to attain the "exact curve of the thing" (74) he has just contemplated.

Hulme's endeavours to demonstrate that "fancy will be the necessary weapon of the classical school" (75) derive from his disagreement with the romantic theory of the imagination as it was put:

forward by Ruskin. Ruskin is explicit on this point: "Imagination cannot but be serious; she sees too far, too darkly, too solemnly, ever to smile. There is something in the heart of everything, if we can reach it, that we shall not be inclined to laugh at... There is in every word set down by the imaginative mind an awful undercurrent of meaning, and evidence and shadow upon it of the dark places out of which it has come" (76). Hulme's reaction against this romantic attitude leads him to declare "that the particular verse we are going to get will be cheerful, dry, and sophisticated, and here the necessary weapon of the positive quality must be fancy" (77). While Hulme insists that: "Fancy is not mere decoration added on to plain speech" (78), he says that "when the analogy has not enough connection with the thing described to be quite parallel with it, where it overlays the thing it describes and there is a certain excess, there you have the play of fancy that I grant is inferior to imagination" (79).

Chapter IV

HULME'S POETRY

Hulme thinks the poet should write about the momentary impressions which reality presents to him. That is, the poet's experience must be circumscribed to real and common events. The experiences the poet has had in daily life and the sensations he perceives from the outside world ought to be important themes in his poetry. Hulme believes that modern poetry should refer to all kinds of impressions, be it that one speaks of a landscape, a mood or something else the poet may want to suggest. In order to get an accurate description of the impressions that have arrested all his attention, the poet must make a mental effort, if he wishes to evoke what he has previously seen. There are certain impressions the poet retains vividly in his mind and which do not let him rest until he has expressed them. Therefore, we can say that these impressions become of great significance to the poet as he feels the urgency of evoking them in accurate terms.

To get a better idea of what Hulme wishes to see in modern poetry, I have considered it necessary to reproduce in their totality some of his most representative poems and discuss them. Some of the poems which I am going to mention here were published during Hulme's lifetime. They are "Autumn", "The Man in the Crow's Nest", "Above the Dock", "Mana Aboda", "The Embankment", "Conversion" and "Trenches: St. Eloi". Other poems such as "The Poet", "A City

Sunset", "The Sunset" and "Sunset", though little known, seem to me worth studying because of the light they throw into the knowledge of Hulme's poetic technique.

Hulme's poetry has its limitations. It does not amount much to paraphrase it. The themes he deals with in his poetry are those of the cosmic phenomena. These cosmic phenomena are used by Hulme to show man's isolation as well as his wonder and fear before the unknown. The success of Hulme's poetry depends on the freshness by which he communicates homely, immediate, actual things which gives it a personal touch. The accuracy of his analogies and the relationship he finds between the infinite and the finite serve as a means of proving that poetry can refer to living facts and bodily sensations.

Instead of generalizing about Hulme's poetic ideas, I would rather discuss one by one the poems that I have already mentioned in order to render a better illustration of his work. If I have added in my comments some of Hulme's fragments or images it is to give more emphasis to certain points, which have seemed to me of considerable importance in the present study. To go back to Hulme's poetry, let us begin with his well known poem "Autumn" (1).

> A touch of cold in the Autumn night
> I Walked abroad,
> And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge
> Like a red-faced farmer.
> I did not stop to speak, but nodded;
> And round about were the wistful stars
> With white faces like town children.

In this poem Hulme expresses the emotions that an 'Autumn'

night might bring to him. He communicates the effects of these emotions in a direct, clear and precise manner. The momentary vision of an Autumn night, a very special one for the poet, has made him express the qualities of his contemplation. The feeling of "a touch of cold in the Autumn night" and the sight of the "ruddy moon" leaning "over a hedge" are sensations that tell of a very particular experience. They also convey a sense of immediacy. Hulme is not sentimental in his experience; he rather describes the effects of his vision with a series of images. He has chosen images which he thinks are an exact reproduction of what he has seen. According to Hulme, the poet, who is always trying to see solid things, has to create "new analogies", new phrases or ways of saying things, which may help him to express what he desires and feels. To Hulme poetry is "the advance guard of language" (2). It is so, since it creates "new analogies", which when employed in poetry, "are all glitter and never coruscation" (3). It is the poet's creativity which enriches the language and gives it new vigour. He is a maker of as well as a contributor to 'the progress of language" (4).

On the other hand, when the "new phrases" the poet creates are often used in prose, they tend to deaden by the mere fact of repetition. Thus, it is the constant usage of these new phrases in prose, which forces the poet search for new ones. The old phrases have become obsolete and meaningless to him. Hulme asserts that prose is "a museum where all the old weapons of poetry are kept" (5). This is

what impels the poet "to construct a plaster model of a thing to express his emotion at the sight of the vision he sees, his wonder and ecstasy" (6). If the poet, Hulme goes on, had to use "the ordinary word" (7) as means of poetic expression the reader would only grasp it "as a segment, with no hair, used for getting along" (8). Worst of all, the poet "without this clay, spatial image" (9), will be deceived for he will not express at all what he sees. Thus the images, the color effects, and the shapes Hulme employs in his poem enable his contemplation to become something personal and distinct. Hulme's poetry causes on the reader an immediate and striking effect. This effect is rather visual since it expresses something real. With regard to this Hulme remarks that "all emotion depends on real vision or sound. It is physical" (10). The poet's perception is manifested to us through his images as he evokes what he has previously experienced. Thus for Hulme to write poetry it is necessary to have a visual image of the significance of the material just as if it were before one's eyes. Hulme adds that: "It is this image which precedes the writing and makes it firm" (11). It is Hulme's primary concern to present his experience in a vivid, tangible manner. Hulme attains his purpose as he compares "the ruddy moon" with "a red-faced farmer" and "the wistful stars" with "white faces like town children". These images evoke something near and true.

The use of the cosmic is quite characteristic of Hulme's

poetry. The effect it causes in the poet is that of wonder. He shows his astonishment at what he has beheld "saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge" when he confesses that: "I did not stop to speak, but nodded". Hulme also uses the cosmic to compare it with common and familiar living creatures. For instance, in this poem the stars have "white faces like town children" and the moon is "like a red-faced farmer".

The cosmic phenomena awake in the poet a feeling of fear. Both man's isolation and fear are felt in Hulme's poetry when he is face to face with the unknown and the infinite. In his poem "The Man in the Crow's Nest" (2), Hulme speaks of man's solitude and of his fear before the unknown in a symbolical way. For example:

> Strange to me, sounds the wind that blows
> By the masthead, in the lonely night
> Maybe 'tis the sea whistling - feigning joy
> To hide its fright
> Like a village boy
> That trembling past the churchyard goes.

Though Hulme opposed the romantic attitude, he did not succeed in breaking away from it. The romantics bring about in their poetry the infinite and so does Hulme. Hulme, however, disguises it wittily. The infinite is used to evoke familiar things. In "The Man in the Crow's Nest" the wind that blows in the lonely night is compared to a "village boy" The relationship Hulme finds between the wind and a country boy depends on their behaviour. The wind blows "Feigning joy to hide its fright" while the boy "trembling past the churchard goes". On the one hand, the sound of the wind is for the poet something

"strange", but he thinks of it as "The sea whistling". The images the poet uses here help to express in an impersonal manner the emotions that both the wind and the solitude awake in him. In his other poem "Above the Dock" (13), Hulme expresses beautifully the likeness between the moon and a child's balloon.

> Above the quiet dock in midnight,
> Tangled in the tall mast's corded height,
> Hangs the moon. What seemed so far away
> It but a child's balloon, forgotten after play.

In this poem, Hulme manages to associate the cosmic with something of common and urban use such as a balloon. In a shrewd manner Hulme makes the unknown-in this particular case the moon-appear to us as something seizable and familiar. The merit of Hulme's poetry lies in the accurate reproduction of something concrete. Modern poetry, Hulme says, has to arrest one's attention and the only way to achieve this in poetry is to make it a "succession of visual images" (14) by which the reader, in his effort to grasp their meaning, becomes exhausted. It is Hulme's purpose to "fix an impression" (15). Hulme firmly believes that: "What has found expression in painting as Impressionism will soon find expression in poetry as free verse" (16). From this springs up Hulme's idea that the poet no longer should submit to a perfect rhyme or metre; quite the contrary, he should imitate the Impressionists whose art was dedicated to paint the particular and the concrete with almost scientific realism. It is possible to notice the similarity that Hulme finds between the Impressionist school and the poetry he

advocates. According to him, both follow the same method which is that of bringing up in their work real, definite things. The poet, as well as the impressionist painter, are carried away by the truth of a thing when they see it. It is this particular thing which interests them and arrests their whole attention. The poet and the painter must be conscious of the difficulties they have to overcome if they want to reproduce in a precise manner what they have previously seen. On the one hand, they have to make a mental effort to evoke this impression, in an exact manner; on the other, they have to have a good knowledge of the tools they use to fix this impression. The acceptance of these facts makes the poet and the painter avoid telling a story. It is their desire to present something definite and concrete in their work, and this can only be possible if they speak of a single object.

When Hulme speaks of poetry as "the solid leather for reading" (17), he means that it should be written "with perfect style" (18) (without rhetoric or verbiage). Each one of its sentences has to convey the poet's ability to transform whatever he sees into "solid" images. Thus, to Hulme, the poet will have to touch each sentence "with soft fingers" (19) to make of it a "vision seen" (20). He will work with a sentence as a fine artist with a piece of clay. By doing so, the poet will create solid, vivid images. These images will not be restrained by a regular form: "... each sentence should be a lump, a piece of clay, a vision seen; rather, a wall touched with soft fingers. Never should one feel light vaporous bridges between one solid sense and another. No bridges all

solid: then never exasperated" (21). Hulme's objection to metre is that poets who have used this method tend to use rethorical verse which is the opposite of poetic inspiration. It is the poet's task to create images that were never used before. Hulme sets to attack people who write in metrical form and who call themselves poets. This way of writing, he says, restrains the poet's inspiration. They write prose rather than poetry. Inspiration has failed them. Hulme no longer admits the old methods of writing poetry. His should not be submitted to a rigid, affected style. It should be the poet's purpose to keep away from "perfections of phrase and words" (22), if he wishes to look for a "general effect" (23) in his poetry. Hulme sets the rules for those who want to write a new kind of poetry: "This new verse resembles sculpture rather than music; it appeals to the eye rather than to the ear. It has to mould images, a kind of spiritual clay, into definite shapes. It builds up a plastic image which it hands over to the reader" (24).

Hulme's poetry is not for recitation purposes. It should be read slowly to get the exact meaning of it. Hulme does away with rhyme and with regular rhythm in his poetry. It is Hulme's purpose to achieve in his poetry a firmness of outline and discipline of emotion. He knows this can be attained if he uses free verse in his poetry. Mr. William Pratt defines free verse and the use of it in his book "The Imagist Poem" as follows: "In the Imagist Poem the rhythm was "chosen" to fit the subject just as the words were chosen; every true poem should have its

own inner order, and the only real "freedom" was in the subject -the image- with which the poem began" (25).

In his poem "Mana Aboda" (26), Hulme shows his preoccupation for the poetry written in his time as follows:

> Mana Aboda, whose bent form
> The sky an archéd circle is,
> Seems ever for an unknown grief to mourn.
> Yet on a day I heard her cry:
> 'I weary of the roses and the singing poets
> Josephs all, not tall enough to try'

"Mana Aboda" is the symbol of perfect poetry. In it Hulme shows his disgust for the poor condition of poetry during his time. His reproach is directed towards the poets. "Mana Aboda" condemns both the lack of mental effort on the part of the poets upon writing their verses and the abuse they make of rhythm. This way of writing has brought as a result the repetition of themes, the use of clichés and rhetoric in poetry.

The poetry that Hulme writes refers to small and ordinary incidents. These incidents are very significant for the poet. They are motives that compel the poet to search for an adequate medium of expression in order to communicate his experience to the reader, no matter how insignificant may it seem. It is the poet's mission to evoke in a distinct manner, minute events which awake his emotions. In his poem "The Embankment" (27), Hulme states "that warmth's the very stuff of poesy" as when you may listen, during a solitary and cold night to the music of violins and the echoes of footsteps.

Once, in finesse of fiddles found I ecstacy,
In a flash of gold heels on the hard pavement.
Now see I
That warmth's the very stuff of poesy.
Oh, God, make small
The old star-eaten blanket of the sky,
That I may fold it round me and in comfort lie.

Even though Hulme attacks the Romantic poets' attitude in his poetic theory, he still lingers on this vague sentiment in his poetry. In the poem "The Embankment", Hulme expresses man's solitude and his desire to escape into the infinite in the following lines:

"Oh, God, make small
The old star-eaten blanket of the sky,
That I may fold it round me and in comfort lie.

In a two line image which is quoted from Hulme's "Fragments" Hulme speaks about the solemnity and quietude of the night in a city:

The mystic sadness of the sight
Or a far town seen in the night. (28)

Also, in his one line image of nocturnal loneliness in the city streets, he denotes a romantic feeling:

Down the long desolate street of stars (29).

The poet can not write true poetry if he has not visualized previously what he desires to express. In his poem "The Poet" (30) Hulme communicates this very idea as follows:

Over a large table, smooth, he leaned in ecstasies,
In a dream.
He had been to woods, and talked and walked with trees.
Had left the world
And brought back round globes and stone images,
Of gems, colours, hard and definite.
With these he played, in a dream,
On the smooth table.

The impressions that the poet receives from the outside world are changed into definite images as he recalls them. Here Hulme does not speak about the mental effort the poet makes to bring back what he has felt. He goes into raptures over his impressions. He builds up his own world and plays happily in it. The poet in a delightful state of mind evokes vividly those shapes and colors that help him to re-create his experience.

In his other poem "Conversion" (31), the poet expresses the joy and surprise that causes him to walk in the forest at a time of the year when the flowers offer to the eyes their full bloom.

> Light-hearted I walked into the valley wood
> In the time of hyacinths,
> Till beauty like a scented cloth
> Cast over, stifled me, I was bound
> Motionless and faint of breath
> By loveliness that is her own eunuch.
> Now pass I to the final river
> Ignominiously, in a sack, without sound,
> As any peeping Turk to the Bosphorus.

The poet is carried away by the spell the wood casts over him. The sweet smell of flowers in the "valley wood" has made him think of the beauty of nature "like a scented cloth". He also compares the beauty of nature to a "eunuch" which gives one the idea of nature staying in solitary confinement. It is the sight of such a beauty and the silence he finds in it which causes the poet to be "motionless and faint of breath". On the one hand, the poet feels guilty of having intruded into this lovely land, on the other, he thinks his experience has been worth while. After being in it he can run away unnoticed or as he himself put it

"ignominiously" to the "Bosphorus" "in a sack, without a sound" exactly as if he were a thief.

When Pound published "Trenches: St. Eloi"(32) in his "Catholic Anthology", he put it as follows: TEH poem: abbreviated from the Conversation of Mr. T.E.H." The authorship of this poem has been under dispute since Pound some years later would publish it as his own poem, in his Umbra volume in 1920. In spite of the controversy that this poem has arisen, certain critics have conceded Hulme the honor of its composition since it contains fragments that are found in Hulme's War Diary. Here it is:

> Over the flat slope of St. Eloi
> A wide wall of sand bags.
> Night,
> In the silence desultory men
> Pottering over small fires, cleaning their mess-tins:
> To and fro, from the lines,
> Men walk as on Piccadilly,
> Making paths in the dark,
> Through scattered dead horses,
> Over a dead Belgian's belly.
>
> The Germans have rockets. The English have no rockets.
> Behind the line, cannon, hidden, lying back miles.
> Before the line, chaos:
>
> My mind is a corridor. The minds about me are corridors.
> Nothing suggests itself. There is nothing to do but keep on.

In such a poem we find a vivid description of Hulme's experiences in the war. We can rightly call it a Hulmian poem for its richness of images and the accuracy with which he presents us real facts. The piling up of his images to achieve an exact reproduction of what he has seen is not accidental, but follows a definite purpose which is that of conveying to the

reader an actual situation and place. The evocation Hulme makes of his experiences at the war front and the simplicity of his words when he speaks of them help to form a real picture of the war and its misfortunes Hulme's state of mind is felt throughout the poem. His bellicosity has subsided as a paradoxical effect of the war. He does not protest against anything, but submits to his fate whatever it be. Hulme neither laments nor shows any trace of fear. The way Hulme records his impressions may seem to come from an unnerved man who looks at things in a calm and philosophical manner. Hulme begins his poem by telling us where the actions are taking place:

> Over the flat slope of St Eloi
> A wide wall of sand bags.

The way Hulme has put this speaks of the simplicity and directness of the statements in his poem. He uses the same qualities when he refers to the men's activities after a battle day. Men are having a relief after a hard day in the battlefield. The night is no longer used for stratagem war purposes but as a refuge where they can keep warm, eat and sleep:

> In the silence desultory men
> Pottering over small fires, cleaning their mess-tins:

The horrors of the war and the trivial, monotonous actions men perform in it have dulled their minds. Men act here without having any real consciousness of what they are doing. They seem to do things to no purpose. The shock of the war has made them nearly automats. In the next two following lines Hulme speaks about the men's behaviour in the battleground:

To and fro, from the lines
Men walk as on Piccadilly,

Here men seem to be walking at a leisure time and with a vacant expression. They walk and look at things with a kind of indifference,

Making paths in the dark,

Afterwards Hulme changes the mood in his poem. He does it on purpose. He uses it as a device to give his narrative a more dramatic effect. From what may seem at first an easy-going description of what is going on, Hulme breaks into a more lively detail of the whole matter. He maintains the reader's interest as he leads him to a more dramatic and bloody scene. The changes of mood in Hulme's poem are easily followed if we read the five lines together:

To and fro, from the lines,
Men walk as on Piccadilly,
Making paths in the dark,
Through scattered dead horses,
Over a dead Belgian's belly.

Hulme proceeds to give an account of the English disadvantages in the war.

The Germans have rockets. The English have no rockets.
Behind the line, cannons, hidden, lying back miles.

On the whole, the war has caused men suffering from mental disorders. Their mental state has been damaged. Hulme expresses the emptiness of his mind and of the other men's in a precise and colloquial manner:

My mind is a corridor. The minds about me are corridors.

He also comments on the abandonment and the lack of courage in them when he says that:

Nothing suggests itself. There is nothing to do but keep on.

In this three poems "A City Sunset" (33), "The Sunset" (34) and "Sunset" (35) we can clearly perceive Hulme's way of writing his poetry. Hulme's impression of the sunset has been fixed in his mind and he is not content with giving us one picture of it. He considers it necessary to write of it as many times as he can to let us grasp the different states of his mood contemplating different sunsets. Hulme holds on to his idea and develops it with a succession of images. To Hulme it becomes very important that the writer have a "central idea" (36) in his mind and to "hold on to it" (37). Without it, he says, nothing will come. He gives more emphasis to what he says as he states that 'all inventions spring from the idea" (37). It is this "central idea" which has to be developed into a "multiplicity of detail" (39) to acquire that meaningful character the writer is looking for in his work.

The writer grasps an idea and "sticks to it" (40). Through accurate images he moulds it and gives it a "definiteness" (41). Without this process "the central idea is nothing" (42). Thus the effects Hulme attains in his poetry depend on this way of putting distinct images together. While they state facts about common living things they also help to suggest the different feelings of the poet at the time of his evocation. Hulme poem "A City Sunset" reads as follows:

Alluring, Earth seducing, with high conceits
is the sunset that reigns
at the end of westward streets...
A sudden flaring sky
troubling strangely the passer by
with visions, alien to long streets, of Cytherea
or the smooth flesh of Lady Castlemaine...
A frolic of crimson
is the spreading glory of the sky,
heaven's jocund maid
flaunting a trailed red robe
along the fretted city roofs
about the time of homeward going crowds
a vain maid, lingering, loth to go

The sunset which appears joyfully and majestically is described as malevolent. The light it throws on the earth makes the poet think of it as something fascinating as well as provocative of temptation. The poet expresses this in the first three lines of his poem:

Alluring, Earth seducing, with high conceits
is the sunset that reigns
at the end of westward streets...

The cosmic radiance of the sunset is seen as a promise of seduction but also of disturbance to the numb senses of the people that live in the city:

A sudden flaring sky
troubling strangely the passer by

The effect it produces in the city inhabitants is also that of wonder. While man feels a foreigner in his own homeland by the effect of a "sudden flaring sky", he is also induced to evil thoughts. It makes him think of "Cytherea" and "Lady Castlemaine" who might as well be two maidens whose mere presence disturbs man. When Hulme alludes to this cosmic phenomenon he associates it with a young lady who is dressed up in colorful clothes. Thus the sunset is for the poet a familiar being:

heaven's jocund maid
flaunting a trailed red robe.

The brightness of its color over the city helps to give it a new and surprising aspect. The light of the sunset is reflected in the streets of the city, and 'along the fretted city roofs". Because of the luminosity of the sunset the buildings acquire distinct, decorative patterns. Again, when Hulme speaks about the sunset, at the time it is fading, he refers to it, as if it were a girl who goes home before it gets dark:

about the time of homeward going crowds
- a vain maid, lingering, loth to go

In his next poem, "The Sunset", Hulme uses the same device for catching the reader's attention to a particular point just as he did in his other poems

A coryphée, covetous of applause,
Loth to leave the stage,
With final diablerie, poises high her toe.
Displays scarlet lingerie of carmin'd clouds,
Amid the hostile murmurs of the stalls.

The sunset, nearly like in his previous poem, is here compared to a 'coryphée, covetous of applause". The repetition Hulme makes of his themes is quite characteristic of all his poetry. Notwithstanding this, he achieves his purpose which is that of creating a poetry that is suggestive, sophisticated and cheerful. To the poet, the sunset coming to its end is no more than a mischievous ballerina who shows off in a ludicrous and rather tentative manner. In this poem, "The Sunset", both Hulme's sense of humor and wit are denoted. Hulme associates the

colorful clothes the ballerina wears with the clouds illuminated by the sun rays at twilight time. Hulme finds a close relationship between the sunset and its way of attracting attention to the conspicuous behaviour of the ballerina. The sunset flirts with everybody before departing. Hulme expresses this idea with a good sense of humor in the following lines:

> Loth to leave the stage,
> With final diablerie, poises high her toe,
> displays scarlet lingerie of carmin'd clouds,

The ostentation of the sunset raises "hostile murmurs" among people. They are bothered by the great pride the sunset shows in its possession of a bright dress.

In his poem, "Sunset", Hulme beautifully expresses his disgust at seeing it proudly appear "o'er half a sick sky":

> I love not the Sunset
> That flaunts like a scarlet sore
> O'er half a sick sky,
> That calls aloud for all to gape
> At its beauty
> Like a wanton.
>
> But Sunset when the sun comes home
> Like a ship from the sea
> With its round red sail
> Shadowed against a clear sky,
> Silent, in a cool harbour
> At eve,
> After labour.

The sunset at its disclosure shows such a radiant face that it makes the sky look rather pale. The magnificence with which it presents itself seems to have no other purpose but to call attention. The poet has a

dislike of the sunset because of the vanity of its splendour. In the second part of this poem, Hulme shows his complacency at seeing a different sunset. Here the poet speaks about the sun exactly as he would of a ship when it is emerging from the sea:

> But sunset when the sun comes home
> Like a ship from the sea

As the sun gets nearer and is almost at home it is possible to admire it in its full radiance. To the poet, the sight of the sun with its "round red" face becomes a beautiful thing. The beauty of it increases as it is "shadowed against a clear sky" and stands motionless "in a cool harbour" about the time the afternoon dies away.

Chapter V

EZRA POUND AND T. S. ELIOT AS IMAGIST POETS.

"Creative effort", remarks Hulme, "means new images" (1). As we have seen, Hulme's position in modern poetry depends largely on his insistance on the creation of new images . It was Hulme's desire to write poetry that would speak of real facts. Thus his poetry should be real and objective. According to Hulme, to attain this objectivity in his poetry, the poet must make an extraordinary mental effort. The poet's mental effort and his sincerity as he writes his verse can only be measured by his invention of new images. Both Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot understood this. On the one hand, Ezra Pound admitted the importance of the image as well as its poetic value. He also recognized how difficult it was for the poet to create each image. Eliot, on the other hand, adopted the "vers libre" form that was being used by the Imagists. Eliot admitted that to use it with effectiveness in one's own poetry the poet had to have mental discipline. We may say at this time that both Pound and Eliot's poetry surpasses that of Hulme in originality and complexity. Nowadays Hulme's poetry may seem the work of a person who experiments with a new technique (free verse) and who seeks new means of expression (visual communication). If we happen to compare Hulme's poetry with the one written by Eliot and Pound, the former may appear to us rather poor because of the little variety of its themes and its small production. But, if we look back at the beginning of this century, when Hulme stubbornly set to attack the sort of poetry which was by then being

written, his poetry might have seemed to many of his contemporaries quite uncommon and rather surprising, because of the play of mind with which he wrote it. Hulme's poetry served as an example of what modern poetry ought to be. Hulme's poetry gained the admiration of his friends not only for the conciseness and briefness of his poems, but for the high degree of intellectual distinction that one finds in them. Thus Hulme's poetry distinguishes itself by the originality with which it brings out common, actual facts. Such qualities we are bound to find in two of the most outstanding poets of this century. They are Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot who are well known as the founders of modern English poetry.

It would be risky to state the degree to which Hulme exerted an influence on both Pound and Eliot. We can only point out that the influence was at work and that it can be detected in an affinity of aims and procedures. Ezra Pound as well as T. S. Eliot are both great poets. They have that quality which is important in a fine artist; that is, they possess the mental discipline which enables them to write out in a poetic language their direct experience of life. Their poetry contains the image of what is going on in the urban, industrial cities of the present times. They also use it to express the complexities of the modern mind. If I mention these two poets here it is because their work has a number of things in common with that of the Imagists. Pound was himself an Imagist poet. And Eliot, through his friendship with Pound,

knew about the Imagists' doctrine and thought of the movement as a new approach to poetry: "The point of reperé usually and conveniently taken, as the starting - poin t of modern poetry, is the group denominated 'imagist' in London about 1910"(2) he said. By this he meant that the movement had offered to the poet certain rules that he could follow in order to express his feelings accurately. Therefore, if I have committed to the task of commenting upon passages from Pound's "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley"(3) and Eliot's "Preludes"(4), it is merely because I have found working in them certain principles which were stated by Hulme in a distinct and emphatic manner.

Ezra Pound's "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" is, in many respects, an autobiographical poem. It is a confession in which the reader is carried to different states of mind and feeling. Through the poem the reader develops an acquaintance with the man. The man the reader is going to know here is not an ordinary one, quite the contrary; the speaker is a man who strives to maintain the culture of the ancient times in order to derive from it a basis to understand and judge modern society. Pound believes that a cultural background is all important, especially if one wishes to comment with a critical mind upon events that are taking place in one's own time. In this poem Pound shows his craftmanship as a poet. He is cognizant of a modern technique, because he applies an economy of words and prefers the rhythms of natural speech.

Sometimes Pound's expression is familiar and direct while other times it is complex and incomprehensible to the reader. It is this latter way of using words which annoys the reader and makes him reject Pound's poetry at first hand. What makes it more difficult to read are the numerous quotations Pound takes from other tongues. In spite of all, both Pound's artistic maturity and sensibility are noted throughout his work. One notices this in the objective and compact presentation of his images. Pound gives his poetry a distinctive touch, because of the refinement and carefulness with which he presents his analogies. If Pound's poetry seems rather complex and difficult to read it is because he is demanding from the reader a scholastic education quite similar to the one he has got. In "Mauberley" the poet-teacher is noted. Pound's poetry seems to be written for those who have acquired a high cultural level and who possess a high index of intelligence.

The poet can not but make vivid the historical moment in which he lives as he evokes the sensations and experiences he gets from everyday life. Mathew Arnold thinks great poetry is but a criticism of life and Pound's "Mauberley" can rightly be considered of this sort. In a very subtle manner the poet re-creates and disguises his experiences. He uses the persona of Mauberley to make his poem appear impersonal.

Published in 1920, "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" is perhaps the most ambitious poem that came out from the original school of the Imagists,

not only for its length and its variety of themes, but also for its pure form and style.

Though "Mauberley" was written by Pound in a supposedly impersonal manner, it is difficult to determine when Mauberley speaks and when Pound does. For a better understanding of the poem we should not be too strict in thinking about Mauberley-Pound as one single person. With respect to this, Mr. Kenner says the following: "... Pound's impersonality is Flaubertian: an effacement of the personal accidents of the perceiving medium in the interests of accurate registration of mœurs contemporaines... the adoption of various personae is for such an artist merely a means to ultimate depersonalization, ancillary and not substantial to his major work... Hugh Selwyn Mauberley, on the other hand, does not speak with Mr. Pound's voice, and is more antithetically than intimately related to the poet of the Cantos. It would be misleading to say that he is a portion of Mr. Pound's self whom Mr. Pound is externalizing in order to get rid of him (like Stephen Dedalus); it would be more accurate exaggeration to say that he is a parody of Pound the poet with whom Mr. Pound is anxious not to be confounded"(5).

The poet looks upon his past and present life and analyzes it with the cold, but not for this less human eye of the artist. In small scenes, Pound presents us the complex and multiple vicissitudes of a life dedicated to the cultivation of the spirit in modern society. The poet

finds out that the society he is living in is indifferent to the fine arts. He regrets its being a materialistic one. The poet thinks that the lack of interest people have towards art and quite particularly towards poetry has stopped them from developing adequately. It is this attitude of indifference which has also made the poet's life difficult in it. The situation has become so bad that every true artist is forced into isolation. Such a thing has happened to "Mauberley" or Pound whatever you wish to call him. It is only his desinterested passion for literature which has made him bear such sort of life. "Mauberley" does not complain of living devoid of comforts as long as he succeeds in awaking the people's interest for the appreciation of fine arts. In the poem, "Mauberley", Pound tells us the originis and influences that have nourished his love of poetry.

In the first part of the poem, entitled "E. P. Ode Pour L'Election De Son Sepulchre" Pound expresses his devotion to poetry and his untiring effort to make it worth considering by the public of his time. Pound thinks he is "out of key with his time" as he has in vain tried to rescue poetry from a dead poetic tradition. The poet acknowledges he has failed in making people distinguish between good and bad poetry. All his efforts to invigorate poetry and give it the antique, classical form have become useless. He believes no one has listened to him. Pound begins his poem telling this in a simple and direct language:

For three years, out of key with his time,
He strove to resuscitate the dead art
Of poetry; to maintain 'the sublime'
In the old sense. Wrong from the start---

Thus the sort of poetry Pound advocates should be in accordance with the one written by the classics. What he is aiming at is "to maintain 'the sublime' in the old sense". Gathering from this, one can assume that the poet has had in mind writing in a distinct manner to avoid blurring the reader's attention. To make this possible the poet has, on the one hand, to be conscious as he writes that there will not be in his poem any gaps between words. On the other, the words he uses in his poem must convey to the reader the poet's feelings. Only by doing so, can the poet attain in his poetry the stark and spare style of the classics. Thus Pound openly rejects the poetry written during his time with its flabby thoughts and words. The poet goes on explaining the reasons for his departure to England. He abandons his native country which he calls a "savage" one as he does not find in it either the education he is looking for or the appropiate place for the study of poetry. He thinks England offers good possibilities for both things. Later on, he finds out that his trip to England has not at all fulfilled his ambition of learning. He thinks he has deceived himself as things have turned out to be the same as they were in his own country: "Capaneus; trout for factitious bait". In spite of being disillusioned he had to remain in England for another year. During this time nothing important happened.

In an abrupt, but confessional manner Pound changes the topic of his conversation. He gives an account of the things that have mostly occupied him while he was in England. His efforts were directed towards the perfection of poetry. To attain it he devoted to the study of it in different sources. As he did this he avoided being distracted by other things which were not in connexion with the field of poetry.

> His true Penelope was Flaubert,
> He fished by obstinate isles;
> Observed the elegance of Circe's hair
> Rather than the mottoes on sun-dials.

As he was concentrating on his taks he lived in seclusion. This brought as a result that he became "Unaffected by 'the march of events'", and was unnoticed by the public while he reached the age of thirty one. In spite of his voluntary retirement and complete dedication to the study of poetry he humbly recognizes he has not achieved anything that will contribute to the perfection of it... "the case presents/No adjunct to the Muses diadem".

Before I go any further on my comments I think it is necessary to point out here why Pound uses the short poem throughout his work. He uses it to make his utterance clearer and stronger. If Pound continually changes from one topic to another it is to demonstrate that things can be said in this way without making his poem lose force. This way of putting things serves also to follow the poet's way of thinking.

Pound has consciously divided his "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" into nine poems and some of them have been divided into sections. In his "E. P. Ode Pour L'Election De Son Sepulchre", there are five sections, and each one of them deals with a different theme. For instance, in section II, he refers to the poetic image and its misuse. On the one hand, he admits that the use of it is in fashion. On the other, he regrets that it has lost its force and that the method of attaining it has been completely misinterpreted. Pound or "Mauberley" blames the public for the disgraceful state of poetry because there is a tremendous hurry to produce stock materials:

> The 'age demanded' chiefly a mould in plaster,
> Made with no loss of time,
> A prose kinema, not, not assuredly, alabaster
> Or the 'sculpture' of rhyme.

In section "III", Pound's admiration for the classics and the profound knowledge he has of them is noted. Pound uses it to compare the attitude the Greeks held towards art with that of his time. To him the Greeks reached perfection and refiniment in sculpture, poetry and other arts mainly due to the care with which they created their works. Pound criticizes the attitude of frivolity that the people of his time have towards art. Pound thinks such lack of depth comes from a mental laziness which runs parallel to the lack of critical judgement in art and literature. This situation has not permitted the arts to develop as they should. Pound sums up his point of view as he admits that a serious problem has arisen in modern times. Things are produced

on a great scale without taking artistic refinement into account.

All things are a flowing,
Sage Heracleitus says;
But a tawdry cheapness
Shall outlast our days.

This lack of critical opinion is also seen in the literary publications "We have the press for wafer" as well as in the way the people that will rule society are elected:

All men, in law, are equals.
Free of Pisistratus,
We choose a knave or an eunuch
To rule over us.

In the fourth and fifth sections Pound refers to the First World War. He condemns the causes that have brought it about. To him it has meant a wastage of young blood. The blood that has been shed in it has not been enough to stop it. Pound raises his voice against those who by foul means have encouraged young men to fight in it. He thinks that those who have gone to the front were all deceived, though some of them thought that what they did was the right thing to do. But those who had saved their lives regretted the fallacy that had compelled them to go. As they get home they are still hearing the same "old lies and new infamy". Pound recognizes that some young people went to it for fear of being critised by their countrymen. Pound expresses this in a straightforward language:

These fought in any case,
And some believing,
pro dome, in any case...

Some quick to arm,
some for adventure,
some for fear of weakness,
some from fear of censure,
some for love of slaughter, in imagination,
learning later...
some in fear, learning love of slaughter;

Pound violently attacks those who have used war to make big business "usury age-old and age-thick and liars in public places". Pound can not ignore the tragedy that has arisen in his lifetime. War has made him realize the injustice that there is in it. He becomes indignant at the lie that has provoked it. Pound may recall the memory of his friends (Hulme, Gaudier Brezska) and laments the cause of their deaths as he says:

There died a myriad,
And of the best, among them,
For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
For a botched civilization,

Pound seems to mourn the loss of his friends. He regrets it more as he knows that they were killed in the prime of their lives. Pound expresses this in a distinct manner:

Charm, smiling at the good mouth,
Quick eyes gone under earth's lid.

Pound ends paying homage to his friends as he complains about the cheap price paid for their precious lives.

For two gross of broken statues,
For a few thousand battered books.

In "Yeux Glauques", Pound takes us back to the nineties. This is the period that precedes the First World War in which peace and progress seem to go hand in hand. It is also the Age of the Victorian moralists. John Ruskin and Gladstone are typical representatives of the Victorian idealism. Swinburne and Rossetti are the most largely discussed poets of the time because of their advanced ideas.

> Gladstone was still respected,
> When John Ruskin produced
> 'Kings' Treasuries'; Swinburne
> And Rossetti still abused.

The pomposity of this era is evident; its greatness, unreal. Pound gives us one example of this as he comments on the ill treatment that woman is given at this time. Pound thinks that the feminine figure has been undervalued in this sort of society as woman has no rights to claim nor a place in it. Woman's dignity is debased to the utmost. People look at a woman with indifference as if she were a thing of strange appearance. To criticize this period, Pound makes woman appear to us as something grotesque and corrupt:

> The thin, clear gaze, the same
> Still darts out faun-like from the half-ruined face,
> Questing and passive....
> 'Ah, poor Jenny's case'...
>
> Bewildered that a world shows no surprise
> At her last maquero's
> Adulteries.

In "'Siena Mi Fe'; Disfecemi Maremma'", Pound speaks about Monsieur Verog and the way he is "Engaged in perfecting the catalogue". This he does "Among the pickled foetuses and bottled bones". Monsieur

Verog is a man who boasts of his knowledge, but this is neither sound nor profound. Mr. Verog's knowledge is always singular. It is gossip such as that heard in cafés and public places.

> For two hours he talked of Gallifet;
> Of Dowson; of the Rhymers' Club;
> Told me how Johnson (Lionel) died
> By falling from a high stool in a pub...

Monsieur Verog speaks endlessly though in an amusing way. It is his interest to call attention to his wit. As he gives an account of the things he supposes to know better than any other man he does it with every single detail. Monsieur Verog's mind is an imaginative one. But Monsieur Verog brings out his anecdotes in a disorderly manner. His topic is still that of Johnson's death. To make his narration more lively to his listeners he adds that Lionel Johnson's body "showed no trace of alcohol at the autopsy, privately performed --tissue preserved--". Then he refers to Dawson, another "aesthete" of the nineties whose life was a blend of dissipation, art and religiosity. In spite of his charming conversation M. Verog is not paid serious attention. All the things he says are considered out of fashion and place.

In the poem which is called "Mr. Nixon", Mr. Nixon himself compares his position as a writer of successful commercial works with Mauberley's. Mauberley, who has devoted all his life to the art of writing, leads a precarious existance. His mode of life is quite opposite to that of Mr. Nixon. His disinterested passion for poetry has led him into isolation. Mauberley attacks the poor condition in which poetry is found

at this time. He blames the writers for that state of things. He condemns the lack of mental effort on the poet's part as he writes his verses. According to him, it is this that has made people think that poetry is only a pastime and not a discipline which requires serious study and complete dedication. As he refers to this, Pound makes use of colloquial and direct language:

> In the cream gilded cabin of his steam yacht
> Mr. Nixon advised me kindly, to advance with fewer
> Dangers of delay. 'Consider
> Carefully the reviewer.
> 'I was as poor as you are;
> 'When I began I got, of course,
> 'Advance on royalties, fifty at first,' said Mr. Nixon,
> 'Follow me, and take a column,
> 'Even if you have to work free.
>
> 'Butter reviewers. From fifty to three hundred
> 'I rose in eighteen months;
> 'The hardest nut I had to crack
> 'Was Dr. Dundas.

Mr. Nixon is a man who knows his business in the art of writing. It is his chief interest to satisfy the demands of his public to gain his favor. Mr. Nixon advises Mauberley to write without exerting himself and to give up poetry:

> 'I never mentioned a man but with the view
> 'Of selling my own works.
> 'The tip's a good one, as for literature
> 'It gives no man a sinecure.
>
> 'And no one knows, at sight, a masterpiece.
> 'And give up verse, my boy,
> 'There's nothing in it.'

With his typical sense of humor and irony, Pound gives us an

exact image of what goes on in the literary circles of the time. The tone of his voice becomes sarcastic and hurtful as he expresses his sentiments towards the total lack of a literary critical analysis. Mr. Nixon goes on speaking to Mauberley:

> Likewise a friend of Blougram's once advised me:
> Don't kick against the pricks,
> Accept opinion. The 'Nineties' tried your game
> And died, there's nothing in it.

Mauberley faces the sophisticated English society of his time. To him it is no more than grotesque, superficial and vain. As he compares it with that in which "Dr. Johnson flourished" his disillusion towards it becomes stronger. Mauberley condemns the bad manners of the society in which he lives and from which he has had to stand aloof in order to maintain both his individuality and his unspoiled status as an artist. His interview with Lady Valentine serves as a means to express what he thinks of a woman who belongs to this society. Mauberley's feelings and mood are shown as he pays a visit to Lady Valentine in her "stuffed-satin drawing-room". He immediately knows he is not the right person for her extravagant tastes and habits:

> 'Daphne with her thighs in bark
> Stretches toward me her leafy hands, ' ...--
> Subjectively. In the stuffed-satin drawing-room
> I await The Lady Valentine's commands,
>
> Knowing my coat has never been
> Of precisely the fashion
> To stimulate, in her,
> A durable passion;
> ---

Poetry, her border of ideas,
The edge, uncertain, but a means of blending
With other strata
Where the lower and higher have ending;

In "Mauberley", the speaker measures his capacity as an artist. The year he is talking about here is that of 1920. At this time, he believes that his ideas towards art, are clearer than ever. It is this critical attitude which has induced him to be more strict with himself as he writes. He no longer wants to write vague and insipid poetry. The one he has chosen to write will from now on be more difficult as it will urge him to think and write in definite terms.

Turned from the 'eau-forte
Par Jacquemart'
To the strait head
Of Messalina:

Mauberley's devotion towards poetry as well as his continual effort to make of it something that will endure are stated in the following lines:

'His true Penelope
Was Flaubert,'
And his tool
The engraver's.

Mauberley has a particular way of considering his art. It should be a suggestive. But while it suggests what the poet wants to say, it should also denote there is in it a "firmness" in style. That is, each word must convey the poet's feelings in order to avoid waste.

Firmness,
Not the full smile,
His art, but an art
In profile;

Mauberley considers that he has achieved maturity as a poet. If he happens to be a better artist than "Pier Francesca" and "Pisanello" it is mainly due to his patience as well as to his enormous effort to make his art an accurate one. He judges both "Pier Francesca" and "Pisanello" as he says that the former produced "colourless" paintings and the latter one was a failure as he lacked the skill to "forge Achia".

No matter how difficult it was for Mauberley to learn poetry he never gave up. He devoted to it in the same way a magician would to his concealed art. According to Mauberley, nothing caused him more pleasure than the study and practice of poetry:

> For three years, diabolus in the scale,
> He drank ambrosia,

But in spite of all his efforts to learn every single detail of his art he found himself moving "amid her phantasmagoria, amid her galaxies". He recognized it was impossible to get hold of everything that has been written on poetry. He admitted that a lifetime would not be enough to get through all of it. Being conscious of time limits, he surrenders to it and pleads it "to designate his new found orchid...". It is Mauberley's desire to get rid of all the formulae he has come through and get at the end his own particular one. What Mauberley wishes most of all is "to be certain... certain... (Amid aerial flowers)" in order to pick up the one which will suit him best. Mauberley thinks the time to find his own way of expressing things in a poetical manner has come. To achieve his purpose he knew

quite well he had to break up once and for all with the old methods. He admits, however, that to get away from his habit of imitating other writers was not an easy thing to do. In a humble way Mauberley confesses that at the beginning it had cost him a great effort to write "in the supervening blankness" and to "sift TO AGATHON from the chaff". It was only his enormous desire to express actual things in accurate terms "To present the series/ Of curious heads in medallion" that led him to find at the end "his seismograph".

In "The Age Demanded", Mauberley gives us an account of the difficulties he had to overcome in order to bring about in his poetry the things he saw in a metaphorical way. To achieve this, he knew he had to examine his own thoughts and feelings reflectively. In other words, he had to make a mental effort to be able to look at things as they really were. Once he began doing so, he noticed his viewpoint towards social environment did not change at all. Mauberley expresses this idea as follows:

> The glow of porcelain
> Brought no reforming sense
> To his perception
> Of the social inconsequence.

Mauberley's reactionary attitude towards the social environment of his time is clearly seen in this part of the poem. Mauberley is the artist who becomes aware of his place in a complex, modern society. To maintain his individuality both as a man and as an artist he has to struggle to keep away from it. Mauberley thinks at this time it is more

important for him to concentrate on his work as a poet than to protest against those things which he considers are mainly of the public opinion. It is Mauberley's desire not to be disturbed with other thoughts which are not in relation with the field of poetry. With beautiful images Mauberley expresses his main preoccupation at this time:

> The coral isle, the lion-coloured sand
> Burst in upon the porcelain revery:
> Impetuous troubling
> Of his imagery.

Mauberley says that at the beginning, he had to act cautiously as he was in search of the image: "Mildness, amid the neo-Nietzschean clatter". By the time he had acquired the mental discipline that was necessary for the attainment of it he was surprised that no one around him would understand what he said. This, however, did not prevent him from his habit of observing things.

> Invitation, mere invitation to perceptivity
> Gradually led him to the isolation
> Which these presents place
> Under a more tolerant, perhaps, examination.

Mauberley leads an isolated life because of his love of poetry. Poetry is his life and his refuge. The poet endures loneliness and ill-criticism as long as nature offers to his eyes images he can enjoy and use in his poetry.

> By constant elimination
> The manifest universe
> Yielded an armour
> Against utter consternation,

Mauberley finds comfort in his task. He does not become discouraged if it takes him a long time to select from many images one which has really called his attention. "A pale gold" vision is enough to give him delight. It also serves to associate it with other images he has previously seen.

> A pale gold, in the aforesaid pattern,
> The unexpected palms
> Destroying, certainly, the artist's urge,
> Let him delighted with the imaginary
> Audition of the phantasmal sea-surge,

Yet, in the last stanzas of this section Mauberley emphasizes the widening breach between himself and "official poetry". This will culminate in his "final/Exclusion from the world of letters".

"Medallion" is the last poem of "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley". In it "Mauberley" shows his devotion to observe things in detail. Here, for instance, Mauberley is particularly interested in looking at a medallion. He becomes surprised at the skill of the medallists as they work their pieces. He admires most of all the accuracy with which they paint their portraits. As Mauberley sees a portrait of a soprano singer he imagines hearing her voice. The effect the portrait has on him comes from the distinct manner with which it was worked. Mauberley is struck by the woman's "sleek head". The portrait of the woman he is observing now makes him think of "Anadyomine". The poet admires every single feature of the woman's face just as he did when he saw Anadyomine's portrait "in the opening pages of Reinach". The poet's

mind begins to associate the woman's face with things he is well acquainted with and which he thinks have a lot in common with it. To the poet, the woman's facial skin has a "honey-red" color. And her long hair which has been artistically wreathed is nothing more than "A basket-work of braids/Spun in King Mino's hall". The face which is covered up with porcelain is clearly seen through it. The porcelain serves only to make it look brighter and smoother. And the eyes when they are looked at against the light become of a different color just as a topaz would by the effect of it.

> The face-oval beneath the glaze,
> Bright in its suave bounding-line, as,
> Beneath half-watt rays,
> The eyes turn topaz.

With his "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" poem, Pound has definitely come to terms with the Image doctrine as it was lay down by Hulme. Pound has used in his poem many of the devices which were formerly stated by his friend. To begin with, Pound was not content with what he wrote until he thought he had found the word that would exactly mean what he wanted to say. In this way, Pound propounded a difficult art like Hulme. It was the two poets' concern to invigorate the language. To achieve this, they both knew they had to struggle with it to create new images. Like Hulme, Pound was aware of the importance of being a keen observer. This, he knew, would help him to bring into his poetry the common facts of the actual world.

Much has been said about Pound's true poetic ability. This fact

can not be denied especially if one has been acquainted with his work. In the poem which I have examined, Pound has demonstrated why he is considered a major poet. He, indeed, possessed an uncommon ability to make his utterance effective. Pound had a taste for words and a good knowledge of them. He knew exactly when he had to use a simple language or a stilted one. Pound was also a master in the use of the punctuation. If his poetry has at times the rhythms of a colloquial speech it is because he has consciously made it this way. In the whole, Pound was very careful in what he proposed to write. He has expressed in his poem "Mauberley" how difficult it was for him to write in distinct terms. But Pound was an untiring poet and a disciplined one. He studied and practiced unceasingly the method of writing which had appealed to him most. The method he set to follow was Hulme's. For Instance, Pound was for concreteness and so was Hulme. It was this definiteness which both poets wanted to see which led them to write in compact images. In a similar way to that of Hulme, Pound had in mind that each image should convey the poet's state of mind. This has brought about the shift of images in his poetry. If Pound succeeded in writing an original poetry it was because he was verystrict with himself. This was all important to Hulme. According to Hulme, a real poet is the one who never spares any effort to give his poetry a definite form. It is this definiteness which will make the reader visualize the poet's experience and remember it afterwards.

Both Pound's and Hulme's poetry may be seen as good examples of such distinction.

When one speaks about Pound one can not ignore the relationship there was between him and Eliot. Of course, this does not mean that Eliot without Pound would not have been a great poet. For Eliot, as we shall see, had the same interest as Pound had. Eliot, like his friend, concentrated on the study of English and foreign poetry. To follow Eliot's method in writing his verse is somewhat difficult to do. To follow it all along the bulk of his work would demand long time and study. I am not trying here to comment on all the great contribution he made to English poetry. It is my intention to point out only certain Hulmian devices, notably the compact use of images, that are found quite particularly in his poem "Preludes". By doing so, it will be possible to trace the connexion he had with the Imagists and in a particular way to Ezra Pound. Because of the fact that Eliot considered himself the disciple of Pound, we can assume that he might follow the same technique his master used in writing his verse. Pound's interest in Eliot's poetry began in 1917, when the former read Eliot's first volume of poems to which the latter secured publicity. Pound thought Eliot's work needed to be published mostly because it had a quality of its own. To Pound, Eliot's work represented something which was new, original and essentially poetic. Eliot's originality depends mainly on his taste for words as he imbues his verse with a rare sensibility and an uncommon intelligence. When one goes through Eliot's poetry

one notices the purpose with which the poet wrote. Eliot, like Pound, had in mind awakening the reader's interest and making his brain work as he tries to grasp what the poet wants to say.

The abrupt social, political and economical changes which arose at the beginning of this century, were bound to manifest themselves in a man like Eliot. Eliot perceived the problems that had arisen in modern city life. He thought the inadequate planning of the cities, with factories spread all over them, would be the cause of serious maladjustments in the life of their inhabitants. Eliot's merit lies in the fact that it was he who first expressed in his poetry the complexity of urban life. We have a good example of it in his poem "Preludes". The "Preludes" poem is no more than the vision the poet has of the world that surrounds him. The poet's vision of the modern world is one of horror and ugliness. Eliot draws his experiences from the living world and speaks about them in an impersonal way. For instance, in the first part of his poem he refers to an ordinary "winter evening". At such a time the poet becomes struck by incidents that take place in the streets of the city. These incidents are trivial like those that occur every day in city life. The poet is aware of such incidents and makes use of them in his poem to give it a sense of immediacy. His senses are full of the life of the city as he feels the "smell of steaks in passageways". The poet's mood is shown throughout the poem. This is more clearly seen as he mentions in a conscious manner the time

he is exactly talking about: "Six o'clock". As the poet refers to the time one is immediately carried away by his state of mind. It is one of boredom and tiredness. The poem begins as follows:

> The winter evening settles down
> With smell of steaks in passageways.
> Six o'clock.

The poet continues in this same state of mind. This particular evening and the things that are happening in it makes him think of many others that have gone by. To him they are all the same. Time slips away without any significant change. The poet expresses his idea of the time a compact image: "The burnt-out ends of smoky days". As one reads such a line one can not help to associate it with the time smokers waste in doing a trivial thing. The city scene becomes more hideous to the poet as he feels the violent blow of the wind, the falling of the rain and the dry fallen leaves as he walks about. The sordidness of living in a city increases as he steps on dirty "newspapers from vacant lots". As the rain becomes heavier he looks around him and sees dirty and dilapidated houses: "The showers beat on broken blinds and chimney-pots". There is ugliness everywhere. Life in the city is a solitary and hopeless one. The streets of the city are empty except for "a lonely cab-horse" which stands at a corner in the cool evening. The poet awakes from his nightmare vision as he sees the lights turn on: "And then the lighting of the lamps".

In the second part of his poem, the poet comments upon the

activities of the city inhabitants in the morning. He begins by telling us what things have struck him most as he wakes up:

> The morning comes to consciousness
> Of faint stale smells of beer

The smell of beer coming from "the sawdust trampled street" is a sharp and disgusting sensation. The poet watches the people walk by with heavy steps along the "muddy" streets The scene becomes more vivid and more sordid as he observes the crowds with dirty shoes gather in "to early coffee-stands". In an abrupt but conscious manner the poet changes from one image to another. By doing so, he also leads us to a different scene each time. The poet does so to make his poem appear more natural as well as more real. Again the poet comes back to his image of the time and the way it goes by while people do simple and worthless things.

The sense of time is more acute as the poet recalls some sombre experiences he has had while he has been living in an urban place. The poet considers himself a spectator and the world around him is no more than an outward show. Things and men become only apparent figures to him. Both the sharp visual experiences of looking at dirty things and men's automatic behaviour are firmly fixed in the poet's mind. This is clearly shown in the following lines:

> With the other masquerades
> That time resumes,
> One thinks of all the hands

That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

Eliot succeeds in creating an atmosphere of horror and ugliness throughout his poem as he calls up scenes of city life.

In the third part of his poem, Eliot goes on describing in detail a sombre picture of the life of mankind. The world he makes us aware of is a hopeless one. Man leads an aimless sort of life. He does things without being conscious of what he is doing. It is only at night when he awakes from his dumbness. At such a time he has some awareness of reality. The world he moves about comes to his mind in sharp and fleeting "sordid images". He sees them disclosing "against the ceiling" as he lies in bed.

You tossed a blanket from the bed,
You lay upon your back, and waited;
You dozed, and watched the night revealing
The thousand sordid images
Of which your soul was constituted;
They flickered against the ceiling.

And after such confrontations with one's own thoughts a new day begins and with it the same sad feeling of being alive.

And when the world came back
And the light crept up between the shutters
And you heard the sparrows in the gutters,
You had such a vision of the street
As the street hardly understands;

Again there is this odd feeling of loneliness. Man moves about clumsily with no idea of what he is doing. Man (or woman) is no more than a clown as he automatically touches his (her) hair and makes

curious movements with his hands and feet.

Sitting along the bed's edge, where
You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the yellow soles of feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.

Man's littleness and timidness are acutely present when he is out in the street. The sky above him makes him feel a wretched creature. This feeling becomes stronger as he walks along the streets. He is unceasingly pushed by the crowd who seem to be marching by tirelessly and endlessly. He is no more than a ghost who wanders over the city.

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block.

The poet continues speaking in an impersonal way. He expresses in it his experiences of the actual world. He speaks mainly about those things which have arrested his whole attention. The poet's personality is disguised as he comments upon the things which he observes once he is out in the streets of the city. He is given to watch people and the things they do, "At four and five and six o'clock" of the afternoon. He does this with wide open eyes. Again the impressions he receives from the outside world are of the commonest kind. What he sees as he walks about the streets are "short square fingers stuffing pipies, and evening newspapers". When it is getting dark the poet sees how people make an effort to look through it. Because of the people's attitude the poet assumes that they are trying to be sure of "certain certainties". It is also this attitude which makes the poet think that people are half-conscious of the darkness

which inevitable comes at night and which according to him is "Impatient to assume the world".

The things, the poet sees, are telling him what sort of world is the one he is living in. The poet's feelings towards it are mingled with pity and sadness. The poet's state of mind is denoted in the following lines:

> I am moved by fancies that are curled
> Around these images, and cling:
> The notion of some infinitely gentle
> Infinitely suffering thing.

Eliot though, ends up his poem in a sarcastic way. This may come from his knowledge that life in a modern city has turned to be a misery, and that there is no hope to change it.

> Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
> The worlds revolve like ancient women
> Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

Eliot's "Preludes" can rightly be considered an Imagist poem. It is possible to trace in it some of Hulme's principles in relation with the image. It was Hulme's desire to see a poetry which would communicate to the reader his impressions of the actual world in an objective manner. Eliot's poem fulfils Hulme's demands in this respect. Eliot's poem is a vivid description of instantaneous impressions of the world which surrounds him. If Eliot uses the short form in his poem it is to present the thing just as he has seen it. While this prevents the poet from using a rhetorical language, it forces him to write in accurate terms to make

his utterance become a visual one. "Preludes" distinguishes itself by the clearness of statement as well as by the purpose with which it was written. Hulme says that good poetry is the one which suggests the poet's state of mind when one reads it. And Eliot's poem is of this sort. It shows both the poet's way of thinking and feeling all through it. Eliot's poem is characterized by the quick succession of related images. The images Eliot uses in his poem are drawn from common life. Each one of them speaks about a real happening. It is this which gives Eliot's poem a sense of immediacy. This was one of Hulme's concerns too. Every image which Eliot brings out in his poem serves as a testimony of the poet's pains as he created it. It also indicates that the poet was in search of the right phrase in order to render his impressions exactly. This is clearly seen as one finds great economy of words with a maximum of visual content. For all these reasons, T. S. Eliot can rightly be called the literary heir of T. E. Hulme.

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