

Introduction

By the time of her death at age twenty-seven, Veronica Forrest-Thomson (1947–75) had produced a remarkable body of poetry and criticism. Her most influential work, *Poetic Artifice: A Theory of Twentieth-Century Poetry*, published posthumously in 1978, turned sharply against critics of the previous generation, notably William Empson, and against emergent strains of historicism. The book is an exhaustive (and sometimes exhausting) defense of “all the rhythmic, phonetic, verbal, and logical devices which make poetry different from prose.” According to Forrest-Thomson, such devices are responsible for poetry’s most significant effect—not pleasure or ornament or some kind of special expressivity, but the production of “alternative imaginary orders.” Artifice “absorbs and transforms” language, and thereby alters our experience of the world language mediates. To see this potential requires the suspension of dominant forms of interpretation—paraphrase, conceptualization, contextualization. Forrest-Thomson calls such critical response “bad naturalization.” “Good naturalization,” on the other hand, begins at the level of non-meaningful structure itself, moving outward to semantic content and eventually to the “external world.” By a process of “expansion and limitation,” artifice acts as a sort of filter that enables insignificant external elements to be discarded from interpretation.

As these idiosyncratic terms attest, this is an ambitious and peculiar theory. At a time when literary studies is struggling, often clumsily, to find new ways of talking about form, *Poetic Artifice* feels remarkably vital. The essays in this portfolio represent an application of this theory to nineteenth-century verse, an archive examined only in passing in *Poetic Artifice*: “One might say...that both the poetry Pound recognised, such as the Cantos, and the poetry he repudiated, such as early Canzoni, are relevant to our situation today. This matter must wait for another book, though, which will concern Pound, the ’Nineties, and the great fictionalisers, Tennyson, Swinburne, Rossetti, who lie behind them.” The book she alludes to, “Obstinate Isles” (1973–75),

exists only as an outline and small group of draft chapters. Even in this rough state, the manuscript is tantalizing. If *Poetic Artifice* was largely concerned with Modernism and its heirs—among them John Ashbery, Andrew Crozier, Robert Lowell, Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath, and Forrest-Thomson’s teacher J. H. Prynne—“Obstinate Isles” is concerned with its precursors. As she explains in the draft introduction, “I hope, by a detailed consideration of Pound’s early poetry in relation to the latter half of the nineteenth century, to help English criticism to touch bottom independently again; the most obvious means is an examination of the devalued qualities of those conventions that lift poetry away from the commonplace and which both the theme and the form of late nineteenth-century poems do stress.”

“His True Penelope Was Flaubert: Ezra Pound and Nineteenth-Century Poetry” is a condensed version of this project. We believe it was written concurrently with “Obstinate Isles” and may be an attempt to work its arguments into an article. The essay is too long to include in full; excisions are marked by section signs. We print the first of two parts from “Lilies from the Acorn,” the manuscript’s unfinished chapter on Rossetti, as a companion to “His True Penelope.” (The second part ends midsentence.) Forrest-Thomson’s microscopic reading of “Death-in-Love” and her articulation of “allegory without a literal level” must stand in this portfolio for the kind of analysis she performs elsewhere in the manuscript. “His True Penelope” provides crucial context for this analysis, and we suggest reading it first. The final essay, “Pastoral and Elegy in some Early Poems of Tennyson” (1973–75), is distinct from the “Obstinate Isles” project. Like so much of Forrest-Thomson’s work, it represents an attempt to come to terms with aspects of Empson’s thought, in this case his definition of pastoral as the “process of putting the complex into the simple.” Forrest-Thomson identifies in Tennyson’s neglected early poetry a curious combination of pastoral with elegy. She argues that this invented genre enables a distinctive kind of “fictionalization” in which landscape and object and character tend to blur. “Elegiac pastoral” transforms directed grief into generalized mood, absorbing past and future in a timeless present.

The essays exist only in single versions, and are clearly drafts. They have been edited for clarity. Edits are primarily orthographic and grammatical; in some instances, sentences have been slightly

adjusted on a case-by-case assessment of Forrest-Thomson's intentions. Readers interested in locating other work by Forrest-Thomson should consult Alison Mark's excellent bibliography in *Veronica Forrest-Thomson and Language Poetry* (2001).

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*from His True Penelope was Flaubert: Ezra Pound and
Nineteenth-Century Poetry*

Pound's relations with the nineteenth century have always been ambivalent, and this ambivalence can help us to situate with some precision the alternatives available to him at the crucial beginnings of his career. Such study will have the incidental merit of bringing into contemporary attention the vital work of Swinburne, Tennyson, Rossetti, and the 'Nineties, which the theories of ordinary language poetry have submerged. It was, of course, in the name of "ordinary language" that Pound rejected his earlier style—in the name of "The Prose Tradition in Verse." An attempt to extract a consistent attitude from Pound's own writings in prose would be doomed to failure, and so we are left with the practice to guide us, and the first thing to be clarified seems to be whether the break with worn-out rhetoric was as radical as Pound believed.

Out of the welter of claims and ideas, we can find some illumination from the statement that "Wordsworth was so intent on the ordinary or plain word that he never thought of hunting for *le mot juste*."¹ Just, of course, to what? An answer to that question takes us into causes disguised as reasons and vice versa:

I should like to break up *cliché*, to disintegrate these magnetised groups that stand between the reader of poetry and the drive of it.... For it is not until poetry lives again "close to the thing" that it will be a vital part of contemporary life.... The only way to escape from rhetoric...is through beauty—"beauty of the thing," certainly, but besides that, "beauty of the means...." We must have a simplicity and directness of utterance, which is different from the simplicity and directness of daily speech.... This difference, this dignity, cannot be conferred by florid adjectives or elaborate hyperbole; it must be conveyed by art, and by the art of the verse structure, by something which exalts the reader, making him feel that he is in contact with something arranged more finely than the commonplace.²

Now, what is this “beauty of the means” if not rhetoric purged of its pejorative connotations? One kind of rhetoric is substituted for another, giving rise to a new set of justifications, but what is altered is the relation of poetic language to other kinds of language, and the alteration comes for reasons given in “the art of the verse structure,” reasons normally attributed to the non-verbal world. The elaborate vorticist comparison of the interaction of words with cones of steel that, when placed in relation, radiate sparks is equated with the power of genius to perceive new relations—a pretty traditional idea—and this perception of relations is justified by the “beauty of the means.” As Pound says, “Let the poet who has been not too long ago born make very sure of this, that no one cares to hear, in strained iambics, that he feel sprightly in spring, is uncomfortable when his sexual desires are ungratified, and that he has read about human brotherhood in last year’s magazines.”³

Well, let us call the bluff. And since it is the nineteenth century with which we are dealing, our counterexamples had better come from there.

When vain desire at last and vain regret
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
And teach the unforgetful to forget?⁴

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell;⁵

O let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet;⁶

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields.
Rosy is the West,⁷

Let me ask grace; for I,
Being loved, loved not again.
Now springtime makes me love,
And bids me satisfy
The lover whose fierce pain
I thought too lightly of:⁸

If you loved me ever so little,
I could bear the bonds that gall,
I could dream the bonds were brittle;
You do not love me at all.⁹

A gift of Silence, sweet!
Who may not even hear:
To lay down at your unobservant feet,
Is all the gift I bear.¹⁰

So much for the joys and sorrows of love—chiefly the sorrows, of course; it is an interesting hypothesis that the poetry of the last two hundred years would make a *prima facie* case that a man who is happy in love does not write poetry. The brotherhood of man is more difficult to exemplify, but we shall not be afraid of much-handled examples.

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.”¹¹

Not hear? when noise was everywhere? it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears,
Of all the old adventurers my peers,—
How such a one was strong, and such was bold
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost! one moment kindled the woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hill-sides—met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame

I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slughorn to my lips I set
And blew. "*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.*"¹²

Quite a formidable crowd: Rossetti, Tennyson, Swinburne, Browning, Dowson, *et beaucoup d'autres encore*. But, of course, these are far from strained iambics, and it is not poetry of this quality that Pound is attacking; he attacks the diluters, the imitators, the Henleys, Brookes, the Georgians generally. And, if he were not very much indebted to the poets I have quoted above, there would have been little point in the demonstration.

The crux, however, is the existence of rhetoric in these late nineteenth-century masters and rhetoric's connection with the techniques of the "prose tradition in verse" that Pound helped to develop, as he thought, in opposition to rhetoric. The twofold aspect of this tradition has been summed up by Pound himself in elaborating the vorticist comparison of electrified steel cones with the interaction of words:

This peculiar energy which fills the cones is the power of tradition, of centuries of race consciousness, of agreement, of association; and the control of it is the "Technique of Content," which nothing short of genius understands.

There is the slighter "technique of manner," a thing reducible almost to rules, a matter of "j's" and "d's," of order and sequence, a thing attenuable, a thing verging off until it degenerates into rhetoric; and this slighter thing is also a thing of price, notwithstanding that all the qualities which differentiate poetry from prose are things born before syntax; this technique of surface is valuable above its smoother virtues simply because it is technique, and because technique is the only gauge and test of a man's lasting sincerity.¹³

Two kinds of rhetoric, then, though Pound calls them "technique of content" and "technique of manner," reserving "rhetoric" only for the abuse of the latter. Such abuse, clear from Pound's remarks on Wordsworth, consists in finding a word that will approximate the nonlinguistic phenomena that Pound at his Imagist stage considered the final area of arbitration in trying the case of various poetic styles. The "beauty of the means" is merely incidental in discovering this

word or phrase or arrangement, or "the art of the verse structure." As Pound says in his memoir of Gaudier-Brzeska, "the point of Imagisme is that it does not use images as ornaments. The image is itself the speech. The image is the word beyond formulated language."¹⁴ Unless Pound is clairvoyantly anticipating Eliot's "word within a word, unable to speak for words" (shut up Henry Reed),¹⁵ this word or image is the interaction of two words or two kinds of verbal organization and it is only through this interaction that any configuration of non-verbal phenomena will take place.

Which brings us to the old form/content dichotomy with a new perspective. The dichotomy presupposes that language and the non-verbal world are discontinuous, but—not to drag in unnecessary philosophical problems—how could this be when the world is given to us largely through language and poetry is given to us largely through the layering of one kind of language upon another? The case is simply one of reading between the lines and relating the two kinds of rhetoric—that concerned with persuasion about the non-verbal world and that concerned with making this persuasion beautiful in itself. If, as Pound has just said, "technique is the only gauge of a man's lasting sincerity," clearly this sincerity cannot be a matter of "telling the truth" but a matter of organizing the truth, and, as far as poetry is concerned, the truth has as much to do with "beauty of the means" as with "beauty of the thing." It is, of course, "beauty of the means" that has so much been neglected in recent ordinary language poetry, which takes up the Wordsworthian "man speaking to men" and the slogan of "back to Hardy"—that is, back to personal utterance, where the means are largely taken for granted.¹⁶ But we shall fall into the same trap if we follow the opposite extreme, *poésie pure*, Concrete or Sound Poetry, from which all connections with other languages have been removed, for in that case the technique of content by which Pound rightly sets such store will be unable to provide enough "thickness" of texture to combat the thickness of relation between other languages and the non-verbal phenomenal or empirical world.¹⁷

We shall equally fall into a trap if we try, as did the "New Critics" some thirty years ago or the French Structuralists today, to claim that content and form—the usual names for "beauty of the thing" and "beauty of the means"—are the same thing. They are not the same thing. Nor are they in polarized opposition. They are connected in a

variety of different ways and relations of dominance, and it is our job to decipher or decode, as the semiologists say, these connections.

§

Stale creampuffs. Notoriously thus has Pound described his early poems, written strongly under nineteenth-century influence, largely suppressed, and not reprinted until 1965. Unfortunately, having access to copyright libraries, I have been able to read them, and I have also had the benefit of Christopher de Nagy's fascinating and infuriating study, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: The Pre-Imagist Stage* (1960). These are, of course, far from being exclusive qualifications, but when my special attitude to Tennyson, Swinburne, and the 'Nineties is added, plus my ideas about artifice, rhetoric, and fiction, the mixture promises something at least out of the common run. "As to why a reprint," says Pound in his foreword to the 1965 edition of *A Lume Spento* (first published in Venice in 1908 and never seen since), "No lessons to be learned save the depth of ignorance, or rather the superficiality of non-perception—neither eye nor ear."¹⁸ I think he underrated himself; he was defining eye and ear according to the Imagist or even Ideographic aesthetic of the thing in itself, outside language, as the true test of accuracy. We have other aesthetics of rhetoric, and we can take a lesson from Eliot before demonstrating how well Pound's repudiated early work shows this. Eliot says somewhere that in matters of style it is just as bad for a poet to be precise when he should be vague as vague when he should be precise.¹⁹ Eliot's introduction to his selection of Pound's poems²⁰ is a very interesting document in the case. Among other things, he says that Pound learned the speaking voice from the nineteenth century (not excepting Swinburne) and the singing voice from Italian and Provençal. Now, I haven't yet rigorously studied Pound's Italian and Provençal sources, but after the demonstration in song of Rossetti's earnest lyricism, Tennyson's *Maud*, Swinburne's inveterate lyricism, and Dowson's crafty lyricism, I should think it not rash to say that Pound learnt song as well as speech from the nineteenth century. We stretch our dialectic between Browning's *Bishop Blougram's Apology* and Dowson's *Cynara* (with Swinburne's *Faustine* hovering like a vampire in the background.)

Before more carping, however, let us consider one of the stale creampuffs:

Heart mine, art mine, whose embraces
Clasp but wind that past thee bloweth?
E'en this air so subtly gloweth,
Guerdoned by thy sun-gold traces,
That my heart is half afraid
For the fragrance on him laid;²¹

This is the first stanza of "Canzon: To Be Sung beneath a Window." Now, if we rid ourselves of the preconceptions about inflated rhetoric and poetry as ordinary language that Pound has been instrumental in creating, what are our first reactions to this stanza? Clearly, the content is of no possible importance; it is as much conventionalized as the elaborate stanza. The poet is not speaking about his own emotions; he is presenting us with a fictional situation in which people sing canzoni beneath their ladies' windows. (Did anyone actually do this? Not that the question has any importance for the present discussion, but I suppose it has some sort of historical interest.) But the canzone as a poetic form cannot be sung, since its complexities of formal pattern would only be distorted by a tune; only the most simple lyrics, which are amenable to distortion, can actually be set to music. Could anyone, even Benjamin Britten, envisage setting to music William Dunbar's "Hale, sterne superne! Hale, in eterne"? Only an idiot who had no ear and was incapable of realizing that metrical and rhythmical complexities like these cannot be tampered with by the alien patterns of music or voice. In fact, Pound's "Canzon" has much in common with Dunbar's piece, the same kind of variation on sounds within the line ("Heart mine, art mine, whose embraces"). These variable sounds feed in from the rhyme-word to the assonances and alliterations of the rest of the line, and even dictate the shape of the stanza.

Where Dunbar's piece is so much greater, of course, is precisely where this technical virtuosity is combined with the seriousness of content that Pound at this stage could not manage. For a long time, Pound thought that "technique of content" must come from an opposition to "rhetoric" rooted in everyday speech and the external language of politics, linguistics, social and economic theory; only in *The Pisan Cantos* does he finally and triumphantly get back to the proper poetic ground of conventionalized and fictionalized meaning combined with innovation in traditional form. A strong resemblance,

indeed, exists between these very early poems and the later Cantos, which puzzles those who like to think of *The Pisan Cantos* as personal lyric and try to assimilate them to "ordinary language poetry." That this cannot be done has been recognized by Hugh Kenner, among others.²² Here we must note that Pound cannot afford Dunbar's great strength for mixing frivolity, even facetiousness, with high seriousness; Pound has to make his content banal so that he can concentrate on his form, since he is not yet ready to begin the long and arduous process of developing a new form to cope with the extremes of new content.

§

Eliot included "Canzon: the Yearly Slain" in his selection under the heading "Early poems rejected by the author" because he was able to perceive its quality. The poem uses, of course, the myth of Persephone that was so popular with Swinburne, Rossetti, and their followers, but it uses that myth with an almost Browningsque vigor that they were not able—in justice did not try—to attain.²³ And the reason for that is that Pound believed the myth:

I

Ah! red-leafed time hath driven out the rose
And crimson dew is fallen on the leaf
Ere ever yet the cold white wheat be sown
That hideth all earth's green and sere and red;
The Moon-flower's fallen and the branch is bare,
Holding no honey for the starry bees;
The Maiden turns to her dark lord's demesne.

II

Fairer than Enna's field when Ceres sows
The stars of hyacinth and puts off grief,
Fairer than petals on May morning blown
Through apple-orchards when the sun hath shed
His brighter petals down to make them fair;
Fairer than these the Poppy-crowned One flees,
And Joy goes weeping in her scarlet train.

[...]

IV

Korè my heart is, let it stand sans gloze!
 Love's pain is long, and lo, love's joy is brief!
 My heart erst alway sweet is bitter grown;
 As crimson ruleth in the good green's stead,
 So grief hath taken all mine old joy's share
 And driven forth my solace and all ease
 Where pleasure bows to all-usurping pain.

[...]

VI

Crimson the hearth where one last ember glows!
 My heart's new winter hath no such relief,
 Nor thought of Spring whose blossom he hath known
 Hath turned him back where Spring is banishèd.
 Barren the heart and dead the fires there,
 Blow! O ye ashes where the winds shall please,
 But cry, "Love also is the Yearly Slain."

VII

Be sped, my Canzon, through the bitter air!
 To him who speaketh words as fair as these,
 Say that I also know the "Yearly Slain."²⁴

I suppose I shall have to repeat that Pound's strength comes from the fact that he believed literally what was only a fiction to the English nineteenth century. I do not mean that he believed literally the myth of Proserpina seeking flowers, a fairer flower herself by gloomy Dis was gathered,²⁵ nor even that he believed in the transience of love. What he believed was the value and vigor of beautifully shaped words—"who speaketh words as fair as these"—to create an earthly paradise. (It was only in the last Cantos that he tried his literal belief in the poet-mage to create "a paradise terrestre" and found it wanting.) And he got this belief partly from the Italian and Provençal sources, which seemed new to him as an American, whereas to the English they had been assimilated before Chaucer, partly from his own personal energy, but mainly—what is our chief concern here—from the blend of the work of Swinburne, Browning, and other nineteenth-century poets he was able to allow himself. "Who speaketh words as fair as these"? Well, Rossetti, Tennyson, Swinburne.²⁶ Pound absorbed nineteenth-century

poetic rhetoric and changed it with something that, if we like to be generous, we can say he got from Browning or some more energetic and less skillfully monotonous master.

We could invoke "My Last Duchess," for example, where Browning's reach doesn't exceed his grasp and the powers of dramatic monologue are well displayed. I seem to have let myself in for another batch of lengthy quotation, but it can't be helped. The external world and theme are both given in the title, "My Last Duchess: Ferrara," as in "Canzon: To Be Sung beneath a Window," but there the resemblance ends, with a certain vigor and coordination that Pound learns from Browning's directness but absorbs with a subtlety Browning never reached. This poem, however, is Browning's nearest approximation to it; the pentameter couplet is quite freely handled to accommodate the cadence of speech, and the cadence of speech is quite skillfully handled to accommodate the persona of the homicidal duke. I say "persona" here because the poet's dog is very much in eclipse, being confined to the arrangement of the meter, rhythm, and rhyme, and, of course, to the projection on these of the persona itself—a case of the dog leading its master.²⁷

In fact, the first few lines of the piece show quite a skillful use of matching line breaks with rhyme and the natural pauses of speech:

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.²⁸

This is projected so well that even had the piece been unfinished we could guess just what kind of character the ghastly duke was and what he had done to his last duchess. Partly we know this from the inferred fact that he is speaking to a third party, whom he is, presumably, showing over to his castle; his motives for doing this could be various as could his attitude both to the task and the inevitable confrontation with the past. And they are various, both. I don't think we guess from these first four lines that he is giving a conducted tour to an emissary from the father of his next duchess, but it certainly seems that the unfortunate emissary is being made to participate in a private joke of the duke's, because the emissary stands in some special relation to the duke's duchesses, last and next.

On the other hand, the duke is clearly enjoying a private joke of his own, connected with his last duchess and with the fact that her portrait looks as if she were alive when she is in fact dead. There could only be one reason for this: that the duke who caused her portrait to be painted also caused her death. And he cannot afford to let the emissary know this, for the cupidity of the father of the unfortunate next duchess would surely stop short of giving his daughter in marriage to a homicidal maniac. Thus the duke is also gambling a little on what he might himself let out if the emissary had been less of a toadying cretin.

Now, note that since I have begun to discuss this poem I have been talking exactly as if the revolting duke, the cretinous emissary, the ambitious father, and the two wretched duchesses were real people. What a lapse! What a flaw! When my whole argument is that personae in poems are never real people (even as we think we understand real people), that they borrow every changing shape as the technique demands, that it almost never demands complete consistency of character and the illusion of non-verbal reality, and that even if it did, since it must be couched (if only perfunctorily) in the artificial medium of verse, it could not achieve this illusion. But did I not also say that the whole point about rhetoric was that it could use the level of meaning and meaning's extension into non-verbal phenomena and situations to achieve fictitious ends? And what else, pray, is Browning doing here? He is not pursuing some profound thematic purpose or presenting some penetratingly subtle perception; we all know that killing people is wrong, especially for the kind of reasons the duke gives; if we don't, we are not likely to be convinced by a poem, still less by one based on our acceptance of this rule. Browning is pursuing the limited but respectable purpose of presenting an imaginary scene and making imaginary actors vivid (whether or not a Duke of Ferrara actually did murder one of his wives because she wasn't starchy enough may have interested Browning, but it doesn't interest us). This is not the usual purpose of nineteenth-century poetry or the area of its greatest achievements, but we must concede that Browning had every right to do what he liked, and here, at least, he admirably succeeds.

But he does not succeed without help from the special techniques of fiction and especially verse fiction; it would not be possible without them. I have already mentioned the blending of poetic rhythm, meter, rhyme, and speech rhythm, and this in itself shows that Browning

was aware of the need to bring the other nonmeaningful patterns into his—forgive the word in this context—picture. Further, of course, he is consciously using the fictional devices of drama, especially seventeenth-century tragedies like those of Middleton, Tourneur, Webster, and Ford (not to mention one greater man), which, no one I hope needs reminding, are very far from being models of everyday life in the suburbs or even in gorgeous palaces. At the risk of banality, we could say that, in this piece, Browning is making a medium-short poem stand for a scene in one of these tragedies—say, the chess game in “Women Beware Women”²⁹—where the leading character is talking to himself and all the others are talking at cross purposes without knowing what is really going on or how they fit in with the decor (don’t mention Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, please). The difference here is that only one voice is speaking, and the other, the subvoice, the poet who arranges, has to act all the rest of the parts himself.

The poet does this, of course, by using the other levels of poetic technique, knowing full well that a short poem will be given more attention by an audience of respectful readers than any scene in a fast-moving play could possibly arouse. Since this is the case, let us look at the other levels. I have already mentioned the way speech cadence is fitted into the rhythm of the rhymed pentameter line; it isn’t likely with Browning that we shall find a great deal more to interest us in the formal pattern at nonmeaningful levels; therefore we should look for patterns on the fictional dramatic level that Browning has absorbed into the repertoire of poetic technique. First, of course, we have the scene set by the speech of the main character; this is very Shakespearean, except that in Shakespeare usually a minor character sets the scene. Such stage setting is impossible in a monologue poem because the minor characters cannot speak. The opening “that’s” is what a linguist would call anaphoric—it refers back to something outside the utterance itself: the portrait of the last duchess, which we cannot see. However, it is also homophoric—referring to itself as an object—and kataphoric—referring to something that follows and explains it (“my last duchess painted on the wall”). So that a multiple use of one word can give us the non-verbal scene, the absorption of the non-verbal by a single word, and the reaction of the speaker to both of these things: in this case, the duke’s view of his duchess as a mere picture, inanimate even before her death, which he has brought.

about with ruthless amorality, since he never really thought of her as alive in the first place.

This is quite a lot for a first line to be doing, especially as it sums up the theme when taken with the title and provides the first rhyme for the first couplet. In fact, the rest of the poem just enlarges and elaborates the situation and attitudes presented in the first line and clinched in the next three. The middle of the poem deteriorates somewhat toward Browning's other clumsiness and lack of technical skill:

—all and each

Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-year-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop

But the very next lines retrieve the mastery of the beginning:

Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive.

Browning evidently thought (and we can hardly blame him overmuch since everyone except the despised aesthetes has thought the same, right up to the present day) that you make a persona and situation and theme vivid by presenting them through broken phrases and ordinary language, trying to ignore the level of formal patterning. Nevertheless, we can see that he could on occasion write with skillful attention to the "decorative and symbolic"—look at the echo of the first two lines

in the last two quoted above—and that this need not work against the vivid presentation of “dramatic monologue.” Indeed, Browning had developed a medium in which drama and artistry could be combined, but it was Pound, with his dual influences,³⁰ who struck the real gold in this new area of development.

§

We may now look at other early poems and observe how this blend of dual influences works. Of course, the note printed in the original *A Lume Spento* (1908) and in the new edition (1965) to accompany “La Fraisine” makes clear beyond any doubt that Pound derived his strength largely from the literalness with which he believed what for the Pre-Raphaelites, Swinburne, the 'Nineties, and even Yeats—in their saner moments—could be nothing but a convenient fiction. And with this literalness goes a faith in the very artificial forms that do the fictionalizing; Pound believed that these verse techniques were an earthly and verbal equivalent of Plato's eternal forms of reality (oddly enough, the position that Plato himself implicitly held). Already with “Canzon: The Yearly Slain” we have seen that he could blend the myth of Persephone with the myth of the death of love in a way that carries more conviction than even Swinburne's blending, because it has an added freshness of verse technique that Swinburne, sophisticated, overeducated, overcivilized even in his sexual perversion, could not reach.

In *A Lume Spento*, for instance, we find such a piece as this, which could almost have been written by Algernon Charles himself:

Exquisite loneliness:

Bound of mine own caprice,
I fly on the wings of an unknown chord
That ye hear not,
Can not discern.
My music is weird and untamed,
Barbarous, wild, extreme,
I fly on the note that ye hear not,
On the chord that ye can not dream.
And lo, your out-worn harmonies are behind me
As ashes and mouldy bread,

I die in the tears of morning,
I kiss the wall of the dead.
My joy is the wind of heaven,
My drink is the gall of night,
My love is the light of meteors;
The autumn leaves in flight.³¹

The last two quatrains here are pure Swinburne, and so is the middle quatrain—"My music"—

My heart swims blind in a sea
That stuns me; swims to and fro,
And gathers to windward and lee
Lamentation, and mourning, and woe.

A broken, an emptied boat,
Sea saps it, winds blow apart,
Sick and adrift and afloat,
The barren waif of a heart.

These two stanzas are from "Satia Te Sanguine," whose first stanza we took as one of our examples of regular iambic quatrain,³² but we see that almost immediately Swinburne takes up/is taken up by his typical trisyllabic anapestic meter, with a fair sprinkling of spondees and dactyls to give variety. And Pound's piece follows him. Not, however, entirely. The opening ("Exquisite loneliness") and the inserted extrametrical long line, "And lo, your out-worn harmonies are behind me," could not have been found in Swinburne; they are distinctly Pound's own.

Now it would take a bold man (or woman) to say that Swinburne couldn't master any kind of verse he chose, and I do not say it for that is not in question. Swinburne did frequently write in other meters and conducted experiments with just such long-lined, extrametrical verse. But except when it was in a play deliberately modeled on a Greek tragedy—*Atlanta in Calydon*, of course—where he seems to have thought that the intolerable hendecasyllables of the dialogue and narrative made his typical anapests in the choruses into classical meters, he did not deliberately mix his meters. Pound, on the contrary, very frequently mixed his meters in order to give the effect of

uncertainty, hesitancy, otherworldliness that he wanted as content. In fact, when he was beginning to cast the old modes of canzone, sestina, rondel, etc., into his new and freer rhythms, precisely this mixture is one of his main supports. It fits with his literalness and his variation of the persona as a valve for assimilating new content without losing contact with the content preserved in old forms.

We have said that he believed in this content as in the myth of Persephone and the death of love, and we had better take another look at one of his early poems in the old forms before moving on into the techniques he developed in contact with them.³³ This one is "Canzon: Of Incense" and it is most readily accessible in Eliot's *Selected Poems*. This *Selected Poems*, which includes those fascinating early ones that Pound wished to destroy, is one more signal service Possum performed for the literature of this benighted country—however, I digress. The piece first appeared in *Canzoni* (1911), but we may guess that it was written earlier. In any case, here are some stanzas from it:

I

Thy gracious ways,

O Lady of my heart, have
O'er all my thought their golden glamour cast;
As amber torch-flames, where strange men-at-arms
Tread softly 'neath the damask shield of night,
Rise from the flowing steel in part reflected,
So on my mailed thought that with thee goeth,
Though dark the way, a golden glamour falleth.

II

The censer sways

And glowing coals some art have
To free what frankincense before held fast
Till all the summer of the eastern farms
Doth dim the sense, and dream up through the light,
As memory, by new-born love corrected
With savour such as only new love knoweth—
Through swift dim ways the hidden-pasts recalleth.

III

On barren days,

At hours, when I, apart, have

Bent low in thought of the great charm thou hast,
Behold with music's many-stringed charms
The silence groweth thou. O rare delight!
The melody upon clear strings inflected
Were dull when o'er taut sense thy presence floweth,
With quivering notes' accord that never palleth.

[...]

V

All things worth praise

That unto Khadeeth's mart have
From far been brought through perils over-passed,
All santal, myrrh, and spikenard that disarms
The pard's swift anger; these would weigh but light
'Gainst thy delights, my Khadeeth! Whence protected
By naught save her great grace that in him showeth,
My song goes forth and on her mercy calleth.

VI

O censer of the thought that golden gloweth,
Be bright before her when the evening falleth.

VII

Fragrant be thou as a new field one moweth,
O song of mine that "Hers" her mercy calleth.³⁴

Now, I'm willing to bet ten guineas to a brass farthing—as they used to say—that Pound never knew anyone named Khadeeth with a mart full of the spices of the East. And it doesn't matter if this was just a pseudonym for his ladylove of the moment either. The dialogue in the poem is between Pound and his technical skill. But it is because he believes in the content that he can exercise the technical skill. And what is the content? Well, the last line quoted above makes clear that it is the old Neoplatonic stuff about an ultimate reality unreachable through anything but mysticism and poetic form. This, of course, is what the Pre-Raphaelites believed too, but as I say, not with the literal wholeheartedness that could be felt by the young American from Pennsylvania.

What matters is the technical skill that sets Pound apart from the

Pre-Raphaelites, the 'Nineties, and even Swinburne. (Not that these poets were not supremely skillful, but their skills were different.) Having said my say about the Italian and Provençal influences—which may account for Pound's distinctiveness in terms of influence³⁵—I may now say that this juggling of resemblances and differences has nothing to do with the tracing of influences. Influence is a convenient but misleading term, for it suggests a causal relation between a poet and his masters, which is very far from true. What a poet learns from his revered predecessors is not a content but a way of transcending content by form. As if one were to claim that Swinburne's "The Triumph of Time," Rossetti's *House of Life* sonnets, Dowson's *Cynara*, or Yeats's "old, old men" had *caused* Pound's early poetry by some process of self-generation (like worms in the mud), whereas in fact they gave him a set of formal poetic *reasons*, in the shape of a certain content and a certain way of dealing with it, for developing his own devices with which to transform content into form. And these reasons are to be found partly by comparison with known "influence" and observed resemblances, but mainly in the peculiarity of the poems themselves.

We can now examine how Pound's yeast leavens the brew of nineteenth-century Neoplatonism and the artificial form of the canzone in "Of Incense." First, as always, we have a title, and here it bears a rather tenuous relation to the first line. Titles are usually descriptive, explanatory, expanding on the theme from the level of meaning, but this title seems to obfuscate such a relation, for it can hardly be the gracious ways of incense that are either the dog's heart or have cast a golden glamour over it. Incense is a metonymy for all the associations of mystery, the exotic East, the glamorous lady whom the poet wishes to invoke through his dog. We may think that Swinburne's *Faustine* or Dowson's "Little lady of my heart" or Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott" are just an excuse to set the key of the formal pattern, but at least they make a pretense of referring to a real, fictionalized situation stated as theme by the title.³⁶ Pound does not even do that; he is more interested in his sound and line pattern to bother about any puzzle the reader may feel about the relation between the title and the first line. And, in fact, the reader (unless a carping analyst like myself) feels no puzzle, for he accepts immediately that he is transported into an inhabitant of the alien world of imaginative construction, and the reader gets this effect from all three levels of

artifice. From the thematic level, as we have seen, he gets the dubiety of connection between title and first line, so that he is not quite sure what the theme is anyway; from the conventional level, he gets the elaborate line scheme and can guess at the highly artificial stanza as a whole; from the level of formal pattern, he gets the "poetic diction" of "o'er" and the assonance and alliteration.³⁷ (From a combination of all three levels, he gets "rhythm," but "rhythm" is practically impossible to isolate and is, as such, the Achilles heel of any theory of poetry.) Thus from this triple combination the reader realizes that he is subjected to new rules according to which the level of meaning is trivialized, and that he is to take pleasure in the artificiality of the details.

That pleasure can be very great. Especially when such an artificial form as the canzone is combined with an exciting fictional context such as the "strange men-at-arms" who pick up an echo with "my mailed thought," the swaying censer, the spices of the Earth, and the mysterious Khadeeth (whom I must admit I was surprised to find, expecting some lady, either Provençal or unidentified). One sees from all this why Eliot chose this canzone rather than our earlier "Canzon: To Be Sung beneath a Window" for his collection; it has more fictional "action," Eliot might even say much more "reality," more "objective correlative," than the window canzone, and is more skillful technically. In fact, Eliot has said exactly this: "He is much more modern, in my opinion, when he deals with Italy and Provence than when he deals with modern life. His Bertrand de Born is much more living than his Mr. Hecatomb Syrax (*Mouers Contemporaines*)."³⁸ We shall come to Bertrand de Born in due course,³⁹ and I should agree with Eliot about the fact that the poem is better, and indeed the earlier poems in general are better, than the poems that deal with contemporary life under the aesthetic of Imagism. But I should not situate its superiority in its greater "reality," but rather, if I may so phrase it, in its greater "unreality"; it has more levels, more artificiality, and consequently more fictional contexts to oppose the flatness of the prose tradition in verse.⁴⁰

To retake our bearings from Eliot's introduction. He stresses the continuous development of Pound's verse and refers, in a manner I must disagree with, to "strong influences" of Browning and Yeats, which are "the 'Nineties in general." But, by doing so, he restates an important point for us:

In each of these influences [Nineties and the Provençal and Italian] we must distinguish between influence of form and influence of content; but, on the other hand, no one can be influenced by form or by content without being influenced by the other; and the tangle of influences is one which we can only partially resolve. Any particular influence of one poet on another is both form and content. The former is perhaps the easier to trace.⁴¹

My objections to this use of influence have already been stated; my objections to the distinction between form and content are stated by Eliot himself. If the distinction can be made only in such a way as to result in "a tangle of influences" only partially to be resolved, it is of no use to us. On the other hand, there is a distinction between the two things we normally call form and content, and also an indissoluble link; as Eliot says, no one, and we may say this goes for the reader as well as the poet, can be influenced by the form without being influenced by the content. And for the real poet (though not, alas, for many readers), the reverse is equally true: no one can be influenced by the content without being influenced by the form. What I have been attempting with my talk of formal pattern, meter, rhythm, meaning, theme, is to open up an area where we can see the distinction between form and content in a different way: as a gradation rather than a polarity. If there is a polarity, it is between poetry and ordinary language, but I'm inclined to think that that is a gradation too, whence my stress on there being an imagined or conventional context to fictionalize.

With this in mind, we may now look at the context of "Canzon: Of Incense." And since I'm bored (and no doubt you are also) by talking about the vowel patterns and so on, let's start at the other end and talk about the point where meaning implies an external non-verbal context. We can discount the address to the lady for two reasons. First, it introduces an ambiguity in the relation between title and theme that we have already commented upon, and which could only be retrieved by a later development of this juxtaposition. We shall see later whether such a development of extended metaphor occurs, but it is not normal in this mode of artificial writing, whose conventions dictate the second reason for discounting the address to the lady: such a theme is given with the canzone form itself. A canzone is "to be sung beneath a window"; that is, its external context is as fixed on the level of theme as a fictional persona—i.e., the poet masquerading

as lover—which restricts the manner in which the non-verbal world is let into the poem. In the present canzone, a subtitle also reinforces such restriction: “(To this form sings Arnault Daniel, with seven stanzas instead of five).”

That subtitle, however, not only reinforces my point that it was vital to Pound’s style to believe more literally than his English counterparts in the existence of his models as people in real life, but also that the process of developing his own freedom within limitation has already begun. And we can see this in the introduction of the “strange men-at-arms.” To be sure, they are quickly swallowed up by the conventional unreality of the “damask shield of night” and “mailed thought,” which are as nearly meaningless as possible and conform to the artificial convention that detaches meaning from non-verbal reference. Nevertheless, we can see that Pound is mixing this new image with the formal pattern—“*amber*” “*all*” “*strange*” “*softly*” “*neath*” “*damask*” interact in sound among themselves—and thus linking it with the conventional level that his form and his need to find a foothold in the past demand. A similar ambivalence characterizes the appearance of the “eastern farms” and “Khadeeth’s mart,” which are introduced first for the rhyme pattern and only second for symbols of “Khadeeth” herself. Now, as symbols for Khadeeth herself they can have no possible resting place (place of coexistence) except in the mind of the poet, but the mind of the poet has been transferred to his dog/persona. And it is a rule of interpreting poetry than nothing can be more real (have more relations) than the “I” of the poem, the master who controls the dog.

This basic fact is quite simple to see when one remembers that all the relations in a poem have to be brought to relation with a single point, which is the reader. This is not to say that “everything coheres” or should be made to; in fact, my whole argument about the shifting valve stresses the opposite. But neither the reader nor the “master” (poet in the poem) is a simple, single point. This doesn’t seem so paradoxical if we take an analogy from mathematics: no point can have zero extension, but the theory requires that a point is defined as that which has zero extension; therefore, the point has both.⁴² A philosophical puzzle; but it is easy to see that a thing may be both complex and single. Thus it is with the poet in the poem; he is defined by the reader as a single point of reference, but when the reader

examines more closely he finds that this single point is broken up into a variety of relations that destroy its unity. In fact, the reader and the poet are dissolved in the relations that make up the poem. So that the reader is another species of dog. Which is not hard to understand when we recall that the "I" and "you" are equally subject to permutation according as the other levels require their acquirement of relations.

In the present example, the "strange men-at-arms" have fewer relations than "incense"; "incense" than "Khadeeth"; "Khadeeth" than the "lady of my heart"; and all these than the reader—who may as well be called a hound since the poet's persona is to be called a dog—who makes up the "you" of the poem, its addressee, in opposition to the poet, who is the addresser through all these other relations.

Of course, the poet as addresser is only part of the poet as organizer of the entire poem, its master. Such a complex of relations has already been examined in "To Be Sung Beneath a Window," and the point made that the main function of the master is to regulate the absorption of the external world through the variety of levels, including that of personae, in the poem. Part of Pound's development from the later nineteenth century is exactly his innovation and expansion of this function; and, if the strength came partly from innocence of the centuries' weight behind his English models, it was combined nonetheless with an awareness of the possibilities of invention that is distinctively his own. And this awareness is what we are trying to isolate and discover.

Eliot shows himself perfectly aware of this, though, as usual, he relates it to the external world: "Throughout the work of Pound there is what we might call a steady effort towards the synthetic construction of a *style of speech*. In each of the elements or strands there is something of Pound and something of some other not further analysable; the strands go to make one rope, but the rope is not yet complete."⁴³ Naturally, this "some other" is not further analyzable if we insist on the "style of speech" (my italics), and further relate this to ordinary speech and the external world as a standard by which poetry is to be measured. But if we know—to put the thing at its lowest—that the relation is one of give and take, and give and take moreover within the system of poetry—then there is no reason why our analysis should not proceed.

Notes

Forrest-Thomson's endnotes are missing; citations are to original sources or standard editions.

1/ "A Retrospect," in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1968), 7. Original publication 1918.

2/ "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: XI," in *The New Age* 10, no. 16 (February 15, 1912): 370.

3/ "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: IX," in *The New Age* 10, no. 13 (January 25, 1912): 298-99.

4/ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, from *The House of Life*, "Sonnet CI. The One Hope," in *Collected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jerome McGann (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 171.

5/ *Ibid.*, "Sonnet XC VII. A Superscription," 170.

6/ Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Maud* (I.xi), in *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. Christopher Ricks, vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 544.

7/ *Ibid.*, *Maud* (I.xvii), 552.

8/ From Dante Gabriel Rossetti's translation of Rinaldo D'Aquino, "Canzone: A Lady, in Spring, repents of her Coldness," in *Early Italian Poets: From Ciullo D'Alcamo to Dante* (New York: Scribner, 1904), 43.

9/ Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Satia Te Sanguine," in *The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, ed. Edmund Gosse and James Wise, vol. 1 (London: Heinemann, 1925), 219.

10/ Ernest Dowson, "Amor Umbratilis," in *Collected Poems*, ed. Caroline Dowson and R. K. R. Dowson (Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press, 2003), 75.

11/ Tennyson, "Morte D'Arthur," in *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. Christopher Ricks, vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 17.

12/ Robert Browning, "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," in *The Complete Works of Robert Browning*, ed. Roma A. King et al., vol. 5 (Athens: Ohio University Press and Waco: Baylor University Press, 1981), 248. [Forrest-Thomson incorporates lines from this poem and parodies Browning's quest poems in her "Strike" (*Collected Poems*, ed. Anthony Barnett [Exeter: Shearsman and East Sussex: Allardyce, 2008], 134-35). —Eds.]

13/ "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris: IX," in *The New Age* 10, no. 13 (January 25, 1912): 298.

14/ *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir* (New York: New Directions, 1970), 88.

15/ [Forrest Thomson is referring to Reed's parody of Eliot, "Chard Whitlow (Mr Eliot's Sunday Evening Postscript)."] The poem was printed in *Dwight Macdonald's Parodies: An Anthology from Chaucer to Beerbohm and After* (Faber & Faber, 1960), to which she refers in *Poetic Artifice* (116) in relation to Swinburne's self-parody, "Nephilidia." The actual quotation is "word within a word, unable to speak a word," from "Gerontion." —Eds.]

16/ [Forrest-Thomson is referring to Movement poets such as Philip Larkin and Kingsley Amis, as well as later poets such as Ted Hughes, all of whom she criticizes in *Poetic Artifice*. —Eds.]

17/ [Cf. Forrest-Thomson's response to Michael Couturier's request that she clarify her sense of poetry as "fiction": "I'm against the kind of poetry which pretends that language isn't language. I'm thinking specifically of Concrete poetry and other modes which treat words as physical objects." Veronica Forrest-Thomson and Michel Couturier, "Unrealism and Death in Contemporary Poetry," a forum at the Cambridge Poetry Festival, April 18, 1975, in the British Library National Sound Archive, ref. T6023, editors' transcript. Also see *Poetic Artifice* (45): "Concrete poetry is a regression rather than a liberation." —Eds.]

18/ Ezra Pound, "Forward (1964)," *A Lume Spento and Other Early Poems* (New York: New Directions; London: Faber & Faber, 1965), 7.

19/ [Forrest-Thomson is referring to Eliot's essay "Andrew Marvell," in which he argues for a type of "rhetorical sincerity." Eliot states: "The effect of Morris's charming poem depends upon the mistiness of the feeling and the vagueness of its object; the effect of Marvell's upon its bright, hard precision.... The emotion of Morris is not more refined or more spiritual; it is merely more vague" ("Andrew Marvell" in *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed. Frank Kermode [London: Faber & Faber, 1975], 169). —Eds.]

20/ *Selected Poems*, ed. T. S. Eliot (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928).

21/ *Poems and Translations*, (New York: Library of America, 2003), 135.

22/ ["Others" may include Donald Davie, whose work on Pound, along with Kenner's, is accorded more respect by Forrest-Thomson than that of other critics. Also see Christine Brooke-Rose's attack on Nagy's Pound criticism in *A ZBC of Ezra Pound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 66. —Eds.]

23/ [Cf. "The Garden of Proserpine" (*Collected Poems*, 138–40). Also see the first section of chapter 5 in *Poetic Artifice*, "The Garden of Proserpine" (115–26). —Eds.]

24/ *Selected Poems*, 180–81. [Cf. Forrest-Thomson's "Canzon, for British Rail Services," written in response to a canzon by Arnaut Daniel (*Collected Poems*, 150–51). —Eds.]

25/ [Not that fair field / Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,

/ Herself a fairer flow'r by gloomy Dis / Was gather'd[.]” *Paradise Lost*, 4.268-71. —Eds.]

26/ [In the original text, quotations follow from: Rossetti, “The Woodspurge”; Tennyson, “Mariana”; and Swinburne, “The Garden of Proserpine.” Forrest-Thomson quotes from Tennyson’s and Swinburne’s poems in her “The Garden of Proserpine,” and “Strike” features lines from “The Woodspurge.” —Eds.]

27/ [Throughout the “Obstinate Isles” manuscript and this essay, Forrest-Thomson employs an idiosyncratic terminology that uses “dog” for persona and “master” for poet. An explanation is given in a section not included here: “[P]ersona is not a consistent surrogate for the author or a fictional person from both of which we demand qualities of coherence which, out of place in life or novels, are even more inappropriate in poems. The attributes and characteristics of the persona vary within individual poems and between differing kinds of poem according to the way in which the levels of organization demand—what is the special function of persona—that reality be absorbed and transformed.... Clearly, we need some term for this new concept of persona [particular to nineteenth- and twentieth-century poetry] and after much deliberation I have decided on the term ‘dog.’” In this case, Browning would be “master,” the Duke would be “dog.” But as the final pages of this essay illustrate, things get more complicated than that. Forrest-Thomson lists a few comical reasons for choosing “dog” over “hamster,” “cat,” or other animal, but she may have been influenced by Wittgenstein’s observation that “A dog cannot be a hypocrite, but neither can he be sincere” (*Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe [Oxford: Blackwell, 1991], xi, 229e). —Eds.]

28/ “My Last Duchess: Ferrara,” in *The Complete Works of Robert Browning*, ed. Roma A. King et al., vol. 3 (Athens: Ohio University Press and Waco: Baylor University Press, 1981), 201.

29/ [Early seventeenth-century play by Thomas Middleton. —Eds.]

30/ [In a redacted section that follows, Forrest-Thomson refers to these “dual influences” or “blend” as “dramatic monologue” and “aestheticism.” These terms are less specific than those she elsewhere uses to refer to nineteenth-century sources, but she is here engaging the argument of a fellow critic (Nagy), and borrowing his terms. —Eds.]

31/ Pound, “Anima Sola,” in *A Lume Spento and Other Early Poems*, 31. Also in *Poems and Translations*, 33.

32/ [Forrest-Thomson provides a detailed analysis of the first stanza of Swinburne’s “Satia Te Sanguine” in one of the redacted passages. Her argument, which involves rewriting the stanza to emphasize different formal properties, is that Swinburne’s “deceptively simple stanza” is actually highly sophisticated. —Eds.]

33/ [Forrest-Thomson's outline for "Obstinate Isles" called for an analysis of Pound's later cantos, particularly *The Pisan Cantos*. —Eds.]

34/ *Selected Poems*, 183-84; also in *Poems and Translations*, 136.

35/ [A note in Forrest-Thomson's hand here reads: "No, have to be definite on this point!" —Eds.]

36/ [Cf. *Poetic Artifice* 119-20 for a discussion of Swinburne's use of his heroines' names as an "excuse" in a formal pattern. —Eds.]

37/[In a number of unpublished documents, including a lecture written for an undergraduate poetry class at the University of Birmingham in 1974, Forrest-Thomson refers to Donald Davie's work on poetic diction, particularly outlined in his *Purity of Diction in English Verse* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967). Forrest-Thomson attempted to refine Davie's critical work on poetic diction in her theory of poetic artifice. —Eds.]

38/ "Introduction," *Selected Poems*, xiii.

39/ [This suggests that Forrest-Thomson intended to discuss Pound's translations of the troubadour poet in a revision; the existing manuscript does not contain such a discussion. —Eds.]

40/ ["Unrealism" was a key concept in much of Forrest-Thomson's later critical writing and relates to her conviction of poetry's necessary cultivation of emphatic "fictionality" and its resistance to the techniques of "realism." See chapter 5 of *Poetic Artifice*; "Beyond Reality: Orders of Possibility in Modern English Poetry," *Fuse* 1 (1972), 20-23; "Dada, Unrealism and Contemporary Poetry," *Twentieth Century Studies* 12 (1974), 225-38; and "Unrealism as the Poetic Mode for This Century," *Sprindrift* 1 (1977), 16-27. —Eds.]

41/ "Introduction," *Selected Poems*, xiii.

42/ [This use of scientific tropes is common in Forrest-Thomson's writing, including her Cambridge dissertation, "Poetry as Knowledge: The Use of Science by Twentieth-Century Poets" (1971). "Scientific" poems include "Subatomic Symphony," "Still A-Building," and "Atomic Disintegration" (*Collected Poems*, 30-31, 37, and 53). —Eds.]

43/ "Introduction," *Selected Poems*, xiv.