The Dynamics of the Poetic "I": A Selective Reading of 20th-Century "Self" Poetics

Dr/ Nagy Rashwan
(MA. Ph.D DeMontfort Uni, UK.)
English Department, Faculty of Arts, Damanhour University, Egypt.

ABSTRACT

One of the most prevalent م features closely associated with the very act of writing poetry has been the existence of an intrinsic addressor, speaking voice, or a self, shouldering the poem's emotions, politics of form, and aesthetic information. In its overt form, this presence is occasionally termed confessionalism or identity poetics, redefined here much more generally as the "Poetic-Self". Surprisingly, this paper argues, such a self remains stead-fast present, offering the same aesthetic function it has always done regardless of historical happenstance, cultural context, and political agenda. This paper will show that the poetic presence of that self and its aesthetic functions have not been out-throned, debunked or in any accurate way uprooted despite resistance from many poetic movements such as Imagism, Objectivism, French Symbolism, and Visual Poetry, among many others. This paper will concentrate on Imagism as the first and most influential movement of the 20th-century poetic experimentation exemplified by its pioneer poet and thinker, Ezra Pound (1885-1972). The question then becomes; what is the aesthetic and cultural significance of this self-poetics, assuming its inevitability as integral to the language of poetry? Aesthetically speaking, this paper will argue that the significance of this kind of Poetic-Self speaks directly to the old sentiments of actuation derived from memetic relief, rather than the sublime derived from contemporary diegetic from as argued by many postmodern thinkers (e.g. Lyotard, 1984). On cultural grounds, it undermines Marxist critiques of capitalist commodification of

literature by use of identification and affirmation. Its critique rests primarily on its persistent and unshakable presence in the fabric of the language itself, hence being natural and not synthesized. The evidence for this presence is relatively abundant, as shall be demonstrated, across the history of poetics, although in different forms and degrees of sophistication.

Keywords: Poetic-Self, 20th Century Poetics, Postmodern Poetry, Modern Poetry, Contemporary Poetics.

1- Poetic-Self versus "Voice":

This essay is not concerned with a generalized definition of the human "self" as offered in the history of psychoanalytic literature, beginning with Freud-Jung's famous exchange. Instead, it concerns the synthesized "self" offered by the poetic techniques, forms and representations of the poetic texts. By "Poetic-Self ", this article thus, refers to the body of features (both inner and outer) comprising the perceived textual identity of the speaker' or the speaking voice, as presented in poetic texts. Such speaker, or speaking voice, omnisciently works to tell readers in poetic phrases about the various poetic acts presented in the poem revealing, in the process, its distinguishing features or identity (feelings, concepts, behaviours, and beliefs). Interestingly, such a speaker proclaims to determine for those readers what to perceive and how. This is not to say that it controls the perceived but behaves through an implied belief in the finality of its word or confession! This "Poetic-Self ", therefore, either intentionally or unintentionally, offers specific definitions of the text, the actual author and the process of readership itself.

It defines the text by omniscient self-knowledge, assuming total awareness of its allusions, including those to its presence and alleged control. In plain terms, it tells the reader, "this is how I

feel", "what I think", and therefore, "who I am", assuming this to be all the perceived since it rarely questions any part of its confession! Next, it defines the author by indicating his/her general features apparent in his/her confessions which might reveal, but not necessarily be faithful to, the actual author of the text. Finally, it defines the reader-ship process by defining the sort, form and depth of poetic information offered in the poem, thereby determining the type of readership method suitable for its choices.

As such, it claims itself to be a complete uniqueness, a genuine personality, with specific formal, and thematic features particular to itself. However, the matter becomes entirely different if such uniqueness repeats itself in degree, form or both. When in the degree of repetition, this Poetic-Self then fulfils its traditional role within each text replicated. However, if the repetition is in the form (style. structure, phraseology, and logic of imagery), it is transformed into an author's "signature" voice. The usual phrase that such a poet has found his/her "signature voice" generally means that his/her works follow formal and contextual patterns that are particular to his/her poetic "self"; to the projection of identity made in the poem. Such projection promotes and presupposes its self-believed omniscience, perspectivism, and value systems as an implied poetic personality or voice characterising the body of work associated with this particular author or writer.

The Poetic-Self, by this definition, and as shall be made evident quite shortly, is a traditional ontological practice that enforces a specific pre-determined reality on readership. Here are some examples of this paper's concept of the Poetic-Self. The following 16th-century poem by Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542) is entitled "The Lover's Lute Cannot Be Blamed,!" (1557):

BLAME not my Lute! for he must sound
Of this or that as liketh me ;
For lack of wit the Lute is bound
To give such tunes as pleaseth me ;
Though my songs be somewhat strange,
And speak such words as touch thy change,
Blame not my Lute !

My Lute! Alas! doth not offend,
Though that perforce he must agree
To sound such tunes as I intend,
To sing to them that heareth me ;
Then though my songs be somewhat plain,
And toucheth some that use to feign,
Blame not my Lute!

My Lute and strings may not deny
But as I strike they must obey;
Break not them then so wrongfully,
But wreak thyself some other way;
And though the songs which I indite
Do quit thy change with rightful spite,
Blame not my Lute!

Farewell! unknown ; for though thou break
My strings in spite with great disdain,
Yet have I found out for thy sake,
Strings for to string my Lute again :
And if, perchance, this sely rhyme
Do make thee blush, at any time,
Blame not my Lute !

Spite asketh spite, and changing change,
And falsèd faith must needs be known ;
The fault so great, the case so strange ;
Of right it must abroad be blown :
Then since that by thine own desart
My songs do tell how true thou art,
Blame not my Lute !

Blame but thyself that hast misdone,
And well deservèd to have blame ;
Change thou thy way, so evil begone,
And then my Lute shall sound that same ;
But if 'till then my fingers play,
By thy desert their wonted way,
Blame not my Lute !

(Rabholz 332)

As apparent here, an addresser is directing an imaginary audience using the "lute" as a metonymy for his poetry. This addressor, or speaker, describes his feelings from the poem's beginning to its end. As such, he offers an identity, an explicit set of features that compose that speaking self, the speaker/the addresser, while expecting from readers certain mental attitudes and behaviours suitable for his poetic address. Such features would be apparent, for example, in his choice of vocabulary, imagery, and tone. For example, the choice of "Lute" as n ancient instrument offers a view of the speaker's self as highly sensitive and musically versed. The same would apply to choices of phraseology such as "sound such tunes as I intend" or "And if, perchance, this sely rhyme / Do make thee blush, at any time," as indicative of a

highly loving personality who is delicately structured and thus suffers a lot in his love for his poetry. Every aspect, phrase, image, or line seems to indicate quite directly one or more aspects of the identity of that self in his chosen subject matter which happens to be, in this particular case, the very familiar topic of a love of poetry and literature.

In this way, the "self" shapes the poem's form in language and establishes its presence as the sole omniscience before readers. Nearly every line follows a reference to this self, either a possessive or a first-person pronoun. The whole poem is a series of confessions or representations of that self has claimed inner feelings and concepts. Its confessions of love organize its language into highly figurative but easily digestible poetic imagery and ornaments, underlining its omnipresence as the sole motivator in work. The speaker displays his feelings in highly skillful rhymed and rhythmed patterns whose apparent discipline and structural talent seek to capture readers and enlist their identification and conformity. The speaker's "I" here, or self, or identity, and all its poetics of disciplined ornated form, semiotic control, ego-centrism, superficial subjects and values, are more than apparent.

The whole poem, of course, is a single general conceit, in which an imaginative reader faces the speaker using the metonymy of the "Lute",; the ancient instrument of music standing for poetry, particularly his, with a running motif "Blame not my mute". This structure is particularly suitable for this type of confessionalism. It offers enough room in each stanza to remodify the reasoning used for readers persuasion of the speaker's/self's stance chosen in this poem. The repetition provided by the motif seems apt for reinforcing this kind of self-dominance over all poetic aspects in the poem. Voice, usually seen as the actual author's fingerprint

poetics (typical phraseology, repetitive forms/structures, favourite subject matters), is here integrated as a pattern of disciplined structure for each stanza and the general self-poetics of this particular, and many other, renaissance, poets.

It is in this very sense that renaissance poetics, as critics Paul Hammond, Isabell Rivers, and Thomas M. Greene argue, are “trans-historical” (Hammond 15), “blending of classical and Christian traditions” (Rivers 12) and “elaborative” of Medieval aesthetics as "assertions of identity" (Greene 23). It was a space of exhibiting English as a literary language, not only as a vernacular tongue, regulating words and music to deliver delicate excellence and wit. Renaissance poetics, in other words, is an aesthetic means of defeating an overwhelming sense of early linguistic and "cultural poverty", as Greene defines it. In his *THE LIGHT IN TROY: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (1982), Thomas M. Greene argues:

> The embarrassment of the English with their language should be read, I think, synedochically, as an oblique lament over a broader cultural poverty. Not only the language was inadequate; the nation as a whole was seen as suffering from a kind of privation which translations from antiquity or even from the continental vernaculars could only underscore (Greene 33)

The major theme of the poem is obviously a complaint about a reader’s disliking of the speaker’s love themes typical of the age: “Though my songs be somewhat strange/ And speak such words as touch thy change”. It is a complaint that readers who do not appreciate genuine expressions are used to false reflections: "Then though my songs be somewhat plain, And toucheth some that use to feign". Being a poem speaking about other poems, having for a central theme, the defence of other poems' typical -

deprived-love themes, puts it in a somewhat good position to represent most of the poetics of self in this kind of poetry. Every stylistic and aesthetic feature in it seems to confirm the overwhelming space of the Poetic-Self so much that it sees itself as an absolute given of poetic expression, un-negotiable as it may be unavoidable.

Phrases such as "my lute", "my songs", "pleaseth me, "Hearth me", "I indite", and many more reflect quite unmistakable self-centrism. Therefore, the " I " is quite obvious and protrudes in almost every phrase, sentence or line. It does all the addressing and all the defining in the poem. It addresses its imaginary reader asking him/her not to blame its poetry (exalted/represented by the metonymy of the Lute) commanded by him to say what he wants it to say: "To give such tunes as pleaseth me". The image reflects the kind of control this poetic-self claims to practice over the poem's meanings, for it does indeed, as he commands it to do, at least from his perspective.

Every aspect of Wyatt's poem, not excluding its imagery, is directed to refer to the self, represented by the speaker. He is the one who not only loves, writes poetry and plays the lute, but defends and philosophies his endeavours also, as well as understands fully their value and worth (Then since that by thine own desart/ My songs do tell how true thou art,).

This singular voice guides every poetic aspect, idea, or feeling to point specifically and exclusively to a singular "him". He is the only supreme being within the confines of the poem. His voice is the only voice. His presence is the only presence. There is no other presence in the poem but his. His descriptions reflect how well he describes, how profound, and how witty: (Change thou thy way, so evil begone/ And then my Lute shall sound that

same) ;! In reality, the object he describes is immaterial because, in essence, his self is always the more accurate object of all his descriptions. He does not describe his feelings or the beauty of his music/poetry; he describes how delicate or truthful he is. There is nothing in the poem that does not point back to that self.

It is a simplistic Poetic-Self that offers a simplistic subject matter both familiar and unsophisticated. Its visibility and claimed control over aspects of poetic presentation in the poem seem conventionally justifiable since it works by conforming to its own cultural identity, not by questioning it. The reader in this sort of poem is not expected to challenge the status quo of his/her own identity but instead receives a confirmation from the poem of its worthiness as it is. No need for questioning and self-reflection; you are good enough the way you are. This is the message relegated by that self; a total acceptance of the status quo. The unquestioning and unquestionable self conforms to the familiarity of what is in order to arrive safely at our being with the least amount of contemplation.

2- Poetic-Self Versus "Implied Author":

A Poetic-Self naturally emerges during the readership process when readers form their respective concepts about the self behind the emotions and the ideas of the poem. The Poetic-Self, therefore, is a co-process of creation in which both the text and the reader are present and active.

However, the closest literary definition to what this paper means by Poetic-Self is perhaps American critic Wayne Booth's (1921-2005) definition of the "implied author" in his *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961). For Booth, there are two forms of the author: the first, the actual creator of the text, whom he terms as the "flesh

and blood author", while the other is the "implied author" or "the author's second self" (Booth 76). The implied author, in Booth's terms, is an imaginary character who authoritatively decides for the reader what to visualize and, accordingly, what to conceive. According to Booth, each attempt to neutralize the actual author is inevitably aligned with a compensating presence of the implied one. For Booth, the author's absolute neutrality is an inherent "poetic" tendency in its dreaming, not aesthetic form. According to Booth, this "poetic" objectivity is unattainable, at least, in fiction. In *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Booth argues:

> Objectivity in the author can mean, first, an attitude of neutrality toward all values, an attempt at disinterested reporting of all things good and evil. Like many literary enthusiasms, the passion for neutrality was imported into fiction from the other arts relatively late. Keats was saying in 1818 the kind of thing that novelists began to say only with Flaubert. "the poetical character . . . has no character . . . it lives in gusto, be it fair or foul, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated . . .". three decades later, Flaubert recommended similar neutrality to the novelist who would be a poet. For him the model is the attitude of the scientist . . . it should be unnecessary here to show that no author can ever attain to this kind of objectivity . . . as he writes, he creates not simply an ideal, impersonal "man in general" but an implied version of "himself" (Booth 67-70)

In this sense, both the Poetic-Self and the "implied author", as Booth defines it, have two major characteristics: first, both are inevitable in literary creation, for no literary creation is possible

without one or both. Secondly, they both relate (though very differently) to a concept about the actual author of the text. Nevertheless, on the other hand, they differ dramatically in two equally strong aspects of their natures. The first is that the implied author is the reader's illusion about the author's identity, while the Poetic-Self is the reader's acknowledgement of the speaker's textually protruding features. The second, perhaps more significant, is that the "implied author" is a largely passive concept identifying only what might be in readership perception about the nature of innovation. In contrast, the Poetic-Self is a positive concept acting continually in the text-reader relationship to modify and remodify referential and aesthetic information regardless of readership awareness.

However, 20th-century poetic experimentations seem to push the boundaries of the Poetic-Self near breaking point. The key word in that previous sentence is "near", as neither the Poetic-Self nor the implied author, as negative or positive embodiments of the conventional textual selves, were ever in real danger of absolute annihilation or utter debunking as promised by experimental poetics. Here is one experimental poet’s view of identity poetics in conventional poetic discourse:

> The affinities and subordination are familiar- and familial- linked traceably to the say the social body is organized. Notions of character as predictable and consistent identity, or plot as a problem of credibility, and theme as an elaboration of a controlling idea: all these mirror official ideology’s predilection for finding and supplying, if necessary, the appropriate authority. Social life is reduced once again to a few great men or a narrow set of perceptions and strategies

stripping the oinnnovative of its power, (Hunt 199)

True, as we shall see very shortly, 20th-century poetics offers newer poetic formats that are as innovatory at the level of design as they are at the level of versification. Moreover, unlike prior literary forms, which seem inherently amenable to narrativeness and authorship contexts, modern experimental poetics, such as Imagism, offer other formal dimensions to the process of literary creation.

However, the Poetic-Self, as this paper defines it, and as Booth's "implied author" suggests, remain unavoidable despite a seemingly neutralize-able denominator who resists "predilection for finding and supplying, if necessary, the appropriate authority". Almost contradictorily, the idea of defeating the Poetic-Self's authoritative presence seems to re-assert, rather than debunk, its most defining and compelling presence. By definition, what is claimed to be resisted is re-affirmed, and the more complex the resistance, the stronger the confirmation. This is probably why every attempt to defeat the Poetic-Self in most 20th-century poetics can be identified as self-defeating. All of these attempts, as we shall see, one way or another, are excessively ambitious. Though formally and stylistically innovative, these attempts offer many forms of the very Poetic-Self they mean to undermine and reject for being a trojan horse for capitalist commodification practices. Each challenge of the conventional Poetic-Self in 20th-century poetic experimentation attempts ends up simply creating other forms of the same Poetic-Self that are only more synthetic, unfamiliar or digitalised, though still unmistakably dominant.

3- Poetic-Self Versus "narrator":

In his *Fiction and Diction* (1991), French theorist *Gerard Genette (1930-2018*) recognizes only the two most basic and general genres of literature; the "lyric," seen as poetic, and the dramatic, which he associates with narrative. Both genres, in Genette's definition, offer a form of "fictitious I", a Poetic-Self (Dischtung), responsible for the work's aesthetic information and structural philosophy, or as he puts it; "controlling the entire enunciation of the narrative, down to the grammatical details of its sentences". This speaker, what he sees as "I-Origo" (I, "source of being" *in Latin*), is an independent textual narrator far removed from any realistic subjectivity but is somewhat specific to the text at hand;

> This text recognizes, in the field of *Dichtung,* only two primary "genres": the *fictional,* or *mimetic,* and the *lyric,* both marked-each in their way-by a rupture with the ordinary regime of language, which consists in what Hamburger calls "reality statement," authentic speech acts accomplished concerning reality by an honest and determined "I-Origo." In fiction, we encounter not utterances of reality but fictional utterances whose true "I-Origo" is not the author or the narrator but fictitious characters, whose viewpoint and spatiotemporal situation control the entire enunciation of the narrative, down to the grammatical details of its sentences. This is all the more true of dramatic texts. In lyric poetry, utterances of reality-thus authentic speech acts-do occur, but these are acts whose source remains indeterminate, for the lyric "I" is inherently incapable of being positively identified either with the poet in person or with any other determined

> subject. The putative enunciator of a literary text is thus never a real person, but either (in fiction) a fictitious character or else (in lyric poetry) an indeterminate "I"-thus constituting, in a way, an attenuated form of fictionality. *(Genette 12)*

In his *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (1980), he points out two significant variations of narration. The first sort is "**heterodiegetic"**, where the narrator/speaker speaks/tells from outside the actual events, "a third-person narrative" (Genette 34) as he terms it. The second is "**homodiegetic**", where the narrator is an active participant in the narration or speech acts, "a first-person narrative" (Genette 51) in Genette's terms. "Narration", by his definition, is not simply akin to overt generically definable novels or narratives, as is commonly known. Instead, it is an integral part of the function of language itself regardless of genre, form or type of aesthetic impact. In Genette's words:

> For me, all these discourses boil down to the dramatic mode (a character speaks) and consist in serious illocutions that are more or less tacitly posited as *interactional:* the pretense here constitutes, as Plato and Searle indicate, a simulation or substitution of identity (Homer pretends to be Chryses, Doyle pretends to be Watson, as Sophocles pretends to be Oedipus or Creon), which overhangs and determines the discourse of a character who for his part is entirely serious, within his fictional universe-except when that character is himself, like Scheherazade or Savarus, a producer of fiction in the second degree. This description, as I see it, is exhaustive. As for

> the discourse of nonfictional literature, whether it is narrative (history, autobiography, diary) or not (essays, aphorisms, and so on), it obviously consists in what Kate Hamburger calls "utterances of reality"- (Genette 51)

Here comes the most basic conceptual distinction in Gentte's definitions: the speaker in the text, be it a third, or a first-person, in the actual events or outside, enacting or witnessing the speech acts, lyrical or diegetic, is dramatizing the text by his/her presence for aesthetic reasons. His/her ontological existence is complete and variable, taking the form of a narrator (when there is a story), a doer (when there is a lyric reflection), or, in most cases, both simultaneously. The Poetic-Self and Genette's narrator are two faces of the same coin: essential in addressing, arising and affecting readers. Both, directly or indirectly, seem to tell the reader what to perceive.

Even in the most experimental of the 20th-century literary forms, poetic selves, be them "heterodiegetic" or "homodiegetic," can easily be recognized as such. They can, either explicitly or implicitly, be seen, heard and identified in literary texts, including those generally acknowledged as anti-literary or anti textual such as visual or random composition poetries. As this paper has shown so far and will continue to show hereafter, such forms of the Poetic-Self are indispensable components of the creative situation itself, manipulate-able, but never erasable.

However, most 20th-century experimentations have generally identified the presence of a Poetic-Self, particularly its most conventional versions as we have seen in Sir Thomas Wyatt's John Donne's above quoted poems, as self-indulging, non-questioning and asserting of the status quo. Therefore, it is one

aspect of poetic creation against which most poetic movements of the 20th century, including Imagism, revolted. It is condemned as one means of capitalistic commodification practices when identities are not interrogated and questioned but indulged, packaged and sold like any other commodity.

This paper investigates the primary cultural and aesthetic motives behind, and methods of, this cultural and aesthetic rejection, represented by the work of experimental pioneer poet, Ezra Pound, attempting to answer the following questions:

1. Does the work of this poet (and of others) does away with all forms of this Poetic-Self and the realism it symbolizes?
2. Is the presence of a Poetic-Self so culturally damaging that he seems to want to do away with it?
3. If so, would the aesthetic impacts of poetry in particular, and art in general, assume a better stance culturally without such a self? And why?

5- Poetic-Self in History:

Historically, self-poetics is one of the significant and defining features of 18th and 19th-century Victorian and Romantic poetics. Generally known as "confessional" poetry, 18th and 19th-century poetics seem agreeable to this Poetic-Self in terms of its assertion of reality as an unquestionable sovereign truth unaffected by consciousness. The reality assumes an independent identical, homogeneous unity of objectives and sensations whose awareness is equally shared by individual beliefs and aesthetic-political orientations. In this sense, the chance of revolting against the overwhelming sense of a "righteous" common culture is reduced to a minimum. If reality is fixed by nature, and perception is mainly neutral, then influence on such a presence is inherently microscopic if existent at all. Reality is thus only

changeable through active handling that manipulates its acknowledged tangibility in which perception plays a minimal role. No perceptual act like art or thought has a natural effect on such reality, which then has every opportunity to and does assume itself to be realism.

Individual identity then is seen like any other component of that reality; a solid unquestionable presence offered for admission rather than questioning and for identification rather than interrogation. As such, the self is transformed into a part of the cultural reality commodified by the publishing industry for readership self-admiration. Readers of such a self, or buyers of its poetic embodiments in literature, seek to identify with what conforms with their identities and preserves their narcissistic self-feeding wishful identities. They are not paying money for pieces of literature that investigate their very perceived presence and pain in their ideals and beliefs about themselves! That is how capitalism works to preserve its political domination by indulging the self in every individual, claiming that to be reality and its methods to be simply realism. Consequently, capitalistic social and political domination is, more or less, guaranteed. Speaking of his own poetic philosophy, contemporary American experimental Language-poet and theorist Charles Bernstein argue:

> An experience (released in the reading) which is non commoditized, that is where the value is not a dollar value (and hence is not translatable and instrumental) but rather, what is from the point of view of the market, no value (a negativity, inaudible, invisible)- that non-recognizable residue that is specific to each particular experience. It is of this sense that we

> speak of poetry as being untranslatable and unparaphrasable. (Bernstein 58)

20th-century anti-self-poetics attempts to resist such capitalistic hegemony by interrogating the legitimacy of any everyday public reality and the sense of false security that might come with it, opening the horizon for truer innovation on aesthetic as political grounds. Recounting the history of Language-Writing as one of the most influential experimental poetic movements of the 20th-cenmtury, American poet and critic Bob Perelman argues:

> The Lyric "I" of the voice poem was a prime object of attack in early language writing theory and practice. But while the self as a final term of value in poetry was harshly disdained, the goal was not the avoidance of self demonstrated in the chance generated work … Language writers' attacks on the self were intermixed with a desire to construct or enact some sort of person in poetry who would be of political consequence. (Perelman 109)

Perelman's interpretation of one contemporary experimental movement's "disdain" of the conventional Poetic-Self simultaneously contains an admission of its persistent existence even when authorial "intention" is removed from the equation. His argument implies both the rejection of that self on political grounds, and the acceptance of its inevitability on linguistic even poetic ones, even when he continues to attack it:

> Such an insistence on individuality; which is often translated the aesthetic necessity of "finding your voice," makes the institutional circuits, the network of presses, reviews, jobs,

> readings, and awards that are the actual sounding board of "voice." (Perelman 114)

Perhaps it is time to exemplify both Romantic and Victorian poetics to ascertain the kind of self-poetics each seems to have offered. This step is significant for another reason: to expose the many forms of self-poetics that have transpired across history. For example, here is Edmund Spenser's (1552-1599) *Amoretti* sonnet lxv:

> The doubt which ye misdeeme, fayre loue, is vaine,
> That fondly feare to loose your liberty,
> When loosing one, two liberties ye gayne,
> And make him bond that bondage earst dyd fly.
> Sweet be the bands, the which true loue doth tie,
> Without constraint or dread of any ill
> The gentle bride feels no captiuity
> Within her cage, but singes and feeds her fill.
> There peride dare not approach, nor discord spill
> The league twixt them, that loyal loue hath bound
> But simple truth and mutual goodwill
> Seeks with sweet peace to salue each others wound
> (De Selencourt 404)

Intentionally written in medieval vernacular English, Spenser's *Amoretti*, specifically sonnet 65, offers a form of Poetic-Self which is inherently authoritative and self-assertive. The poem is simply a love poem that discusses conventional marriage issues and its relevant patriarchal gender fears. Revealing his lover's unconscious fears, the voice assumes that she, as well as all 16th-century ladies, is anxious about losing her freedom. However, losing a single person's freedom; hers, the voice argues, she would be gaining both theirs; and his. By defeating her fears, the

voice assumes he and his lover will be healing each other's emotional wounds. Almost paradoxically representing the assumed pleasure of their future unity, the voice recalls a rhetorical image of a bird happily singing in a cage. The voice represents love "bonds" as "sweet bonds", for they are willingly chosen.

In this sense, the presence of an ultimately self-centred voice throughout the poem could hardly be more significant. The voice in the poem utilises poetic language that serves the immediate cultural context as a means of asserting authenticity and worth. Various archaic expressions such as "misdeeme", "fayre", "vaine", "gyne", and "salue" are employed to establish Medieval masculine identity rather than question the status quo.

Through this patriarchal antique poetic language, the voice asserts connection with readership in its cultural context by affirming rather than interrogating prevalent concepts of patriarchal supremacy and control. The Poetic-Self 's main goal seems to recruit likening through identification with the prevalent concepts and beliefs. He addresses his beloved, "The doubt which ye misdeeme, fayre loue, is vaine", through already established concepts of femineity and its role in society. Women are seen as "fearful". "doubtful", and generally scared of responsibility and loss of freedom. The speaker's role as a masculine figure is to "reassure" and "provide", which is typical of the patriarchal mindset of the time. This way, the self in the poem maintains control over the content. By offering an easily identifiable, quickly digestible identity confirming familiar and unquestioning content, the Poetic-Self arrives peacefully at the reader's identity. Here comes its proclaimed authority over the readership process; by offering straightforward controllable content at the centre of which its presence is focused.

This authoritative presence is not only evident on a linguistic level. The self in the poem entitles itself to absolute wisdom, judging not only others' unconscious impulses but its own seemingly more prudent reasoning as well (The gentle bride feels no captivity/ Within her cage, but singes and feeds her fill). There is no instance in the poem where the speaker offers any degree of doubt or reflection on his reason, feelings or argument. His is the only reason presented, and readers should follow! Therefore, the image of the lover as a bird singing happily in a willingly chosen cage is another form of the voice's pretentious, one-sided view of the world. Here is another example of 17th-century poetics by John Donne (1572-1631), "The Sun Rising-1633."

Busy old fool sun, why dost thou thus
Through windows and curtains call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' season run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late schoolboys and sour prentices,
Tell court huntsmen that the king will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hours, days, or months are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverend and strong
Why shouldn't thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long;
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,
Whether both the Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou lefte'st them, or lie here with me?
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

She's all states and all princes, I;
Nothing else is.
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, sun, half as happy as we,
In that, the world contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and then the duties be
To warm the world, that is done in warming us.
Shine here to us and thou are everywhere;
The bed bu center is, these walls, thy sphere.
(Robbins 246)

Metaphysical poetry does not much differ from classical poetry in terms of asserting and reflecting essential forms of Poetic-Self. Utilizing various poetic techniques such as extended conceits,

complex imagery and argumentative intellectual style, Metaphysical poetry at large offers still neither an objective cause, nor a public social concern. Rather, its complex imagery is mostly woven into self-indulging self-pointing contemplations emphasizing temporal moments of emotional and sensual pleasure. Classic poets' indulgence in masculine-identity is, in other words, replaced by another kind of indulgence in humanist-identity. In his *The Sun Rising* (1633), pioneer Metaphysical poet *John Donne* (1572-1631), offers an almost completely self-absorbed Poetic-Self, interested only in its proclaimed self-thought. For example, the voice in the poem addresses the sun as "busy old fool" blaming it for interrupting his pleasure with his lover. Not long afterwards, the voice compares his lover to all "states" and himself to all "princes", imagining their bed to be the center of the universe, whose place should be where the sun shines: "She's all states/ and all princes/ I; Nothing else is".

Throughout the poem, no other voice, perspective or feeling exists except for his. It dominates both the argument presented and the form assumed. From the very beginning to the very last word in the poem readers are confronted only with what this self feels, thinks, imagines and depicts. It is a self that presupposes its inner identity as its poetic universe with no questioning or interrogations of its proclaimed givens. Readers' roles in this case are very limited to the specific meanings, significances and views offered, or rather imposed, by this self. There is no room for readers to questions that self's view-points, feelings or poetic arguments from within the actual text itself. The text states and presumes to know everything on behalf of everybody. He knows how the sun should behave: (To warm the world, that is done in warming us /Shine here to us and thou are everywhere), how it should not (Go tell court huntsmen that the king will ride/ Call country ants to harvest offices) and how readers should respond

(All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy). It offers its own as the only possible poetic reality with itself at its very centre. This is the kind of Poetic-Self this essay means to underline as the target of most poetic experimentation across the 20th century.

As a significant artistic and literary stream spanning the 19th century, Romanticism is probably the climax of what this study terms as "Poetic-Self ". To be sure, first, its pioneer poets' concept of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings… modified and directed by our thoughts," in Wordsworth's words, (Wordsworth 6) is quite telling. This concept equates poetry with confessional expressions of self and identity, making its artistry synonymous with the speaker's psychology. Feelings-modified-by-thought is just another term for self-uncovering, self-projecting, and self-inhabiting; in other words, self-centralization and realism. The givens of the poem are entirely self-essentializing.

Secondly, of course, Romanticism's general rejection of the concept of "artifice" and its resultant advocacy of only nature as the ultimate source of life and beauty (Aiden 41). Romanticism came as a reaction against the pervading materialism, rationalism and industrialism of its age (Aiden 71). An attachment to nature, therefore, seems itself a means of resistance and political opposition. For Romantic poets, nature is probably not a mere medium within which man acts and reacts. Instead, nature, as seen by the Romantics, is a living being and a sacred source from which man acquires knowledge and wisdom. Accordingly, within Romantic poems, an intensive intimacy is set not only with nature but also with the recipients of the poem. Utilizing revolutionary techniques such as representing a stream of spontaneous feelings and addressing the audience in the most intimate and self-revealing voice, Romantics probably founded

man's uniqueness and individual originality as a fundamental ground of aesthetic creation.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er valrs and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the syars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Then thousands saw I at a glance,
tossing their heads in a sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company,
I gazed- and gazed- but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when my coach I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon the inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then, my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.
(Gill 513)

William Wordsworth's (1770-1850) *Daffodils* (1807), for example, is a model of a Romantic poem which depicts a brief scene of momentary emotional indulgence in natural beauty. The poem is neatly woven by delineating the entangled interaction between the beauty of nature, on the one hand, and the feelings it arouses in the human self, on the other. The poem also reflects a remarkable subjectivity and self-centrism, which is typically relevant to Romanticism. The speaking voice initiates the poem "I", which seems to dominate the poem as the main narrator, a doer and a creator: "I wandered lonely as a cloud/ That floats on high o'er vales and hills".

The voice represents the brief moment of watching daffodils around the lake and the internal impact it causes. Utilizing descriptive narration, regular rhythm (aa bb cc) and intense Nature-based imagery, the voice constructs an overwhelming mood of peace and serenity. According to the voice, this peaceful sense of complete indulgence in natural beauty and unity with nature is more precious than any wealth: "I gazed- and gazed- but

little thought/ What wealth the show to me had brought". In the last stanza, the momentary sense of beauty ends, and the general mood of the poem turns melancholic. Back to reality, the voice seems to imply, having nothing to console himself with except for memories. The poem, therefore, represents a typical theme of Romanticism: permanence and the love of continuous beauty and the lamentation for the lack of it.

Another kind of late Romantic self is detectable in the following poem by W. B. Yeats (1865-1939), in which there is more depth involved in its structure:

> Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
> Enwrought with golden and silver light,
> The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
> Of night and light and the half-light,
> I would spread the cloths under your feet:
> But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
> I have spread my dreams under your feet;
> Tread softly because you tread on my dreams
> (Finneran 70).

Yeats's (1805-1939) *He Wishes for the Clothe of Heaven* (1899) is more concise and specific. It offers a less pretentious form of the Poetic-Self. The poem starts with a third person pronoun in the title and a speaking voice "I" in the poem itself. The Poetic-Self in the poem, therefore, seems to be superficially divided into two parts. This alteration of the speaking voice not only offers varied narration perspectives but also a general status of fragmentation and fracturing of identity. Therefore, the speaking voice in the poem represents himself and every tormented self within the same generation.

Utilizing relatively simple vocabulary and internal rhyme, the speaker in the poem briefly represents his issues of love, vulnerability and sacrifice. The poem starts with a conditional phrase: "Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths/ … I would spread the cloths under your feet", in which the voice's helplessness and despair are presented. The voice addresses his beloved, declaring his inability to bring her "a cloths of heaven". However, he describes the shape and colours of these unpossessed clothes as: (Enrought with golden and silver light/ The blue and the dim and the dark cloths/ Of night and light and the half-light). The unattainable clothes, therefore, are a metaphor for his inability to offer his beloved a luxurious life. However, the voice still has something to offer. He offers her his only thing: his "dreams": (But I, being poor, have only my dreams/ I have spread my dreams under your feet). Being soft and vulnerable, the voice asks his beloved to "tread softly" on his dreams, begging her to accept them and not to break his heart. Acknowledging his limitations, he seems more rational than emotional, speaking about the truth of his inabilities rather than of his aspirations. The poem, therefore, offers a mature form of Poetic-Self that neither states a claimed reality nor offers unattainable dreams. However, it remains dominant and self-centred, being as aware of its qualities as it is ignorant of everyone else's.

Compared to Wyatt's completely self-absorbed Poetic-Self, for example, Yeats's offers a degree of self-denial and question-ability. However, it still wholesomely gives nothing and sees nothing out of itself, its limitations and abilities. Besides its absolute presence, as a central protagonist, for example, the self in the poem might accept another presence of a narrator or an addressed lover. However, its discourse does not speak of the

lover either physically or emotionally. Instead, it is indulged in itself, its potentiality, and its aspirations.

Though a little self-doubting and self-questioning, the self in this particular poem, as in this sort of poetry in large, offers a singular voice speaking through its metaphors, vocabulary, and general syntactic formations. One way or another, the idea of a singular voice projecting its viewpoints, feelings, and thoughts seems the only option. Even when it comes to seemingly neutral descriptions of places, natural sights, or events, the self behind the description manages to repoint the whole aim of such descriptions as its own capable voice of delicate insight into things. Here is the main point of that Poetic-Self; its capacity to put itself forward always as the central theme underlying all its surface themes, its pretended themes. This is, as this paper argues, one of the reasons behind its rejection by 20th century experimental aesthetics, which generally attempts to establish a most democratic relationship with its audience/readers.

> And yet—she has not spoke so long!
> What if heaven be that, fair and strong
> At life's best, with our eyes upturn'd
> Whether life's flower, it first discerned,
> We, fix'd so, ever should so abide?
> What if we still ride on, we two
> With life for ever old yet new,
> Change not in kind but in degree,
> The instant made eternity,--
> And heave just prove that I and she
> Ride, ride together, for ever ride?
> (Browning 278)

Formally speaking, both in its linear form and regular rhythm, Robert Browning's (1812-1889) The Last Ride Together (1855) seems to investigate the conventional contours of classic versification. The poem consists of ten stanzas, each of eleven iambic tetrameter lines. Though Classic in form and rhythm, the poem offers an form of Poetic-Self, which is rebellious and doubtful. In this particular sense, the poem can be viewed as innovative and early modern.

Unlike conventional dramatic monologue, particularly common in Victorian poetics, the voice in the poem is not authorial and judgmental but rather conversational and argumentative. It assumes various voices within the poem other than the speaking voice. This, in turn, creates a sense of "otherness in discourse". The poem's conventional Romantic "self" is balanced by a detachment of an invented, seemingly separate personality doing the speaking in the poem. This split in narrativeness seems to liberate the voice in the poem from the conventional mono-dimensional view of the world. It offers an intense sense of uncertainty and interrogation about absolute Romantic values such as love and life.

Indulged in the present moment, the Poetic-Self in this poem celebrates its last moments with its beloved as the everlasting joy and the only truth in the world. It represents neither memories nor futuristic hopes. Instead, it is much concerned with delineating instant fears, frustration and aspirations. Throughout the poem, such human fears, disappointment and other insecurities seem glorified and celebrated as a source of beauty and inspiration. Unlike conventional challenging and heroic Romantic voices, the voice in the poem celebrates his shortcomings, lost hopes and fears in life. Much to the same effect, unlike conventional Romanticism, the voice is not much

concerned with representing his beloved emotionally or physically. Instead, he seems indulged in his thought and internal contemplations about the moment. In the last stanza of the poem, for example, multiple pronouns "I", "she", "our", and "we" are represented. However, the primary concern of the voice is not he, himself, or his beloved as individuals. Instead, it is much concerned with representing them within a present context of love, loss and possibilities. In this particular sense, Browning's The Last Ride Together steps a little further from conventional Romantic and Classic mono-dimensional and self-centered poetics. Throughout the poem, the voice represents love from other perspectives than yearning, blaming, complaining and physical joy, particularly relevant to Classicism and Romanticism. It offers a view of love and life that is more reasonable and accepting of its temporariness and alteration.

To summarise this paper's above definitions, there are four general stages through which the Poetic-Self has passed before reaching its modern and postmodern experimental seemingly anti-self stance.

In traditional poetry, the self is, more or less, a pre-supposition of presence, an unquestioned given of an omniscient speaking voice who seems to take precedence and priority. It assumes almost zero questionability or investigation-ability. It is the only provider of truth, answers and facts. With a minimal degree of reflection inward, it has a mindset that is not directed by doubting the felt, the seen or the heard. Poetic selves, offered by such poets as Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542) and Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), are self-indulging tyrants always knowing. It presumes to know what it talks about entirely and be in control of that which its meanings seem to offer: the Classical, the Metaphysical, the Romantic and the Victorian.

Metaphysical Poetry, primarily illustrated through Donne's poetics, offers another variety of the same Poetic-Self. Its uniqueness generally comes from its dependency on a particular form of stylistic wit, as seen above in *The Sun Rising*. It is not a classic self in the overt sense of the word since it consistently redefines its boundaries and limitations. It is witty and clever in its imagery and style, which offers its own form of complexity. It is not Romantic either because it does not offer absolutist beliefs in permanence as the only worthy aesthetic ideal, symbolized by nature alone, to look forward to or lament its absence. Instead, it offers a supposition of completion in, and by, itself, where wit, insight and conceit play opposite roles in a performance of language about a never-defined meaning such as love, death and life. Metaphysical Poetic-Self, therefore, presupposes its wholesomeness and totality in presence. It is an early form of proud self-investigation and self-assertion. It seems to re-identify, recognize and glorify itself and the presence of this self as a whole, complete and honourable within a context.

The Romantic Poetic-Self, by comparison, went even a step further because it offers a reason why it feels superior and deserving to be omniscient. Its understanding of permanence as the only worthwhile aesthetic value capable of sustaining beauty as such speaks directly to its utter belief in a kind of self that is not only omniscient in itself but not lacking longevity as well. The perfect Poetic-Self, offered by early Romantic poets such as *William Wordsworth* (1770-1850)), is perhaps invented by the Romantics. It is complete in every way possible and comprehensive by every means imaginable. It is very much in this very sense that Idealism and Romanticism seem akin. The Romantics insist on an aesthetics eager for permanence as the most fundamental aspect of beauty regardless of its object; love,

being or life. This Romantic Poetic-Self, therefore, searches for and glorifies permanence as the ultimate aesthetic value.

For example, Victorian Poetic-Self offered by Robert Browning (1812-1889) is one in which the beginning of self-doubt and self-questioning appears. It adopted social issues such as social justice against a sexist, anti-feminist society. It seems to attack social and sexual taboos through questioning the self and others. It represents inherent doubts regarding now and then. However, it remains singular, in perspective, and not adequately self-reflexive. It offers itself not as omniscient but as wonderer and inquisitor.

6- Imagism as Modern Poetry.

As the "best organized and most influential movement in English poetry since the Pre-Raphaelites" (Hughes 25), Imagism offers one of the earliest, most complete forms of poetic experimentation known in literature. Historically, it was founded after T. E. Hulme and Henry Simpson's suggestion to form "a poets' club" in 1908 that would be particular to experimentation in form for political reasons. Their first meeting occurred on the 25th of March 1909 (Olsen 11). The club was mainly comprised of amateur poets. However, it produced several anthologies, the first of which were *For Christmas MDCCCCVIII* (January 1909) and *The Book of the Poets' Club* (December 1909), two of Hulme's earliest examples of imagist poems first appeared. The term "Imagism" was first coined by Hulme, but later, Aldington argues, it has undergone "appropriation" by famous pioneer imagist poet Ezra Pound (1855-1972), (Adlington 101). Pound utilized the term "Imagism" to represent the work of American poetess H. D (1886-1961) "in the tea room of British museum on October

1912" (Olsen11), about three years after Hulme's poet club of "Imagists" was founded. Afterwards, Pound joined the Imagists as the most prominent figure in the movement's history for apparent reasons. Hulme's club of Imagists dismantled itself only two years after its formation. In 1912, Pound collected the work of T. E. Hulme at the end of his book, *Ripostes*, proclaiming the emergence of the second wave of "Imagists, the descendants of the forgotten school of 1909" (Hughes 12).

7- Imagism and The Science Revolution:

Historically, it was not until 1850 that all aspects of human culture were generally understood under the umbrella of "literature" as the broadest and most capacious cultural term. Famous English critic and poet Mathew Arnold (1822-1888) redefines "literature" as "everything written with letters or printed in a book" (Otis xviii). At the turn of the century, science has just invaded the most exclusive area of language: its literariness or particularized capacity for expression. Newly independent, science investigated other more objective syntax forms for academic writing. In other words, in their early scientific research and final equations, nineteenth-century mathematicians and physicists adopted neatly labelled linguistic patterns that are neither subjective nor allegoric. Instead, concise linguistic forms with the fewest possible rhetorical details and the most precise expressions are submitted. Greek and Latin literature are no more the most prestigious area of study. Other. purely scientific fields of study, such as physiology, economy and technology, came into focus. By the end of the century, both science and literature were viewed by academics and educationalists as equally significant and study worthy. In her *Literature and Science in the Nineteenth Century*, Laura Otis argues:

> In the nineteenth century, as western economies became more industrial than agricultural, educational reformers protested that the traditional Greek and Latin literature curriculum- which had given aristocrats and gentry the "stamp of an educated man"- failed to prepare the new professional classes of modern life. Moreover, technological advances and transformative new theories made science as essential to cultures as Horace's poetry had once seemed (Otis xviii).

This sovereignty of science as a field of knowledge underpinned by an apparent belief in materialism and the promise of technology has had the largest possible impact on the aesthetic philosophy of early 20th-century literature at large and the literary act in particular. Consequently, the 20th century's poetics, of which Imagism has been the most formative, rejected any absolutist reality. Throughout their work, Imagists neither trusted nor represented any object, idea or value as wholly accurate or unquestionable. The only catchable part of any assumed reality, Imagists argue, is the fleeting moments and temporary scenes of an eternally unattainable reality.

Imagists, Olsen argues, "did not suffer from science envy" (Olsen 14). Instead, they initiated equal experimentation that mimics actual laboratory tests by alluding to linguistic material resembling combinations of chemical substances resulting in meanings much like chemical interactions result in new substances. Influenced by scientific experimentation, in their work, Imagists investigated the contours of poetic objectivity, both verbally and formally. With the concise scientific equation model in their minds, they invented poetic equations simultaneously minimizing verbosely and maximizing meaning.

Their verbal-formal balanced forms are generally viewed as "rendered items of what is conventionally understood as reality" (Olsen 14).

However, the difference between Imagist poetic experimentation and 20th-century scientific experimentation could hardly be more significant. Though seemingly objective, at least formally, Imagists' work still offers other forms of poetic subjectivity, as shall be seen very shortly. Unlike scientists, in their work, Imagists are much more concerned with the relative, the sentimental and the temporary over the absolute, the intellectual and the perpetual. Believing that no final findings, be they literary or scientific, are absolute, Imagists offer a kind of subjective reality that is, in its totality, unstable, fleeting and momentary. Viewing reality as both momentary and fragmental, they created another, or rather, a parallel version that is infinitely relative. However, their relative reality, Imagists argue, remains as credible as any experimentally proven scientific fact. Unlike laboratory experimentation, Imagists' syntactical cases can be individually experimented with and investigated apart from any context, rationality or structure. Spotting the difference between Imagist poetic experimentation and scientific experimentation, Olsen argues:

> They refused to accept causal explanations and did not believe that it was possible to arrive at "truth" by accumulating scientific facts. They insisted that the truth they were striving to find had the same value as that of scientists. They objected to the cult of mechanical regularity, arguing that it was possible to view phenomena individually without being obliged to incorporate them into a necessary and unchangeable relation to other phenomena (Olsen 14).

8- Imagism and French Symbolism:

However, Imagism did not spring out of a cultural vacuum in the spare moment during a tea break in London in 1905. Fare from it, Imagism, in its totality, is probably the outcome of various scientific, philosophical and aesthetic approaches, encompassing various cultural findings, innovations, movements, influences and ideals that have somehow come together in a particularly opportune moment of the general zeitgeist. French Symbolism is one of those literary movements that immediately preceded and significantly impacted Imagism. Side by side, both have initiated a whole stream of poetic experimentation that has since challenged every single part of the Classic, Romantic and Victorian poetic modes, save linearity as the only exception. Imagism downright owes much of its role models, aesthetic ideology and stylistic techniques to French Symbolism with its pioneer poets Stéphanné Mallarmé (1842-1898) and Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1919). The American modern theatre creator and artist Glenn Hughes explains:

> The modern influence of the French was of particular importance, for besides reinforcing the imagists' belief in their neo-classicism, it offered examples of organized poetry movements. It not only clarified their ideals but also gave them a method of propaganda. The principle-forerunner of Imagism was Symbolism (Hughes 4).

At the turn of the century, Apollinaire and Pound, for example, initiated a whole poetic stream that overtly challenged the conventional Poetic-Self, be it the realistic "I" of Victorian human rights or the typical Romantic self of absolutist beauty and perpetuity. Both offered opposing poetic formulas; Apollinaire experimented by foregrounding formal aspects of language as means to suppress packaged-able aesthetics of older

identity poetics. Pound, on the other hand, offered grammatically intact poetic syntax in its most concentrated minimalist form, as pure of rhetorical impacts as possible. He struggled for a "concentrated poetic language stripped of all unnecessary words", as critic Cristopher beach argues (Beach 51). While Apollinaire adopted visual effect minus grammatical syntax, Pound represented experimental poetic forms that investigate grammatical syntax minus all visual effects. Here are two poems that may best demonstrate their differences:

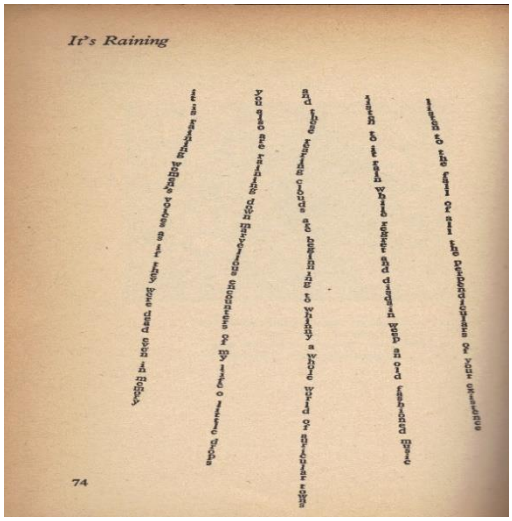


Figure (1)

(*Apollinaire* 100).

Ezra Pound

Meditatio

When I carefully consider the curious habits of dogs
I am compelled to conclude
That man is the superior animal.

When I consider the curious habits of man
I confess, my friend, I am puzzled.

Figure (2)

(Pound 98).

At first look, readers might immediately notice the formal heterogeneity between these two poems where one's shape is visually representational, even symbolic, and the other's is quite linear, even conventional. Apollinaire's *Il Pleuit (It is Raining)*, figure (1), overtly challenges conventional linearity and

grammatical intactness, resisting some of the most fundamental cornerstones of conventional poetic composition. It consists of five lines written vertically in individual letters as in Cantonese. Consequently, readers have to move their eyes five times from the top of the page downwards in a movement similar to that of rain-fall. Such dynamic representation seems to perform the meaning visually and verbally, rather than only tell it. The poem is free from rhetorical verbosity and metrical patterns, which are fundamental to Romantic and Victorian poetics. It does not offer allegoric eloquence, rhythmic musicality, or conventional syntactic stability. Again, all such features are pretty inherent to most prior poetics.

In terms of content, Apollinaire's *Il* Pleuit seems to contradict the playful dynamism of its symbolic representational form. Instead, the poem invokes an overwhelming sense of darkness and melancholy over the significant disparity and loss of life marking the First World War. Emersed in an apparent state of free dissociation, scenes from memory fall onto the speaker's mind like rain "droplets" on the ground. Memories include "the voices of women" looking dead, the deafening noise of "auricular cities", and disdained "ancient music". The poem's layout does not only visually enact but also animates the voice's confused and torn state of mind. It also offers a unique sound effect from the imagery represented by the words falling like rain droplets. For example, the "auricular cities" symbolize the cities invaded during the first world war. Paris was the most influential in such cities, being the poet's home he defended as a soldier. In turn, the "disdained ancient music" symbolizes the cycles of constant and frequent wars throughout history in which violence and destruction prevailed.

Pound's *Meditatio*, figure (2), by contrast, utilizes linearity as a medium of Experimentation. It consists of five short grammatically sound lines in two generally regular stanzas. The poem employs an extreme verbal economy commonly found in flowery language. Instead, it offers intensified poetic representations that seek to eliminate redundancies, complementaries and dispensables. It offers a single moment of deep contemplation into human nature. Compared to the dog's wildness and irresponsibility, man's behaviour is seemingly superior. However, when investigated in terms of cruelty and brutality in war, Man's assumed moral "superiority" does not seem to hold. Such contemplative vision is synthesized in the most focalized and elegant verbatim.

The voice in the poem, in other words, runs an open-ended argument in a grammatically intact but intellectually changing minimalist poetic language stripped of stylistic ornaments, verbal diction and any visual impact. Though technically linear and grammatically sound, this extreme concentration in formal pointedness to meanings questions the limits of its very own linearity and correctness as well as at large. It is as if the poem accuses previous poetics of indulging in redundant verbosity for shallow aesthetic effects that impart no actual knowledge or significance. By contrast, it investigates conventional formative norms in their linearity and regularity. Yet, in his poetic formula, Pound experiments with poetic language itself. He is much concerned with inventing a poetic language which is intact, resilient and concise.

9- Imagism and Impressionism:

In their work, Impressionists represented artistic structures that were "much easier than the canons of earlier periods" and "closer

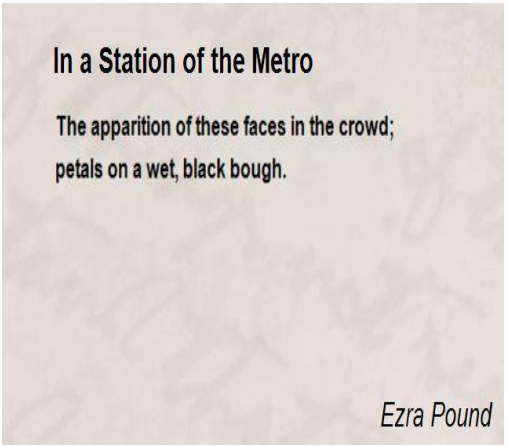
to popular culture" (Cutting 5). They offered innovative artistic forms that are simultaneously "modernist" and "old" (Cutting 5). On the one hand, they investigated classic colour richness, decorativeness and myth-derived themes. On the other hand, however, their paintings represented fleeting, effortlessly comprehensible images. In order to enjoy Impressionist paintings, the viewer does not have to be familiar with the "heritage of iconography" nor have a "classical or Biblical" background (Cutting 18).

Impressionists seem to embrace human sight for other reasons than its conventional observational and interpretative function. In what seemed an attempt to defeat artistic ego, Impressionists celebrated human sight in its most primitive and simple function of "mere contemplation, or just looking" (Barasch 18). At first sight, Impressionist paintings may appear as brief everyday life scenes offering little rational sequence. The viewer does not have to interpret, rationalize or fit the painting within any coherent context. In most of his paintings, the famous Impressionist Claude Monet (1840-1926), for example, represents nature-derived scenes, including gardens, rivers and flowers.

Everyday scenes are verbally captured and represented by Imagists. Familiar figures from reality, such as "sunsets, streets, ships, masts and soldiers" (Olsen 14), are the significant themes of Imagist poems. However, it was not only Imagism that thought to do this Impressionism offered the same interest in creating concise aesthetic experiences devoid of excesses and representative of modern man. As critics have argued, "the Impressionist painters had been intensely preoccupied with the technical aspects of their art. In the same way, form played a major part in the theoretical reflections of the Imagist poets" (Olsen 16).

On the one hand, Imagists follow traditional linearity as the primary medium of Experimentation while rejecting metrical patterns, verbal ornaments and stylistic indulgences. `On the other hand, their experimentations offer highly concentrated forms of imagery, symbolic referentiality and aesthetic idealism, all of which radically challenge prior forms of the Poetic-Self. Their works' lack of direct self-reference, such as first-person pronouns and tangible subjective feelings, attest to this fact.

On the other hand, Impressionists investigate the conventional colour richness and scene condensation. Nevertheless, in its momentary themes, non-individualizing depictions and objective or generalizing details, Impressionism offers the same challenge to prior self-imaging poetics, not to mention prior forms' ideas of colour. For example, here is one painting by pioneer Impressionist Claude Monet (1840-1926) as compared to famous Imagist Ezra Pound's *In a Station of the Metro* (1913):



In a Station of the Metro, (1913), (Pound 48).
Figure (3)

Saint Lazare Station, (1877) (Monet 73).

Figure (4)

As is perhaps apparent, Pound and Monet had a common interest in capturing and delineating short scenes with aesthetic connotations in the least amount of visible details. Their visual and verbal work conveys a concise and profoundly rich contemplative experience. They seem to notice aesthetic and philosophical implications underlying most familiar scenes, underlining the hidden beauty in the common, the ordinary and the usual. Monet, in his part, challenges traditional clichés, artist canon and academic institutions. He initiates his struggle against the authoritarian politics practiced by his contemporary art establishments and salon jury.

As critics Kalitina and Brodskaia suggest, He did not choose to capture "historical, literary or exotic subjects as were popular

with the salon's jury". Instead, his "priority" was to "serve the truth and to keep pace with the time" (Kalitina and Brodskaia 47). In this sense, Monet's primary concern was not representing ancient, metaphysical or even religious scenes appealing to the art audience of his time. On the contrary, like Pound, he concerned himself with reality unmasked of any mitigation, beatifying or justification. His paintings offer artistic focuses that are both simple and common in nature, such as landscape or daily life scenes. In the above painting: *Saint Lazare Station, Exterior (The Signal)* (1877), figure (4), Monet depicts a typical repetitive scene of a train entering Saint Lazare station, with a crowd of people gathering around. Therefore, the painting does not depict man or nature, as is usually in his age, but man versus nature. Warm colours such as brown, grey, blue and black are engraved with irregular brushstrokes to capture the temporality of the shot embodying the dissemination of the singular self in an increasingly faster, industrializing and materializing age. Shadowy figures of people with neither apparent facial features nor individual physical characteristics are slammed together with less care for their individuality than their unmitigated collective presence. The implication is one of overwhelming alienation, objectification and loss of identity. It is a one-scene painting that depicts the zeitgeist as felt by the painter and its underlying dehumanizing aesthetic and philosophical ideals of escapism over contemplation, objectivity over subjectivity and temporality over continuation.

Pound's *In a Station of the Metro* (1913), figure (3), is also a one-scene poem similarly resistant to any sense of individuality or subjectivity, at least superficially. It represents an identical scene from modern life; a metro car entering the station with many people rushing towards it. Formally speaking, the poem consists of two short lines. It is both formally and verbally concise and to

the point with a no-nonsense attitude, where the title functions only as proper *locator*. There are two scenes; one from nature: "petals on a wet, black bough", and the other from daily life: "the apparition of these faces in the crowd". The poem, therefore, constitutes a microcosm of man, nature and modern life. Using an intact and highly condensed language, Pound creates a minimalist and complete dynamism, far from any sequential narration or rhetorical verbosity. In its independency and completion, this poem is a typical model of Pound's Imagism, through which "the perception of one sense" should not be "messed up" by "defining it in terms of another" (Pound, 1913) (206).

As such, both Pound and Monet share the same tendency to break up with not only conventional poetic/artistic canon but also the contours of space and time. They similarly but very differently create brief scenes that are vigorous, dynamic and autonomous. Pound and Monet avoid rhetorical excessive details in their unique ways. They are both concerned with verbally or visually representing familiar scenes from reality with a fleeting sense of beauty. Even Monet's warm colours and nervous brushstrokes are compensated for by Pound's grammatically intact and verbally concise short lines.

So, it was not only the Pound’s poetic ideology that resisted subjectivity in the discourse of poetry, but other artistic mediums also adopted the same ideals and applied them in practice. This was a general cultural response to the advances in science which has since transformed the era’s concepts of reality and the individual. American critic and psycho-analysist Barbara Ann Schapiro speaks of the effects of concemporary science on Western views of reality:

> Quantum theory presents a model of reality in which nothing is more fundamental than dynamic, interactive patterns and relationships. … Chaos and systems theories also present nature a s an intricate web or process structure in which complex, seemingly chaotic systems generate pattern and order in terms of the whole. … Th e mode l of the universe is no longer one of separate working parts; the lens of the new sciences delineates a view of the universe a s a dynamic patterning of interactions, connections, and interrelationships. … The psyche too is now viewed essentially as a matter of relational patterns rather than of anatomy and inherent energy forces or drives. (Schapiro 2-3)

10- The Poundian Poetics:

Of the many pioneer Imagists, including T. E. Hulme (1883-1917); the historical founder of Imagism, F. S. Flint (1885-1960) and H. D (1886-1961), Ezra Pound (1885-1972) remains the most influential. His work, as critic Ira Nadel points out, has not only revived Imagism after the withdrawal of T. E. Hulme's Imagist poets' club but also founded a whole set of "unorthodox ideas and direct approach to art that challenged the stodginess of late Victorian culture and the indulgencies of the Decadents as he set out a modernist map that T. S. Eliot, Yeats, Joyce, Lewis and others would follow" (Nadel 33). Mentoring most of his contemporaries, Pound initiated what came to be seen afterwards as "modernist" poetics, characterized first and foremost by a belief in the higher quality of man over history and individualist belief and a diminished almost alienated form of Poetic-Self. In addition, the unprecedented endeavour for integrating formal and semiotic aspects through the verbal economy and extreme

concentration of the linguistic substance is added to the sophisticated symbolism and referential suggestiveness to offer unique poetic formulae that are fundamentally different in almost every aspect. For this reason, Pound is generally identified as "the renegade, reformer, great experimenter, mentor, adviser, as well as the politically and intellectually disreputable traitor" (Beach 25).

He was born in the western town of Haley, Idaho, on the 30th of October 1885 (Nadel 1). His father worked as a registrar in the American Federal Land Office (Nadel 1). His father's position allowed Pound several European tours at an early age. Fascinated by European civilization, these tours seem to have incarnated themselves in Pound's memory and dominated most of his work. He started his education at Wyncote, where he was called the "professor" for an apparent reason. At an early age, Pound's teachers and classmates saw him as "a bespectacled and articulated little boy whose speech was freighted with polysyllabic words" (Ruthven 4). Later in 1897, Pound joined Cheltenham Military Academy (Nadel 2). He joined The University of Pennsylvania in the autumn of 1901, when he was only sixteen (Ruthven 4), graduating from Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, in 1905 (Nadel 2). He married Dorothy Shakespeare on the 20th of April, 1914 (Nadel 11). At a later age, Pound was accused of "antisemitism, fascism" and branded a "betrayer of the American ideal" (Nadel 31). He died in Venice on the 1st of November, 1972, just "one day past his eighty-seventh birthday" (Nadel 32).

Generally identified as the most "difficult" and, sometimes, "wrong-headed" poetic figure of his time, Ezra Pound had a "generous spirit which caused him to yearn and work for beauty and justice and dream or a realm in which perfect beauty might

be fused with perfect justice" (Stock 460). For most of his contemporaries, including various most significant literary figures such as Yeats (1865-1939), James Joyce (1882-1941) and T. S. Eliot, Pound was "not only an innovator and renewer of language but as impresario and publicity-agent, fundraiser and office boy" (Stock 460). As the initiator and the leader of a whole literary stream permeating the 20th century, Pound has not only influenced the poetics of his contemporaries but also motivated them to explore new realms of literary composition, both formally and contextually.

11- linearity as Experimentation:

Influenced by early 20th century's comprehensive scientific transformation, Pound invokes poetic forms that imitate scientific equations in exactness and concentration. In his Imagist poems, as seen above, Pound seeks neither rhetorical nor syntactical excellence. Instead, another challenge of creating concise poeticness, formally and syntactically, is set. For Pound, poetry is "the most concentrated form of verbal expression" (Pound, 1934, 36). With this idea in mind, his poetic experimentations aim primarily at delivering the maximum possible meaning in the minimum possible number of words.

THE SEEING EYE

The small dogs look at the big dogs;
They observe unwieldly dimensions
And curious imperfections of odor.

Here is a formal male group:
The young men look upon their seniors,
They consider the elderly mind
And observe its inexplicable correlations.

Said Tsin-Tsu:
It is only in small dogs and the young
That we find minute observation.

ABU SALAMMAMM—A SONG OF EMPIRE

Being the sort of poem I would write if King George V should have me chained to the fountain before Buckingham Palace, and should give me all the food and women I wanted. To my brother in chains Bonga-Bonga.

Great is King George the Fifth,
for he has chained me to this fountain;
He feeds me with beef-bones and wine.
Great is King George the Fifth—
His palace is white like marble,
His palace has ninety-eight windows,
His palace is like a cube cut in thirds,
It is he who has slain the Dragon
and released the maiden Andromeda.
Great is King George the Fifth;
For his army is legion,
His army is a thousand and forty-eight soldiers
with red cloths about their buttocks,
And they have red faces like bricks.
Great is the King of England and greatly to be feared,
For he has chained me to this fountain;
He provides me with women and drinks.
Great is King George the Fifth
and very resplendent is this fountain.
It is adorned with young gods riding upon dolphins
And its waters are white like silk.
Great and Lofty is this fountain;
And seated upon it is the late Queen, Victoria,
The Mother of the great king, in a hoop-skirt,
Like a woman heavy with child.

Oh may the king live forever!
Oh may the king live for a thousand years!
For the young prince is foolish and headstrong;
He plagues me with jibes and sticks,
And when he comes into power
He will undoubtedly chain someone else to this fountain,
And my glory will
Be at an end.

Ezra Pound.

(Pound 1914) (176-5)

Above are two poems, for example, which typify the Poundian poetic philosophy in more than one sense. The first poem, "The Seeing Eye", is formally divided into three unequal stanzas, each offering one part of the overall meaning. The poem is devoid of any stylistic ornaments or verbal excesses. There are no literary devices such as Allegory, Rhyme, Elipsis, and amplification. The message conveyed seems, at first glance, relatively simple, undecorated and unreplenished. Man is sometimes less wise in his youth, like lesser animals, not realizing that actual knowledge comes with experience and time. The reference to the Chinese name "Tsin Tsu" adds another more complex dimension to the significance implied by pointing to ancient wisdom as the source

of its philosophy. However, more complex symbolism is involved here than the sound of the name. The very presence of that name implicates the calligraphical nature of the Chinese, or to be more exact, the Cantonese language in the poem's context. It is a further emphasis on the visual beauty of the mere message written on a page without any make-up or decoration, just like in Chinese. The same complex referentiality is employed in the second poem with the Arabic language through the name "Abu Salammamm". Again the recalling of ancient Arabic wisdom as the source of the message philosophy along with reference to the calligraphical beauty of the Arabic letters in writing as an aesthetic part of that wisdom. Critic Christopher Beach points out that Pound "consciously chooses literary predecessors and traditions as well as traditions of social, political, historical, economic, and scientific thought with which to interact in a freely defined intertextual space" (Beach 40).

The second poem's message carries the same general traits. First, it challenges earlier decorative self-indulging verbosity and eliminates any narrative structure in its form. The symbolism and implied dark ironies in the poem's reference to monarchy, "King George", might indeed be interpreted variably. It may refer to an implied rejection of modern monarchies under shaded by Western democracies and the socio-political value-system that founds and feeds them. It could also be about any enslaving system of belief, both old and new.

Although Pound utilizes conventional poetic lines in both poems as a method of poetic composition, they challenge Classic, Romance and Victorian linearity in many aspects. Critics such as Beach argues:

> Pound's relationship to past language is not one of belatedness, either. His desire is not to recapture the linguistic power of past writers but to do away with the crust of dead English . . . Pound feels the need to make his own language to use, but even a language to think in (Beach 51).

Firstly, Pound's poetic lines are neither metrical nor rhythmic, as is evident in the above-quoted poems. Instead, other internal sound impressions from the natural flow of words are offered. Phrases like "curious imperfections of odour" and "consider the elderly mind" both trochaic sounds by themselves while their lines break the monotony of the rhythm. The presence of minor conventional rhythms with extensive rhythm-breaking lines challenges older poetry's musicality and establishes more comprehensive ranges for such musicality. In composition, Pound is not much concerned with creating what he terms "separate iambs" (Pound, 1913) (204) or "pretty noise" (Kenner 60). Instead, his music is natural and poem-specific, where "the beginning of the nest line catches the rise of the rhythm wave" (Pound, 1913) (204). For Pound, poetic rhythmical patterns are not at all superior to the "shape", "the natural sound", or "the meaning" of the words. They must be "well used if used at all" (Pound, 1913) (205). They had other functions than just being ornamental. They are "experimental metrics that foregrounded the vital connections among poetry, speech and song" (Beach 38). Pound's rhythmical patterns, in other words, are meant to set "a slight sense of surprise" (Pound, 1913) (205). They are meant to create an extra sense of suspicion, questioning and uncertainty. It initiated a whole stream of rhythmical Experimentation that liberated poetry from the contours of traditional radical rhythms.

Secondly, unlike conventional poetic lines, Pound's is not allegoric. The mention of the "dogs" in the first poem or the King in the second is symbolic and highly sophisticated rather than simply representative or allegoric. Pound's linearity is not even syntactically intact. On the contrary, it is short, direct and verbally emphatic. The reference to the King could symbolize a value system, a set of beliefs or a personal idol like love or loyalty.

For critics like Nadel, Pound "redrew the lines of poetry, from the rhetorical and metrically rigid to natural speech and the image, often through the narrative use of persona" (Nadel 38). Greatly influenced by Japanese and Chinese concise poetic forms, Pound invented "the ideogrammatic method", which means "direct juxtaposition of elements taken as independent visual concepts that together form a coherent meaning" (Beach 38). Through such "ideogrammatic" composition, Pound investigates what he terms "the exact definition or ching ming" (Beach 51). By "ching ming", Pound means "the absolute and prime sense of a word that withstands the test of time as well as the various attempts to misuse or devalue it" (Beach 51). In this sense, Pound investigated the purest possible forms that best set an intended meaning in the most economized verbalism. Searching for the "exact word" that better gives the meaning uncompromised by any rhetorical or syntactical additions, Pound created what he viewed as a more punctual poetic language that never merges the "concrete" with the "abstract". (Pound, 1913) (206-201).

In this sense, though seemingly conventional in form, Pound's linearity is a medium of Experimentation through which his work attempts to regenerate poetic forms free of poetic cliches and excesses. It attempts to reach an ideal state of word meaning in

which no word is odd, additional or complementary. Even in cases of actual repetition, or motif, as in the second poem, "Great is king George the fifth", each use renders an entirely new interpretation, ranging from symbolism to dark irony.

Unlike Eliot, Pound's challenge to tradition in the background of his poetic Experimentation is not mere recognition of tradition as one source of beauty. His inclusion of world Classics in his work, for example, is not an attempt to prove any aptitude or authenticity. Instead, it seems a conscious choice of poetically experimenting with tradition itself. It is a "chosen inclusion rather than an attempted suppression" (Beach 58), just like the reference to Chinse and Arabic languages in the poems above.

12- Poetic-Self in Pound's Imagism:

Throughout his poetic Experimentation, Pound rejects all repressive practices that hinder the author from being totally himself. In Pound's poetics, Authorship is a conscious process of "active choice of sources" (Beach 58). The author is free to include and adapt various past and contemporary resources yet still offer his regenerated poetic forms. In his *A Few Don'ts by An Imagist* (1913), Pound argues: "be influenced by as many great artists as you can, but have the decency either to acknowledge the debt outright or to try to conceal it" (Pound, 1913) (202). In his *AB of Reading* (1934), Pound ranks literary writers in six categories. At the top of the list comes "the inventors". Those, as Pound suggests, are "men who found a new process, or whose extant work gives us the first known example of a process" (Pound, 1934) (39). In the second place come the "masters"; who, in Pound's terms, "combined a number of such processes, and who used them as well as or better than the inventors" (Pound, 1934) (39). In this sense, "masters", as Pounds views

them, are free to include, re-arrange and re-produce "inventor's" pure models but also have the mastery to re-invent these models in their terms, creating innovative collages that are not any less than those of the inventors.

An author, for Pound, is, first and foremost, a reader with the potential to consciously select and synthesize other literary forms. He is the ultimate signifier, denominator, or simply, as he puts it; "the one who knows" (Pound 1934) (25). Comparing an "author" and a cheque issuer, Pound suggests:

> Any general statement is like a cheque drawn on a bank. Its value depends on what is there to meet it . . . the same applies with cheques against knowledge . . . its meaning can only be adequately estimated by someone who knows (Pound 1034) (25).

Thus, according to Pound, authorship is primarily a practice of knowledge delivery, both cultural and aesthetic. It is about observation, capture and representation of specific everyday presences with underlying aesthetic relations, fully comprehended only by the observer, the creator of its value or the issuer of its knowledge-cheque. An "Author", in this particular sense, is a "decoder" of reality"; a" decipherer" of life happenstances, who objectively views everyday scenes in the most honest, or economized and neutralized, poetic language possible, far from any "transcendental fantasy or paradisiacal dreams" (Olsen 14-15). The primary role of a "good" author is, thus, not only to select and capture significant scenes but also to keep language "efficient", "accurate", "clear", and very formally innovative or "new" (Pound, 1934) (32). In order to keep a productive balance between neutrality (economy+ honesty +clarity) and creativity (particularity + newness + enjoyment), Pound points out; that an author has to imitate scientists in

Authorship. He has to be neutral, decisive and exact, maintaining a state of studiousness and persistence. He is not concerned much with syntactic eloquence or rhetorical diction. As Pound himself puts it, an author has to "consider the way of scientists rather than the way of an advertising agent for a new soap" (Pound, 1913) (203).

Though looking formally objective, Pound's work still offers an active presence of a Poetic-Self that is easily detectable. In Poundian Authorship, the author's eye detects and encodes a specific scene with aesthetic implications. Carefully selected and encoded life-scene is, by definition, author-centred and reflexive of an inner Poetic-Self carrying specific intellectual traits and ideals. Selecting a specific scene, identifying its assumed underlying aesthetic and philosophical relations, and representing it in designed language, are all inherently identity acts expressive of a definite subject appealing for aesthetic gains.

However, a particular perception of a specific life scene is not only temporal and changeable depending on individual taste, personality and cultural context as well as on readership equally variable factors. For this reason, Imagists' claim for exactness of language, aesthetics of neutrality, and objectivity of offered knowledge is, at the least, questionable.

Readership reactions are equally as relative and infinite as potential authorship choices. In his *A B of Reading*, Pound argues that: "the proper method of studying poetry is the method of contemporary biologists" (Pound, 1934) (17). His suggestion puts a load of aesthetic and cultural meaning on the readership's shoulders as if poems could reach a state of complete objectivity devoid of individual perspective, taste or particularity of language. Pound's claimed objectivity of authorship demands, by

definition, equal objectivity in readership. However, both are not equally impossible to attain in theory as in practice. Theoretically, a state of linguistic objectivity requires by its very nature a completely stable linguistic referentiality both in terms of signifiers and signifieds. The very concept of a "Metro station", "big dogs", or of "King George the fifth," in his poems quoted above, would vary slightly depending on the reader, the reading time, and the context of readership. That is why there could never be a single meaning for any word in any dictionary, past or present.

Readership, as Beach suggests, is "an active involvement with what was happening in the given poem" (Beach 24). It is such "involvement" that makes it impossible in practice to claim any degree of, never mind absolute, objectivity. Reader's interpretations are always relative to the interpreter's psychological, sentimental and mental conditions. Pound himself argues: "there is no end to the number of qualities which some people can associate with a given word or kind of word, and most of those vary with the individual" (Pound, 1934) (37). Reader's interpretations, therefore, are not only changeable from one reader to another but also for the same reader in different contexts. Poetic objectivity, in this particular sense, is as unattainable in readership as it is in Authorship. Contrary to his claims, Pound's poems offer quite apparent manifestations of the Poetic-self as defined by this paper.

For example, pound's *In a Station of the Metro*, figure (3) is a single-scene, two-line poem in which no conventional rhetoric eloquence or allegoric referentiality is offered. Nevertheless, the poem implies a sense of representational excellence apparent in its concise verbal equation where there are no excesses. The poem offers no figures of speech or descriptive sentimentalities.

Instead, it uses an assortment of word categories such as nouns, adjectives, prepositions and articles to create an overwhelming sense of suddenness or rush. In its simplicity, the poem's syntactic flow matches the scene's speed and temporality. It creates a dynamic image selected from daily life using what British critic Hugh Kenner terms "the word-to-word jostle of language itself" (Kenner 62).

Nevertheless, underlying its assumed verbal and formal objectivity, the poem, more forcefully still, offers other dimensions that are entirely subjective. It is only through that author's perspective, for example, that an ordinary and accidental scene from everyday life is identified as a valuable experience with aesthetic and philosophical significance. The self here is not a passive maker of already selected, captured and linguistically delineated subject matter. On the contrary, s/he is the most active presence felt in the work by the readership. The only difference from conventional poetic identities is that s/he here does not publicly announce his/her governing presence through explicit signifiers like pronouns. As critics such as Ira Nadel suggest, in Imagist poems, the poetic “I” often has the vanity of also "re-cording" and "re-creating" (Nadel 49) and sometimes re-coding itself in the poem’s language. This is modern poetry’s new method of presentation; being as indirect and hidden as possible.

This unannounced implied Poetic-Self functions as a reader-motivator from behind the seemingly objective scene, which it manipulates from a distance like in a puppet show. Its presence as the Poetic-Self is not neutral or passive but is as active and governing as a puppeteer stringing his hand-made puppets at will, while being almost completely invisible from readers' view. Underlying Pound's formal /verbal equations, there are other more profound and honest equations of the physical versus the

sentimental, the concrete versus the abstract, and the practical versus the Romantic. What else would justify his absolutist attempt to "purge" or "cleanse" poetry off what he obviously deems as impurities of style and diction? What else would justify his poems' intentional blandness, except for a typical Romantic attempt to reach some kind of a "pure" poetic "core" existent somewhere in his appeal to science as "the" ultimate knowledge?

For example, a Station on the Metro offers a one-scene picture with no resolution. It is through the reader's imagination that such a semi-narrative is completed. The poem, in other words, represents a single scene that is temporary on the surface but eternally dynamic underneath. It is a renewable scene that is re-invented through the eye of each reader and even through the eye of the same reader in different contexts. Other related scenes will probably emerge in readership, completing what is missing in this one for each reader.

In summary, throughout the history of poetic writing, from its beginning in the early 15th and 16th centuries, a presence of identity behind the main doings of the poem continued. In Classicism, it took an exact blatant shape where the addressing is done by it, and the readership is expected to follow precisely in the footsteps of that self in all its confessionalism, ego-centrism and arrogance. The main aesthetic reward is simply identification as readers assume its controlling place, feeling as self-affirming and vital as it does. This is the cultural-self advocated by most totalitarian economic systems, particularly capitalism, for its commodification potential and ease of consumption. It questions no authority, interrogates no control, and asks for nothing beyond conformity with its invented and unquestionable reality. It enjoys conformity with the status quo as part of its confirmation of its being as is. This is why it remains the favourite form of poetic

expression for the masses since it is inherently comfortable to identify with, costing minimal interrogation and questioning of the reality it assumes and the being it enacts.

The Romantic self, elitist and self-absorbed by definition, is slightly different precisely because of its cultural despise for anything temporal and disposable. It looks for higher transcendental values to confirm its elitist search for absolutist status. Its presence is just as tyrannical and reader-identifiable as the classical, even more so. It insists on mystical concepts of its genius, on nature as a permanent source of beauty including its own, and the truth as an attainable presence. Romantic poems are mere statements of that uniqueness and proofs of that individuality. They are extensions of that self's belief in itself as a particular and extraordinary being set apart from all others. The Romantic is the ultimate self because it offers its difference as complete and insurmountable.

Culturally speaking, the Romantic Poetic-Self is more conforming to the existing cultural state than the classical one because it rewards followers with an even more sense of individuality, a more robust sense of being and a more elitist sense of sentimentality and delicacy. Its choice of subject matter (beauty of nature, existential melancholy, rejection of rationality and temporality) and language (maximum verbal and non-verbal flow both in prosody and imagery) affirms its readers' sense of uniqueness and individuality. At the same time, it shields such uniqueness and individuality from any rational questioning of their reality as simply irrelevant being too temporal to account for much real value. The Poetic-Self is generally perceived in contemporary cultural thought as a dangerous means of controlling the individual and shielding him/her from any

revolutionary impulse to change his/her reality into better states of justice and freedom.

Victorian Poetic-Self, by contrast, associates itself with the reality of the cultural context in which it exists. Its primary purpose is didactic, offering what it views as issues troubling its cultural consciousness, such as women's rights, poverty, colonial work conditions, freedom of speech etc. This is not to imply that Victorian poetics is devoid of any degree of transcendentalism or confessionalism, but only to underline its main difference from the Romantic and the Classical Poetic-Selves as basically educational and practical. The Victorian Poetic-Self is just as self-absorbed as its prior versions with a twist; its concentration on life issues in terms of themes and cultural impact as opposed to absolutist ontological themes like nature, or death, in Romanticism or familiar cliché ones like the deprived love, or the beloved's beauty in Classicism. Another significant difference is its adoption of anti-absolutist cultural and aesthetic principles like temporality and practicality, as opposed to transcendence and absolutist idealism. Insisting on a socially active role, the Victorian Poetic-Self offers political stances regarding public issues such as social justice or women's rights. It targets readers' rationality, not only sentimentality, in its similar emphasis on identification as the primary enjoyment method.

The formal Victorian dependency on narration (as dramatic monologue) is a final and more visible difference from prior Poetic-Selves. This narrativeness contrasts the imported structural patterns of Classicism, such as the sonnet or the ode, and other traditional cliché forms like the ballad. It also contrasts the more distinct forms of Romanticism and Modernism. "Narrative" seems to have been a more suitable structure for social involvement than any other more accessible form. This is

because narration allows consistent identification in readership much needed for influencing cultural or societal change.

The Classical, Romantic and Victorian Poetic-Selves are not only strongly present in every variation of these eras' general poetic ideologies and practices but are as variable as the types of language, thematic content, and general formats employed. However, none of these eras has expressed distinction by directly dismissing the poetic "I" from the fabric of poems. The confessing self has not been in the way of any specific content or form wished for and employed in practice. However, Imagism, as a sample of modern experimental poetics, had other ideas, as we have seen. Through its pioneer poet Ezra Pound's work, and many of his followers', the poetic "I", was thought to have been diminished to a minimum, if not a zero, presence. It was considered unnecessary verbosity for shallow identificational mentalities. Yet, more so, it was seen as a commodification tool, a packaging contour for easily identifiable, hence digestible, identities, much like fast-food seeking quick comic reliefs to maintain the cultural status-quo. The American poet and critic Charles Bernstein argues;

However, as explained above, there is a modern Poetic-Self, whose presence is not as naïve but still as strong. In Pound's above poems, there are no first-person pronouns or direct references to any sentimental indulgence and no allegoric or rhetorical diction. On the surface, there appears to be almost no Poetic-Self. Underneath the surface, however, every aspect of the poem attests to a strong presence of an identity that not only justifies choices of themes and scenes and general language but declares itself in terms of perspective, grammatical structure and implied poetic ideology. Each poetic instance offers its equation. In each instance, the poetic ideology of the self, its choices, and

thereby identity is strongly apparent, increasing in strength the deeper readers dig within the assumed simplicity of its form. What purports to be anti-self-poetics serves only to affirm that very identity on more profound, more sophisticated levels. As readers, we acknowledge the craftsmanship of the assumed purge, only to find the writing fabric itself, at deeper thirds, emersed in the very dye it wishes to un-colour.

Nevertheless, the modern experimental Poetic-Self is fundamentally different. It requires effort to recognize and identify with. It is not offered but sought, not indulging but contemplative, and indeed not temporal or disposable. Its aesthetics blinds the possibility of identification with the impossibility of comic relief since it generally offers no confessional sentiments or particular social dilemmas or taboos to question and investigate. On the contrary, it usually offers generalized human issues relevant to more abstract questions such as the meaning and value of modern existence or the irrationality of war,

The experimental challenge of prior self- or identity poetics reminds readers of the cultural vices of searching for easily digestible and nicely packaged reality, only to offer cultural voices searching for more profound and perhaps more controlling reality. In both cases, the presence of identity, whether confessional and relieving or interrogating and sublime, practices comparable degrees of cultural control attesting to the inevitability of existence in the fabric of any language, poetic or otherwise.

Works cited

1. Adlington, Richard. ***Life for Life's Sake: A Book of Reminiscences*.** The University of Michigan. Viking Press. (1941).
2. A. King, Roma, et al. (eds) (2012) ***The Complete Works of Robert Browning, Volume v***, Ohio University Press.
3. Bernstein, Charles (1986) ***Content's Dream: Essays 1975-1984***, Los Angeles, Sun & Moon Press.
4. Blackmore, E. H, et al. (2006), ***Stephane Mallarme Collected Poems and Other Verse***, Oxford New York, Oxford University Press.
5. Barasch, Moshe, ***Modern Theories of Art: From Impressionism to Kandinsky***. New York and London. New York University Press. (1998).
6. Booth, C. Wayne. (1983), ***The Rhetoric of Fiction***. New York, The University of Chicago Press.
7. Beach, Christopher. ***Pound and Remaking of American Poetic Tradition***. Berkely, Los Angeles and Oxford. University of California Press, (1992).
8. Day, Aiden (1996), ***Romanticism***, NewYork & London, Routledge.
9. De Selencourt, Ernest (ed.), (1909), ***The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser***, London, Cornell University Library Clarendon Press by Horace Hart, M.A.
10. Derrida, Jacques. (2005), ***Paper Machine***, Stanford California, Stanford University Press.
11. Eliot, T. S. ***Tradition and Individual Talent.*** London. The Egoist. No.4 vol. vi, September, (1919).
12. Finch, Annie. (2005), ***The Body of Poetry: Essays on Women, Form, And The Poetic-Self***, the United States of America, The University of Michigan Press.
13. Finneran, J. Richard (1997), (ch. eds), ***The Collected Works of W. B. YEATS***, New York, SCRIBNER.

14. Genette, Gerard (1983), ***Narrative Discourse G- Reference***, *Information and Interdisciplinary Subjects Series*, New York, Cornell University Press.
15. Genette, Gerard (1991), ***Fiction and Diction***, Catherine Porter (trans.), Ithaca & London, Cornell University Press.
16. Greene, M. Thomas, (1982), ***The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry***, New Haven and London, Yale University Press.
17. Gill, Stephen (ed.), (2004), ***William Wordsworth: Selected Poems***, London, Penguin Books Ltd.
18. Gomringer, Eügene (1968*)*, ***The Book of Hours***, Switzerland, Something Else Press.
19. Gomringer, Eügene (1968*)*, ***Constellations: Being Poems of Eügene Gomringer***, Switzerland, Something Else Press.
20. Goodkin. E, Richard (1984), ***The Symbolist Home and The Tragic Home: Mallarme and Oedipus***, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company.
21. Hulme, T. E. (1906*), A Lecture in Cinders*, in, ***The Collected Writings of T. E. Hulme***, (1994), Centre, Karen (ed), Michigan, Clarendon Press.
22. Hunt, Erica (1993), "Notes for an Oppositional Poetics" (1993), in ***The Politics of Poetic Form: Poetry and Public Policy***, Charles Bernstein (editor), New York, Roof.
23. Hyde, Greet Anne (1980), ***Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War***, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press Berkeley.
24. Kristeva, Julia (1941), ***Revolution in Poetic Language***, New York Guilford, Surrey, Columbia University Press.
25. Larsen, j. Kenneth (1997). ***Edmund Spenser's Amoretti and Epithalamion a Critical Edition***, United States of America, Arizona Board of Regents for Arizona State University.
26. Hammond, Paul (ed:), (2006), ***The Making of Restoration Poetry*** *(Studies in Renaissance Literature)*, London, D. S. Brewer, Cambridge.

27. Howells, Christina (1979), ***Sartre's Theory of Literature***, London, The Modern Humanities Research Association.
28. Hughes, Glenn (1972), ***Imagism and Imagists: A Study in Modern Poetry*.** New York. Stanford University Press.
29. James E, Cutting (2006), ***Impressionism and its canon***. New York. University of America Press.
30. Kenner, Hugh (1985), ***The Poetry of Ezra Pound*.** Lincoln and London, University of Nebraska Press,
31. Nadel, B. Ira. ***The Cambridge Introduction to Ezra Pound*** *(Cambridge Introduction to Literature)*. The United States of America. Cambridge University Press, (2007).
32. Nina, Kalitina (2011), and Nathalia Brodskaia. ***Claude Monet.*** New York, USA. Parkstone Press International,
33. Otis, Laura (2002), ***Literature and Science in the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology*.** Oxford and London. Oxford University Press,
34. Olsen, Flemming (2008), ***Between Positivism and T. S. Eliot: Imagism and T. E. Hulme*.** The United States and Denmark. University of Southern Denmark Press.
35. Perelman, Bob (1996), ***The Marginalization of Poetry: Language Writing and Literary History***, Princeton, Princeton University Press.
36. Pearson, Roger (2010), ***Stephane Mallarme***, London, Reaktion Books Ltd.
37. Pound, Ezra (1-3-1913), "A Few Don'ts By An Imagist", ***Poetry: A Magazine of Verse***, volume1,
38. Pound, Ezra (1957), ***Selected Poems of Ezra Pound*.** New York. New Direction Publishing,
39. Pound, Ezra (1934), ***A B of Reading*.** London and Boston. Faber and Faber.
40. Rees, Garnet (ed:), (1975), ***Guillaume Apollinaire***, London, ATHLONE London and Atlantic Highland, NJ.
41. Rivers, Isabell, (1904), ***Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry***, London and New York, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

42. Robbins, Robin, (ed.), (2008), ***Donne: The Complete Poems of John Donne***, London, Pearson Education Limited.
43. Rebholz, R. A, (ed.), (2013), ***SIR Thomas Wyatt: The Complete Poems***, London, Penguin Books Ltd.
44. Ross, Alex (2016), ***Stephane Mallarme: The Prophet of Modernism***, The New Yorker, the 11th of April.
45. Rothenberg, Gerome (ed.), (1968*),* ***The Book of Hours, and Constellations: Being Poems of Eügene Gomringer***, Switzerland, Something Else Press.
46. Ruthven, Emeritus (1990), ***Ezra Pound as Literary Critic***. London and New York. Routledge Chapman and Hall, Inc,.
47. Schapiro, Barbara Ann (1994). ***Literature and the Relational Self***, New York, New York University Press.
48. Shattuck, Roger, (1971), ***Selected Writings of Guillaume Apollinaire***, Canada, Canada Penguin Books.
49. Stock, Noel (1970), ***The Life of Ezra Pound.*** USA and Canada. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group,
50. Wordsworth, William (1904-1914), ***Lyrical Ballads: Prefaces and Prologues***, Charles W. Eliot. (edited), New York: P.F. Collier & Son.
51. Wordsworth, William. (1807*),* ***Poems in Two Volumes***, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orms.
52. Zachmann, Gayle, (2008), ***Frameworks for Mallarme: The Photo and the Graphic of an Interdisciplinary Aesthetic***, New York, State University of New York Press.

دينامية الأنا الشاعرة:
دراسة في ادبيات شعر القرن العشرين

دكتور/ ناجي رشوان
أستاذ الادب الإنجليزي المساعد بكلية الآداب – جامعة دمنهور

ملخص البحث بالعربية

أحد أكثر الملامح الأدبية شيوعًا وارتباطًا بفعل الكتابة الشاعرية نفسه هو وجود متحدث ملازم لكلمات القصيدة أو صوت لفظي أو هوية ذاتية تحمل علي اكتافها المشاعر التي تقدمها القصيدة والمبادئ المنهجية العامة التي تتبعها في صياغة شكلها المطروح بالإضافة إلى المعلومات الجمالية التي تقدمها عبر هذا الشكل. يُطْلَقُ علي هذه الأنا في أكثر أشكالها وضوحًا تعبير " الذات الاعترافية" أو أحيانا "أدبيات الهوية" وهي ما يعيد هذا البحث تعريفه بصورة أكثر عمومية كـ "الذات الشاعرة". ويقدم هذا البحث جدلا مفاده أن هذه الذات لم تزل موجودة وبشدة مقدمة وظائفها الجمالية المعتادة كما هي دون تغير يذكر بغض النظر عن اختلاف الظرف التاريخي والسياق الثقافي والايديولوجيات السياسية، وسيسعى هذا البحث إلى إثبات أن هذه الذات ووظائفها الجمالية كافة لم تخلع أو تجتز أو حتي يهتز عرشها بأي شكلٍ ذي مغزى أو بأي صورة دقيقة برغم ما تعرضت له من محاولات شرسة من قِبَل حركات كـ "التصويرية"، و"الموضوعية"، و"الشعر المرئي" ، و"الرمزية الفرنسية"، و"الشعر البصري" وغيرهم الكثير. يركز هذا البحث في تلك النقطة علي المدرسة "التصويرية" في الشعر بوصفها أول وأكثر مدارس الشعر التجريبي شهرة وتأثيرًا علي ما تلاها من الحركات وبخاصة فيما يتعلق بأعمال رائدها الفعلي الشاعر الأمريكي الإيطالي المنشأ عزرا باوند (١٨٨٥-١٩٧٢)، والسؤال الذي يطرح نفسه هنا هو: ماهي المغازي الثقافية والجمالية لأدبيات الذات بافتراض حتمية وجودها كجزء مؤسس في لغة الشعر؟ جماليًا تقدم هذه الدراسة جدلًا يفيد إلى أن المغزى الجمالي لهذا النوع من الذات الشاعرة يكمن في مشاعر التحقق القديمة التي يتلقاها الفرد عبر أليات التقليد والتقمص التنفيسي في علاقته بالقصيدة لا مشاعر التسامي التي يقدمها الأدب المعاصر ويتلقاها الفرد عبر آليات الافتراض والعجز الإيجابي كما يؤكد الكثير من النقاد المعاصرين (Lyotard, 1984). أما على المستوى الثقافي المحض يتحدى وجود هذه الذات النقد الماركسي لعمليات تسليع الأدب الرأسمالية عبر التقمص والتأكيد حيث يعتمد هذا النقد في الأساس على وجودها الحتمي غير القابل للمساومة في نسيج اللغة نفسها ومن ثم علي كونها فطرية المنشأ وغير مصنعة أو مفبركة. أما الأدلة على هذا الوجود فهي كثيرة في التاريخ الأدبي كما سنري عبر هذا البحث كله برغم كونها متنوعة في درجات التعقد وأشكال الظهور.