“Come Let Us Build a Monument to Ezra.”

Imagist Affinities between the Poetics of Ezra Pound and the Poems of Ernest Hemingway: A Modernist Friendship and a Quest for Truth.

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INTRODUCTION

“Come let us build a monument to Ezra,” Ernest Hemingway wrote in his 1923 poem “The Soul of Spain with McAlmon and Bird the Publishers.” This single phrase captures the essence of one of the most inspiring artistic associations of the modernist era. Approximately ten years into his apprenticeship, Hemingway here pays sincere tribute to one of his favoured mentors: architect of the Imagist Movement and embodiment of all modernist values, Ezra Pound. Pound was of greatest value to Hemingway as a young poet. He helped sharpen Hemingway’s final credo with his Imagist doctrine and encouraged him to persistently continue the quest for truth he had embarked on as a schoolboy, distilling stories out of personal experiences for the school’s newspaper. I deliberately use the title poet here, for this side of Hemingway’s identity as an artist has remained underestimated and consequently underexposed. But readers and scholars seem to have forgotten the importance of his numerous poems, notwithstanding their value in revealing the real person behind the myth.

This dissertation will be dedicated to an investigation of the Imagist affinities between the poetics of Ezra Pound and the poems of Ernest Hemingway. In discussing the two writers’ close friendship and their successful apprentice-mentor relationship in a modernist climate, I want to find out if and how Hemingway’s poems bear traces of his mentor’s Imagist poetics. The title of this dissertation requires further clarification of the terms affinities, Ernest Hemingway as a poet, Ezra Pound and Imagism and finally the concept truth, in order to acquire a complete understanding of the spectrum of my research.

In talking about affinities, I intended to denote striking similarities between the two writers’ works, related to Pound’s Imagist doctrine. I deliberately decided not to dedicate my research to a possible influence, for it would have limited the scope of my research. In the process however, it became clear that Pound might indeed have exerted a concrete influence on his apprentice. Their close association and shared convictions add to the assumption that it was mainly Pound who shaped and perfected Hemingway’s poetic style. Ernest Hemingway as a poet then needs further introduction as well, as most of us readers are not familiar with this part of his artistic persona. Up until the publication of his first prose work In Our Time however, Hemingway’s oeuvre existed exclusively out of poems. They served as written accounts of his literary wanderings along two continents and numerous mentors. It was never
his intention to become a poet, yet in the process of building a career as a renowned novelist he wrote a fair amount, experimenting and reflecting all valuable lessons and techniques he had acquired: 88 poems in total, covering a timespan of 44 years (Complete Poems xi). Ezra Pound then, was at the centre of literary bustle in Paris at the time Hemingway arrived in 1921. Greatly admired by many of his contemporaries, he was as it were the embodiment of the modernist temper of the age. In the modernist generation’s endeavour to oppose the traditionalist 19th century values and to thus redefine the notion of what art was supposed to do, Pound was the most vigorous in championing a literary revolution. He wanted to make it new, with a language ridden of excess, which could blur a truthful representation of emotionally charged reality, a goal central to his Imagist doctrine. In a 1926 letter Pound wrote to Hemingway, he stated:

ANYTHING put on top of the subject is BAD. Licherchure is mostly blanketing up a subject. Too much MAKINGS. The subject is always interesting enough without blankets (Tetlow 14).

Economy, musicality, emotion and concentration would become condensed in detailed explorations of objects and scenes, which Pound called images or his “primary pigments of the writer” (Pratt 133). Images served as the writer’s vehicles for communicating such emotions and in doing so, Pound answered to the age of science’s call for a “poet of facts” (Cohassey 18). Pound sought for beauty in that part of society that had remained unexplored, the chaos and the ugliness. He too embarked on a journey for truthful representation, out of which all his Imagist tenets have emerged. Lastly then, I would like to elaborate on the concept of truth, as the focal point of my entire dissertation is indeed both authors’ quest for a truthful representation. Based on Pound’s hermetic “A Few Don’ts by an Imagiste,” Amy Lowell’s “On Imagism,” William Pratt’s book Singing the Chaos and a number of telling quotes of Ernest Hemingway, I came to understand that not the unilateral interpretation of truth as mere mimetic representation is central here. It is not so much about representing facts, as it is about presenting emotional dimensions connected to sensory experiences that drive writing. It is these dimensions that evoke the largest emotional response with the reader, for he should not only read what is stated but as Hemingway described it, has to “see it, feel it, smell it, hear it” (Fenton 88). Already at the beginning of his apprenticeship years, writing articles for his secondary school’s newspaper, it became clear that Hemingway was “gifted in the communicative arts” and writing “with an avid interest in realistic adventure” (Fenton 6).
Years later when the biggest conflict in western society’s history up to that point broke loose, it ignited a fire in the author that would never fade. Hemingway was one among thousands of young men who experienced the horrors of the Great War first hand. He survived, but would remain disgusted by how western society had hypocritically betrayed and slaughtered a generation of talented men. In particular, he among all other modernists objected to the 19th century Victorian language, which sought for justification in patriotic words of honour and courage, evoking mere sentimentality. He set out a quest for a language that fit the undisguised truth, not only to give expression to his war experiences but eventually to anything that affected him as a human being and writer.
STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

Structurally this dissertation exists of two major parts that affect each other dynamically. Part I intends to provide a relevant framework of the historical and literary background. The first chapter here is concerned with Hemingway as a poet and with how he dealt with this part of his identity as an artist. As will become clear, Hemingway tended to downplay the value of his poetry and I shed light on what the motivations behind this could be. Then I move on to the scholarly reception on the subject. My overall impression is that scholarly reviews remained quite superficial and did not deal with the poems as artistically valuable. There are barely any in-depth analyses available that could seek for literal reflections of his values and possible influences. Such analyses would however provide a solid base for further research. In the final part of this chapter I discuss why Hemingway’s poetry is worthy of such further research, as it forms an unrestricted playground on which he could experiment freely, especially in his transition from journalism to prose.

The second chapter deals with Hemingway and Pound’s association, what role Imagism played in that and how it would benefit both artists’ quest for truth. I start by elaborating on the circumstances in which the two Poets met, how despite their turbulent lives they would remain ever loyal to each other and how their mutual admiration provided a fruitful starting point for their successful apprentice-pupil relationship. Then I take my readers on a journey through Hemingway’s apprenticeship years, from America to France and show where and why his own quest for truth started. In doing so, I hope to provide a sufficient argument for my statement that Ezra Pound exerted influence on Hemingway. Even before Hemingway met Pound, he shared crucial convictions with his mentor and had learned certain techniques that were reminiscent of Pound’s Imagist doctrine, with its focus on remaining wary of any excess. This would make him a susceptible student willing to accept Pound’s suggestions. Their close friendship would only benefit the case. The third chapter then is an extension of the previous one, in that it provides a detailed, insofar it remains relevant, elaboration on the position and importance of Ezra Pound and Imagism in what William Pratt calls “the golden age of modern poetry” (Pratt 1). I provide an enumeration as clear as possible of Pound’s Imagist principles. I decided to discuss all of them equally elaborately as they will all prove to be useful for the literary analysis in Part II, which in its turn adds to my argument that it is
relevant to discuss Hemingway’s poems in relation to Imagism. To end this chapter with, I briefly mention Pound’s transition to Vorticism.

The second main part of this dissertation then is dedicated to the actual literary analysis and close reading of a relevant sample of Hemingway’s poems, in relation to Ezra Pound’s Imagism. My sample of poems consists mainly of early poems that were published in several “little magazines,” such as The Little Review, Poetry etc. between 1920 and 1926. It were some of these early poems that initially caught Pound’s attention and therefore it is interesting to analyse them in search of early manifestations of Hemingway’s poetics that appealed to his future mentor. These poems should bear traces of the basics in Hemingway’s style as he had acquired them upon his wanderings along several schools and mentors, which Pound would then sharpen and perfect. These early poems also date from the same stage in Hemingway’s apprenticeship as two of his first works of prose: In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises, both internationally considered literary masterpieces. The term “early poems” should therefore not sound pejorative at all, for there are several crucial similarities to be noted with these novels, especially in relation to Imagism. To the sample I will also add three of Hemingway’s first poems, “Blank Verse,” “How Ballad Writing Affects our Seniors” and “The Inexpressible,” written in his hometown Oak Park. These prove to be relevant as well, in their reflection of Hemingway’s youngest convictions, which would always remain the basis of his writing. Finally, I dedicate specific attention to “Poem to Mary (Second Poem),” written in 1944 and according to Arthur Waldhorn Hemingway’s “best – and in a sense only poem” (Waldhorn 85). If I succeed in finding Pound’s Imagist traits in this stage of the latter’s career, it provides proof of my statement that Pound exerted a durable and lifelong influence on his apprentice. Lastly, I will refer to other poems dating from several stages of Hemingway’s apprenticeship that are obviously relevant to my analysis. Also Part II is divided into several smaller chapters, each dedicated to one of the Imagist principles that I have discussed in Chapter 3 of Part I, respectively “Economy and Le Mot Juste,” “Musicality and foreign tongues,” “Images as the writer’s primary pigment” and “Concentration.” Because in any case there exists a lot more scholarly material about Hemingway’s prose work than there is about his poetry, I will begin every chapter with a discussion of In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises. From the articles “The Sun Also Rises: One Debt to Imagism” by Linda-Wagner Martin and Wendolyn Tetlow and Matthew Stewart’s books, respectively Hemingway’s In Our Time: Lyrical Dimensions and Modernism and Tradition in Ernest Hemingway’s In Our Time, I will deduct relevant techniques that contributed to these books’ Imagist character and apply them to my
sample of poems. The analysis of the poems themselves then will always start with remarks about poems written before Hemingway and Pound had actually met, to point out the differences with poems written after them meeting. In these differences indeed hides the essence of my research, as they will lay bare the Imagist affinities and eventually even influences in Hemingway’s poetry. Each chapter is constructed similarly, except for chapter 4 on “Concentration”. Here I use Philip Young and Charles W. Mann’s book *The Hemingway Manuscripts: an Inventory*, to dive into Hemingway’s manuscripts and drafts for they contain signs of writing and rewriting and thus, in juxtaposing early and later material, bear witness of Pound’s insistence on the seriousness of a writer’s task.
MY POSITION IN RELATION TO EXISTING SCHOLARSHIP

Fitting my research into the number of scholarly articles and books that deal with one or more aspects of my subject, I believe it forms a modest attempt to fill two crucial gaps. Based on Arthur Waldhorns A Reader’s Guide to Ernest Hemingway, Nicholas Gerogiannis’ revised edition of Complete Poems, Verna Kale’s “Hemingway’s Poetry and the Paris Apprenticeship” and Linda Wagner-Martin’s article “A Note on Hemingway as Poet,” it has become apparent that scholarship concerning Hemingway’s poetry remains limited to remarks concerning the poems’ main themes and how they reflect events and associations that affected Hemingway as an artist. Barely any attention is dedicated to the actual literarity of the poems and when dedicated, it tends to downplay this aspect. Therefore I decided to provide an in-depth analysis of the aforementioned sample of poems in which I discuss them as literary valuable and more specifically indeed in relation to Ezra Pound and his Imagist doctrine. This in its turn lays bare the second gap I believe requires filling: scholarship concerning Hemingway’s indebtedness to Pound remains limited to remarks about Pound’s concrete adjustments to the former’s poems, instead of dedicating attention to the attitudes and values Pound transferred onto his pupil, which gave rise to such remarks, as well. Harold Hurwitz here shares my conviction in his article “Hemingway’s Tutor, Ezra Pound,” yet does to my opinion not provide a sufficient amount of examples to fill this gap. Also John Cohassey’s book Hemingway and Pound: A Most Unlikely Friendship, which intends to cover their entire association, both personally as artistically, does not really go in depth.
PART I : LITERARY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 1: ERNEST HEMINGWAY, AN UNFAIRLY FORGOTTEN POET

It was never Hemingway’s intention to become a poet, but following the same path as many other young American writers residing in Paris during the first decades of the 20th century, such as James Joyce and William Faulkner, Hemingway also wrote poems in the process of becoming a novelist. He experimented with a number of literary forms, transferring principles and techniques he had acquired during his years as an apprentice with American newspapers, whose rules left an indelible impression (Complete Poems xii). Before Hemingway released his first prose to the public, his published work consisted exclusively of poems. In fact, he was a lot more productive as a poet than is generally assumed. Although he only published 25 poems during his lifetime, he in fact wrote 88 in total, of which 73 already before 1929 (Complete Poems xi). They can thus all be classified as early work. The term might sound pejorative but it definitely is not, since that early period was also marked by the publication of In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises (Waldhorn 72-73).

1.1 Hemingway’s attitude towards his poetry

For a long time however, Hemingway refused to be introduced as a poet. Notwithstanding the urge he felt to write he did not want to be called a writer, because being ambitious, he found this public title too passive to be able to fulfil his dreams. The values he brought from America would initially make it hard for him to immerse himself in Paris’ literary circuit and even harder to tolerate the dandyish behaviour and extravagant lifestyle of poets like Ezra Pound. Although about two years later, he would frequent the same cafés and reside in the same literary circles as his mentors, Hemingway would never feel completely comfortable with this identity (Reynolds 23-24). Hemingway did not go into detail about his poetry often either, as for example he never wrote any introduction to published collections of poems like he did for several prose publications (Fenton 226). Likewise, he seldom mentioned his poetry in prose works, which were characteristically punctuated with autobiographical references. He mentioned it once, in the nonfiction novel Green Hills of Africa, in which he describes his encounter with a man named Kandinsky. Hemingway’s voice here seems to be quite pleased with the man recognizing him (Complete Poems xvii):
“Will you have a drink?” I held out the flask. “Hemingway is my name.”
“Kandinsky,” he said and bowed. Hemingway is a name I have heard. Where? Where have I heard it? Oh, yes. The Dichter. You know Hemingway the poet?”
“Where did you read him?”
“In the Querschnitt.”
“That is me, I said, very pleased. The Querschnitt was a German magazine I had written some rather obscene poems for, and published a long story in, years before I could sell anything in America (Green Hills of Africa 13).

Apart from this brief reference Hemingway did not identify himself as a poet in other writings. The poems he wrote during these first years of his career were published solely in several little-known “little magazines”, like Little Review, Poetry, The Exile, Transatlantic Review, This Quarter, The Double Dealer and Der Querschnitt and agreeing with the responsible publishers he never attributed much value to them. He once even wrote one of his bibliographers, Louis Henry Cohn, that he preferred not to see his poems published in his official bibliography (Kale 58).

1.2 Experimenting freely and undermining the myth

Nevertheless, these writings do make up an essential part of his apprenticeship, confirmed paradoxically by his tendency to downplay their significance (Kale 58). Because Hemingway never claimed to be a poet, he was able to experiment freely within the genre without risking damaging the reputation as a novelist that he was carefully trying to build. In doing so he was able to avoid being recognized as a second-rate writer (Kale 68). As he wrote in his “to Ezra”:
“minor poets do not fail because they do not attempt the major thing. They have nothing of major importance to say. They do a minor thing with perfection and the perfection is admirable” (“Homage to Ezra” 221). Hemingway had a lively interest in poetry as became apparent from some of his letters and obviously he understood and enjoyed it as well. But apparently he did not feel the urge to write more and invest more effort and time in it (Kale 58). Hemingway’s tendency to nullify his poetry, a genre so central to the experimental modernist identity, is particularly striking, given the fact he was an author who would try his hand at different forms, such as journalism, short fiction, novels and his memoir A Moveable
Feast. Moreover he liked to introduce himself as an expert on any subject that deserved his attention (Kale 58). “The Young Chicago poet now abroad, who would soon issue in Paris his first book of verse” as Poetry magazine described him, in 1923, withered when his career as a novelist took off, which as years passed took mythical proportions. His poems however reveal Hemingway as a fiery man and undermine the myth of the novelist, like drafts in a diary (Complete Poems XI).

1.3 Scholarly reception

1.3.1 “Not particularly important”

The few scholars who have dedicated attention to Hemingway's poetry are not particularly positive about it. Edmund Wilson for example, who reviewed the poems in Three Stories and Ten Poems found them “not particularly important” and Reynolds and Wagner-Martin agree with him, especially as to the poems’ poeticality and aesthetics (Kale 59). Nicholas Gerogiannis goes even further and diminishes the poems’ value even with regards to their importance for Hemingway’s development as an artist. He insists that the novelist could not have learned much from conceiving these poems because it could be only logical that as a young writer, experimenting with different techniques, he would turn to poetry which granted him the opportunity indeed to just experiment freely (Complete Poems xxi).

Further criticism generally makes arguments in three main areas, suggesting that the poems’ literary value in itself was not noteworthy:

First, that Hemingway's poetry reflects the influence of a wide range of writers including Rudyard Kipling, Stephen Crane, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, T.S. Eliot, Sherwood Anderson and others; second, that Hemingway's poetry demonstrates how he established himself as an important name on the Paris literary scene even before he published any fiction; third, that Hemingway's talent as a poet lies in the poetics of his prose rather than in his actual poetry (Kale 59).
1.3.2 “Particularly important”

Not everyone agrees with these judgements however. Verna Kale and David Ryan share my belief that in arguing so, the aforementioned scholars forget to take into account the importance of poetry in the oeuvre of writers in general, as an indispensable part of their apprenticeship and for Hemingway specifically, the pivotal role they played in anticipating later prose experiments. In what follows, I will discuss how Hemingway’s poetry is important in relation to his prose, and secondly, I will discuss its importance as part of Hemingway’s apprenticeship and as a crucial factor in his transition from journalism to prose and the role of Imagism.

1.3.2.1 Hemingway’s poetry in relation to his prose

It is interesting indeed to discuss Hemingway’s poetry in relation to his prose, because it is his prose which earned him the Nobel Prize in literature in 1954, “for his mastery of the art of narrative, most recently demonstrated in The Old Man and the Sea, and for the influence that he has exerted on contemporary style (“The Nobel Prize in Literature 1954”). Prose and poetry also share the same objective, as Pound argued in his “A Few Don’ts by an Imagiste”: “Do not tell in mediocre verse what has already been done in good prose.” The main themes that Hemingway would later work out in his early prose vignettes and short stories, he already explored in his verse: war, politics and boyhood (Fenton notes 11). Affinities between Hemingway’s poetry and prose could simply be a reflection of his overall writing style, but there are cases to suggest that Hemingway used poetry as an experimental draft for later prose works. The poem “Ultimately” serves as a good illustration here. It is both the revision of an earlier poem, “To Will Davies”, and the draft for a later prose vignette, “Chapter 15” of In Our Time. Michael Reynolds argues that Hemingway drew his inspiration for the three texts from two real executions that he read about in The Chicago Tribune. Throughout the entire journey from reported news item, to poem, to prose vignette, Hemingway succeeded in maintaining the same feeling of desperation. In the poem already he chose his words very carefully in order to capture the essence of the execution and he continues to perfect this in the vignette. In “Ultimately” we can read:

He tried to spit out the truth;
Dry mouthed at first,
He drooled and slobbered in the end;
Truth dribbling his chin (Complete Poems 39).

The different versions also illustrate Hemingway’s concern to write truthfully, which forms in fact the focal point of his entire career. In the consecutive versions, Hemingway tried to bring back the scene to its most basic elements in order to express the most essential feeling, fear, and in doing so answer to the truthful goals he had set for himself. Although the poem is not the terminus of his quest, it does reflect some of the author’s early concerns that would remain vital for his career as a prose writer (Kale 63).

Furthermore, Mark Schorer once stated that what Hemingway had conceived during his career was “the very finest prose of our time. And most of it is poetry” (“One Debt to Imagism” 97). Hemingway was indeed responsible for breaking down fences that separated prose and poetry and in doing so he contributed massively to the experimental modernist endeavour of bending and blending genres. The tendency to both turn prose into poetry, or poetry into prose, finds its roots already with William Wordsworth: “poetry ought to be written in a selection of language really used by men”, Wordsworth aiming at a language that is traditionally considered to be more suitable for prose or non-fictional texts and wary of tropes or rhyme patterns, which automatically brings us with the Imagist conviction that free verse was the most suitable way to express new ideas (Stewart 18). The prose vignettes of In Our Time can serve as perfect examples of prose that is laced with techniques that are characteristic of poetry, like suggestiveness and pungent compressed language. Also the Imagist succession of images is central to the construction of these prose vignettes (Stewart 18).

1.3.2.2 Poetry as an indispensable part of Hemingway’s apprenticeship

Secondly and lastly, I would like to point out that Hemingway’s poetry should be considered an essential part of his apprenticeship, allowing him to make the transition from sec newspaper journalism to the world famous prose novels we now remember him for (Fenton 227). It is possible that Hemingway spoke so disparagingly of his poems due to the position they occupied in the process of his development: they seemed to be of greatest use to him
during the earliest years of his apprenticeship when he was trying to break with journalism and launch a career in fiction indeed (Kale 59). As soon as Hemingway established himself as a writer of fiction, he insisted on making a difference between his art and his “newspaper stuff” (Waldhorn 73). But the value of his journalism should not be negated, as I will demonstrate in the chapter 2.2.3.

Especially the poems that were published in the 1920s in the “little magazines” offer a clear image of how Hemingway experienced his transformation from journalist to writer (Kale 60). During his apprenticeship years in Paris Hemingway entered into a lot of artistic connections and these were most apparent in his poetry, reflecting the “borrowed”, changing values these poems originated from (Fenton notes 11). The main transition that is observable in his poetry is the drastic reduction and sometimes even total elimination of adjective + substantive constructions (Kale 63). This is exactly where Ezra Pound and Imagism come into the picture. “Mitraillatrice” for example, written in 1921 in Chicago and thus before Pound and Hemingway met each other, counts seven lines of which four contain an adjective. “Montparnasse” on the other hand, written in 1922 in Paris, shows a radical reduction of attributes: only 4 attributes in a poem that counts 15 lines. Furthermore, Charles Fenton remarks how Hemingway’s best poems are focused on one single object, which he would then explore into its smallest details, reminiscent of Pound’s images. “Along with Youth,” and “Montparnasse” show his talent to evoke strong emotions with such explorations, in a way that would truly affect the readers and make them feel and see what had occurred for themselves (Fenton 228).

Summing up, although Hemingway never felt entirely at ease with his identity as a poet and although he joined several scholars in downplaying the significance of his poems, their importance hides in various corners of his career. Not only did they reveal Hemingway as a real person, instead of nurturing the myth surrounding him, they have also proven to be extremely useful in relation to his world famous prose and as witnesses of the writer’s transformation from journalist to artist. I deliberately chose to treat the relation to his prose first and only then move on to how Hemingway experienced the transformation and how this relates to artistic associations, as I will maintain this order in the actual analysis in chapter …: I first provide passages from In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises as it seems useful to interpret their scholarly reception first and then transfer remarks concerning Pound’s possible influence onto his poetry.
CHAPTER 2: HEMINGWAY AND POUND: A MODERNIST FRIENDSHIP
AND QUEST FOR TRUTH

The affinities between Ezra Pound and Ernest Hemingway’s works have been under-researched. Most critics’ discussions remain limited to general remarks about Pound’s concrete corrections to Hemingway’s earliest writings. These adjustments were definitely crucial, but probably even more important were the values and attitudes behind this criticism, that he eventually transferred onto his pupil. This entire process made Hemingway realize how serious he had to be about his craft and it helped him in defining his final credo, with his quest for truth as the focal point. Pound’s character and their friendship were thus equally, if not more important than his actual remarks on Hemingway’s writings (Hurwitz 469). In what follows I will provide a sketch of how the close and durable connection between the two artists was established, in a chaotic artistic climate where friends and mentors used to come and go. At first instance Pound and Hemingway did not get along very well, but getting to know each other better and admiring each other’s craft they soon engaged in a successful mentor-apprentice relationship.

2.1 Meeting Pound, the Parisian dandy who would become his favoured mentor

It was Hemingway’s first mentor, American novelist Sherwood Anderson who inspired him to settle in Paris (Fenton 116-117). Hemingway was one among many young writers who were drawn to the free and cosmopolitan life European cities had to offer. Paris exerted the biggest attraction (Stewart 7). Not having achieved anything worth mentioning yet, but compensating this lack with his vibrant personality and eagerness to become a writer, Hemingway would soon engage in valuable artistic relationships with pivotal modernist writers and armed with a number of recommendation letters from Anderson, become fully immersed in the Parisian artistic circuit (Stewart 8). Anderson met Pound before Hemingway did, at Gertrude Stein’s studio at the Rue de Fleurus in Paris. He was not very fond of him as a person, but he was well aware of his literary connections and keenness to promote young talented writers (Cohassey 5-6).
2.1.1 A literary friendship that survived all the others

Before he met Pound, Hemingway actually had very limited knowledge of Pound’s works and given Anderson’s own negative judgement about the poet, it is very likely that Hemingway did not have the best impression of his future friend when they first met in 1922 (Cohassey 9). At first sight, the two writers were two completely different personae: on the one hand Hemingway, the American sportsman, the rude drunk, easily offended by criticism; on the other hand Pound, chatty and always prepared to champion young talents, but eventually despised for his anti-Semitic beliefs (Cohassey 2). Hemingway found Pound too posturing and having lived in Paris for only two months at that point, he was not yet able to tolerate such behaviour (Reynolds 23).

Hemingway’s turbulent life and his attitude towards his writing did not leave his literary friendships with a great chance of survival. He never left any space for compromise, either you agreed with him or you were against him (Fenton 105). His connection with Ezra Pound survived surprisingly enough, respected their flammable characters and divergent beliefs (Cohassey 1). Hemingway completed his apprenticeship during the post-war period in Paris and it is around this time that both artists were closest and Pound’s encouragement and advice were of immense value to him. Pound established himself not only as a critic of Hemingway’s work, but just as much as a sponsor, confidant, advocate and friend. They spent a lot of time together playing tennis and boxing and although such extra-literary activities might not seem to add any value to Hemingway’s expertise as a writer, they did play a significant role in establishing their close connection (Hurwitz 469-470).

Hemingway’s physical association with Pound lasted shortly, yet its output would survive a lifetime. They spent only six months together in Paris in 1922, followed by one visit to Pound’s property in Rapallo in 1923 and two more months together during the fall of 1924 (Reynolds 26). But they kept in touch for the rest of their lives by means of written correspondence, in which they addressed each other affectively, Pound for example calling his pupil “Hem” or “Hembo” and signing his letters with “Yr fexshunate unkl” (Cohassey 2). There are discrepancies however between the content of their letters and their public attitude concerning their friendship. James Mellow described it as follows: “Hemingway could be ambivalent, both generous and yet wary of crediting too much to Pound’s influence on his writing. It depended on the impression he wanted to make with a particular correspondent”
2.2 Mutual attraction and admiration

In this second part I would like to point to the mutual artistic admiration between Pound and Hemingway. Hemingway considered Pound one of the world’s major poets, expressing this admiration repeatedly. Pound then, was struck by his apprentice’s talent and tried to help him in as many ways possible. Not only did he seize every opportunity to get Hemingway into print, he would also become a literary guide, transferring crucial values and knowledge onto his apprentice.

2.2.1 Hemingway’s admiration for Pound: a major poet

There existed a strong mutual attraction between both artists and they both admired one another. When Hemingway arrived in Paris, he was looking for sincere critique and appreciation, which he both found with Pound. He also admired his friend greatly as an artist, as we can read in several of his writings. He wrote an actual “Homage to Ezra,” published in *This Quarter* in 1925. Hemingway gladly expressed his admiration for Pound, considering him one of the most influential poets alive:

> Minor poets do not fail because they do not attempt the major thing. They have nothing of major importance to say. They do a minor thing with perfection and the perfection is admirable. Ezra Pound has written great poetry” (“Homage to Ezra” 223).

Also in his memoir *A Moveable Feast*, in which Hemingway recalls his apprenticeship years in Paris and the people who were of greatest value to him, he dedicates several chapters to his mentor. Lastly, in 1958 Hemingway told George Plimpton of the *Paris Review* about his connection with Pound. It was the last one in a series of comments that he wrote on his friend
during his life: “Ezra was extremely intelligent on the subjects he really knew… here it is simpler and better to… reaffirm my loyalty to Ezra as a great poet and a loyal friend” (Hurwitz 474). This admiration and the fact they spent a lot of time together in Paris made Hemingway very receptive to his mentor’s later suggestions and corrections. He regularly sent his mentor manuscripts and never complained when he got them back completely blue-pencilled (Cohassey 16).

2.2.2 Pound’s admiration for Hemingway: a member of his aesthetic elite

Pound on the other hand, was immediately struck by Hemingway’s talent and wished to get him the recognition he was craving. As I will discuss later, Pound was known as someone who liked to surround himself with people who were equally intelligent and creative as he considered himself and promoted an aesthetic elite. He always continued his quest to find “those who have some breath for beauty and the arts” (Cohassey 18). Hemingway was definitely part of Pound’s personal elite group of talented writers.

2.2.2.1 Getting Hemingway published

Like many of his contemporaries, Hemingway tried his hand at poetry before dedicating his time exclusively to prose and it is these poems and also his first short prose vignettes that caught Pound’s attention and convinced him of Hemingway’s potential. Pound more than once served as Hemingway’s agent, to get him the recognition he thought his friend deserved (Cohassey 33). He seized every opportunity to introduce Hemingway as a writer to watch (Reynolds 28). His first attempt at getting Hemingway published, dates from February 1922, when he sent Scofield Thayer, the editor of the American magazine The Dial’s, six poems. The manuscripts were unfortunately sent back almost immediately, accompanied by the explanation that The Dial only “occasionally takes in a little new blood” (Cohassey 33). In June 1922 however, Hemingway’s first prose and the poem “Ultimately” got published in New Orleans’ The Double Dealer thanks to Sherwood Anderson, together with the note that he “enjoyed the favour of Ezra Pound” (Cohassey 34). Very much convinced of his friend’s talent, Pound continued vigorously to promote Hemingway. In January 1923, Pound got six of Hemingway’s poems published in the Chicago magazine Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, titled “Wanderings”. The series included the poems “Mitraillatrice,” “Oily Weather,” “Roosevelt,”
“Riparto d’Assalto,’ “Champs d’Honneur,” and “Chapter Headings.” (Cohassey 41). One year before the publication in Poetry, Pound was asked to be the supervisor of a number of prose booklets, *Inquest into the State of Contemporary English Prose* that would be published by William Bird in the early summer of 1922. The books that were to be included in the selection had to satisfy one central condition: “to tell the truth about *moeurs contemporains*, without fake, melodrama, conventional ending.” Hemingway’s collection of prose vignettes, *In Our Time* was selected to be the last volume (Hurwitz 471).

### 2.2.2.2 Giving Hemingway literary guidance

Hemingway soon started to value Pound not only as a friend and an agent who got him into print, but also as a literary guide. Hemingway got the same advice and extensive reading lists as any of his other pupils: read T.S. Eliot, James Joyce and for the rest mainly French authors (Reynolds 29). Hemingway however, was very fascinated by Russian novelists at that time, such as Dostoievsky, Tolstoy and Chekhov, very much unlike Pound who pretended to never even have read “the Rhoosians” (*A Moveable Feast* 102). He condemned the Russian novelists for using too many details and being too verbose, both contrary to his own Imagist doctrine and more specifically his plea for economy and precision (Cohassey 20-21). He advised his friend, as we can read in *A Moveable Feast*, to “keep to the French”, “you’ve plenty to learn there” (*A Moveable Feast* 102). This teacher-pupil relationship just worked.

Pound was familiar with his role as teacher, Hemingway, still a novice in the literary circuit and a young writer, was still very receptive for criticism from people he admired and thirdly, both men shared of course the same dedication and the endeavour to keep on perfecting their style (Stewart 17). Pound was famous for his conviction that a poet had to be disciplined and well aware of the seriousness of a writer’s task. He felt a great necessity for artistic integrity and detested inaccurate renderings (Hurwitz 479). Constantly stressing these key values, Pound helped to further shape Hemingway’s attitude towards his work (Hurwitz 479).

What I have been trying to do with this discussion is build a way towards one of the central points of this thesis and the key element in researching Pound’s possible influence on Hemingway’s poetry. Both writers dedicated their entire career to a quest for truth: an emotional truth that comprised more dimensions than any mimetic representation of reality could ever offer. They smashed the underpinnings of 19th century, action-centred realism that
focused solely on superficial beauty and provided an outward expression of inward experiences, rendering the chaos of an age severely traumatised by the war as equally beautiful (Pratt 130). From this central quest, all Imagist principles have emerged: the accurate language and choice of words condensed into images empowered writers to make their readers see and feel everything for themselves, leaving out anything superfluous that could blur the reception. In what follows I will provide a clear image of how Pound supported Hemingway on the journey that had commenced years before in Oak Park, when writing his first paragraphs for the secondary school’s newspaper.

2.3 Hemingway’s quest for truth

When Hemingway landed in Paris in 1921, the fundamentals of his eventual style were already present in his attitude as a writer, but they needed to be refined and he had to be made aware of the seriousness of his task (Stewart 12). The years he spent in America and France were crucial to the formation of his principles and attitudes. His apprenticeship did not end after leaving Paris however, “I’m apprenticed out at, until I die. Dopes can say you mastered it. But I know nobody ever mastered it, nor could not have done better,” he said more than twenty years later in 1949 (Fenton XI). But Hemingway does largely owe his literary career’s stability and his fame to the Parisian part of his apprenticeship (Stewart 11). Mainly Ezra Pound played a crucial role in helping Hemingway realize the seriousness of his goal to make his literature as true a reflection as possible of what he had experienced and he would prove to be a source of inspiration and encouragement for his apprentice’s convictions (Hurwitz 478-479). In the following sections I will first provide an overview of Hemingway’s apprenticeship years in America as a journalist, which already show traces of the principles that his future mentor would help to perfect. Then I dedicate a section to his transition from journalism to literature. Lastly, I elaborate on Hemingway’s urge to represent truth and how this relates to his war experience and his tendency to use harsh irony.
2.3.1 A journalist apprenticeship: the fundamentals

Already in secondary school, Hemingway was known by his English instructors as a clever student, “gifted in the communicative arts” and writing “with an avid interest in realistic adventure” (Fenton 6). He wrote some stories for the school’s literary magazine The Tabula, which already showed his principal strength and foreshadowed the main focus of his apprenticeship and eventually his entire career: he had a keen interest in experience and a narrative with which he could render this accurately (Fenton 16-17). Not as educated as Pound, he would take a more experiential approach to life anyway, his “self-hardening process” as his mentor liked to call it. Publisher Robert McAlmon was once lectured by Hemingway when they saw a dead dog in Spain, on the necessity of the education that life itself is: “it seemed that he had seen in the war the stacked corpses of men, maggot-eaten in a similar way… he tenderly explained that we of our generation must inure ourselves to the sight of grim reality” (Cohassey 56).

The Tabula marked the starting point of Hemingway’s writing ‘career’, but his actual apprenticeship only started with his journalistic contributions to the Trapeze, the weekly secondary school paper (Fenton 20). Moving to Kansas to find a job, Hemingway wanted to write for the Kansas Star, which he then considered to be the best paper in the U.S. Hired there, he was “infected with a curiosity about mankind and a craftsmanlike regard for clear, provocative, good as opposed to ‘fine’ writing” (Fenton 29). A Star training was known as memorable, because it trained its staff hard and submitted it to an extensive set of 110 rules that exceeded any conventional writing rules. Even when someone worked with the paper for only a short period of time, he would forever write in the same fashion, using the same rules for spelling, punctuation and grammar. The Star’s assistant editor, Pete Wellington, was especially insistent on one specific rule, number 2 1: “avoid the use of adjectives, especially such extravagant ones as splendid, gorgeous, grand, magnificent etc.” (Fenton 33). Young men there learned to write concise prose, ridden of trite adjectives, clichés, superfluous ornament and “other forms of verbal inflation” (Stewart 3-4). Hemingway was very much aware of his literary debt to this newspaper, saying in 1940 “those were the best rules I ever learned for the business of writing. I’ve never forgotten them. No man with any talent, who feels and writes truly about the thing he is trying to say, can fail to write well if he abides by them” (Fenton 34).
2.3.2 Stepping away from journalism

Hemingway however started to realise that he would have to leave journalism at a certain point. “In newspaper work,” he said, “you have to learn to forget every day what happened the day before … newspaper work is valuable up until the point that it forcibly begins to destroy your memory. A writer must leave it before that point” (Fenton 161). Memory and experience were, like I argued before, crucial to Hemingway, especially considering the impact the First World War had on him. Well aware of the shortages of his journalist approach to writing, Hemingway explained in Death in the Afternoon (Stewart 14):

In writing for a newspaper you told what happened on that day; but the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion and which would be as valid in a year or in ten years or, with luck and if you stated it purely enough, always, was beyond me and I was working very hard to try to get it (Death in the Afternoon 7).

As soon as Hemingway established himself as a writer of fiction, he insisted on making a difference between his art and his “newspaper stuff” (Waldhorn 73). As we can read in an early 1930s letter to one of his bibliographers, he refused to see his journalism included, because it had “nothing to do with the other writing which is entirely apart” and “no one has any right to dig this stuff up and use it against the stuff you have written to write the best you can” (Waldhorn 73). But the value of his journalism should not be negated, contrary. In writing these pieces he got the opportunity to explore for the first time the places, people and values that would be transformed into recurrent themes throughout his career and he would be lucky enough to be supervised by mentors who would help him discipline a language, with which he could give expression to these themes (Waldhorn 73).
2.3.3 The impact of the Great War: a need for truthful representation

Hemingway’s time at the Italian front in 1918 wounded him for life and only strengthened the urge he felt to put his experiences and related emotions into words as accurately as possible. It had an enormous impact on him personally and as an artist, yet he remained convinced that such an experience was invaluable to a writer (Fenton 67). What he saw at the battle front caused deeply rooted feelings of disgust with the way people wrapped the horrible conflict in patriotic, hypocritical words of honour and courage, with the way they spoke of morality and values, although it was responsible for the slaughter of thousands of young talented people (Cohassey 24). Hemingway craved a language that was honest and direct, contrary to the ornamental Victorian language that had been flourishing up until the First World War (Johnson). In *Death in the Afternoon* he wrote: “aside from knowing truly what you really felt, rather than what you were supposed to feel, and had been taught to feel, it was the challenge put down what really happened in action; what the actual things were which produced the emotion that you experienced” (*Death in the Afternoon* 7). His work does obviously not replace or replicate the experience of those at the firing lines, but at least it tries to offer the most truthful account possible of those years (Putnam). When explaining his technique some years later, he claimed that:

The writer’s standard of fidelity to truth should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly; but when a good writer is creating something, he has time and scope to make of it an absolute truth (Putnam).

2.3.3.1 Hemingway’s interpretation of truth

However, truth is a rather ambiguous concept here. It encompasses more than mere verisimilitude. It is above all an emotional truth that is largely dependent of particular circumstances and the people involved. The poem that entirely represents Hemingway’s early and eventually lifelong quest for truth is “Ultimately.” Even its composition history, Hemingway’s three different versions of the original newspaper article (see 1.3.2.1) embodies the struggle the “he” in the poem is facing as well, as he “tried to spit out the truth” (Kale 61). Truth would always remain his main concern, as becomes apparent from the different sorts of
writing he engaged in: nonfiction, letters and even the protagonists of his prose stories, like Nick Adams, voice the matter. When looking at one of the last poems Hemingway has ever published, “First Poem to Mary in London” which was written more than twenty years after “Ultimately,” approaching the end of his life and career, he yet again articulates his quest:

I loving only the word  
Trying to make with a phrase and a sentence  
Something no bomber can reach  
Something to stand when all of us are gone  
And long after (…) (Complete Poems 103).

In his memoir A Moveable Feast he tries to describe the way he used to start every single one of his writings, stressing again the importance of experience and truth:

Sometimes when I was starting a new story and I could not get it going (…) I would stand and look out over the roofs of Paris and think, “Do not worry. You have always written before and you will write now. All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence that you know.” So finally I would write one true sentence, and then go on from there. It was easy then because there was always one true sentence that you knew or had seen or had heard someone say. If I started to write elaborately, or like someone introducing or presenting something, I found that I could cut that scroll-work or ornament out and throw it away and start with the first true simple declarative sentence I had written (…) I was trying to do this all the time I was writing, and it was good and severe discipline (A Moveable Feast 22).

2.3.3.2 Irony and satire

One last element that deserves brief mention bearing all the foregoing in mind is Pound and Hemingway’s shared harsh sense of irony and satire. Being already present in Hemingway’s style since his time working for the Toronto Star (Fenton 81), where he experimented with several humoristic genres, Hemingway’s sense of humour became harsh and merciless due to his war experience. The writer wanted to bring war back to that side of society which had remained spared from the horrors and wrapped the conflict in hypocritical refinement.
(Complete Poems xx). According to Hurwitz’ article, Pound’s poetry must have been a great source of inspiration for Hemingway’s techniques for expressing irony and satire. It is of course dangerous here to conclude that this characteristic was directly inspired, while it might just as well or even mainly have arisen from Hemingway’s own personality and experiences. It cannot be denied however that from Pound’s work Hemingway learned how one could effectively express this bitterness with tropes like anti-climax and understatement (Hurwitz 478).

Showing that the core elements of Imagist technique, which I will clarify below, with its focus on truth and accurate representation, were present in Hemingway’s earliest writing already proves that he shared specific convictions and principles with Pound before they had even met. This would make him a very grateful and susceptible student, willing to absorb any kind of expertise that could help him perfect his convictions. Every phase of Hemingway’s apprenticeship, from his secondary school’s newspaper to his years in Paris, would strengthen the urge he felt to present his experiences and the related emotions as truthfully as possible.
CHAPTER 3: EZRA POUND AND IMAGISM

This chapter is dedicated entirely to Ezra Pound and Imagism. In the first and second section I will elaborate on Imagism’s position and importance in the modernist age and how Ezra Pound helped design this modernist climate, bringing about the most radical literary revolution up to that point in history. In the third section then I will use one of the other pivotal Imagist writers’ – Amy Lowell – explanation of the Imagist tenets, for Pound often deliberately remained vague and in doing so contributed to Imagism’s mystical character. The last section then sheds light on Pound’s eventual break with Imagism and accession into Vorticism. He could not come to terms with the democratization of his once elitist movement, blaming it for a decrease in quality.

3.1 The importance of Ezra Pound and Imagism in the post-war decade

The years between 1920 and 1930, the decade most severely marked by the Great War, can be considered the golden age of modern poetry. This period of great poetic achievements that had commenced around the turning of the century then reached its peak and brought about the most revolutionary modern literature western society had ever seen. Ezra Pound’s importance here lies in his leadership of the Imagist Movement, considered one of the influential literary movements that exerted a lasting influence on modernist literature (Pratt 1). Imagists were the first ones to step away from classical English restrictions, mainly present in Victorian literature, flourishing in late 19th century. They were most modern in their endeavour to oppose their age. Ezra Pound himself put this into words brightly:

They tell me to “mirror my age;”
God pity the age if I do it…
We ever live in the now
It is better to live in than sing of (Pratt 2).

Art was not supposed to transform the age, not in any political, social or economic sense, Contrary, modern poets agreed that it was better to sing the ugliness of the world, equally
inherent to human nature as beauty: poetry had to mirror this truthfully, not change it (Pratt 2).

Many talented writers at that time such as Stein, Fitzgerald, Ford etc. contributed to the creation of this new modern literary circuit, yet Ezra Pound was the most vigorous in championing and supporting it: “it is tremendously important that great poetry be written, it makes no jot of difference who writes it” (Pratt 127). It was he who became a literary agent, promoter and critic for nearly all the others. Between 1910 and 1920, his Imagist decade, he was right at the centre of and indispensable for the modern movement. As Eliot argues in his introduction to The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound: “Mr. Pound is more responsible for the 20th century revolution in poetry than any other individual” (Pratt 127-128). Pound was greatly admired by his contemporaries, among others his favoured apprentice Ernest Hemingway who reserved his most grateful praises for his mentor and friend: “Ezra Pound is a great poet (...) He was the master of T.S. Eliot. Eliot is a winner of the Nobel Prize. I believe it might well have gone to Pound (Cohassey 148). The importance of Pound’s Imagism has been subject to a lot of criticism, due to its vagueness and the fact it only lasted a decade (Pratt 14). What critics forget here however, is the lasting influence Imagism exerted on modern literature, with its main movement from representing external reality to presenting inward emotions evoked by that same, often grim, reality. Imagist poems are not very numerous, but even in Pound’s work alone one is able to retrieve an essential set of ideas, reflecting an age and producing a radical change (Pratt 129).

3.2 MAKE IT NEW: Pound’s bridge between tradition and innovation

Pound wanted to “MAKE IT NEW”, as was most modernists’ main objective, but his intentions greatly differed of those of his contemporaries. Marinetti and the other Italian Futurists for example wished to break with any tradition that had been flourishing up to the Great War, to cope with the trauma the war had caused (Cohassey 17). Pound however was convinced that in order to “make it new,” it was necessary to include the great ideas of his predecessors. This in its turn did not mean reinvention or an attempt to make these ideas better. Hemingway put it into words brightly, sharing Pound’s conviction: “a great artist uses everything that has been discovered or known about his art and then absorbs aspects of it at
such a rapid pace that it seems that the knowledge to have been born with him (…) he then transcends his influences and makes something of his own” (Cohassey 18).

Pound thus constituted a bridge between the world of the Symbolists and the Romantics and the age of science he lived in, which demanded “a poet of facts” (Cohassey 18). The English and American writers that laid the foundations for Imagism around 1910, stayed true to their French heritage. They were so thoroughly influenced by Symbolism, that René Taupin argued: “American poetry spoke French” (Pratt 14). Pound used to criticize the Symbolists’ “softness”, their indefiniteness, but at the same time complimented their “hardness,” or directness. The actual theory of Imagism was a lot more limited than the Symbolist theory, which resulted in analogous poetic creation. Instead of considering poems as complex symbols, Imagists preferred trying to catch single moments of time in a concise yet very telling language, epitomising their quest for truth (Pratt 16). The continuity between French Symbolism and Anglo-American Imagism is furthermore based upon the assumption that art “no longer deals with heroic action, it has become definitely and finally introspective and deals with expression and communication of momentary phases in the poet’s mind” (Pratt 32). What the poet thus experiences as overwhelming, he objectifies by detaching it from its context and catches it in a written image in order to evoke the exact same emotion as the one experienced: “In a poem of this sort one is trying to record the precise instant when a thing outward and objective transforms itself, or darts into a thing inward and subjective” (Pratt 133). Early moderns like Pound were not attempting to attain superficial beauty any longer, they wanted the truth that hid in both the calm and the chaos of the word surrounding them, the same emotional yet objective truth that has been so central to my plea so far and that was central to Ernest Hemingway’s entire oeuvre (Cohassey 18).

3.3 Pound’s Imagist principles clarified

“The age demanded an image / of its accelerated grimace” (Hugh Selwyn Mauberley 6), Ezra Pound writes in the second part of his iconic Imagist poetic sequence Hugh Selwyn Mauberley. From this statement we can deduce Imagism’s two main stimuli: a focus on the image and provocation of an age that was deeply affected by the First World War (Pratt 126). His 1914 explanation of his most famous single imagist poem “In a Station of the Metro” illustrates the creative process his mind went through before putting things into words, as he
was trying to create “a verbal equivalent for a moment of revelation accompanied by intense emotion” (Pratt 133).

Three years ago in Paris I got out of a “metro” train at La Concorde, and saw suddenly a beautiful face, and then another and another, and then a beautiful child’s face, and then another beautiful woman, and I tried all that day to find words for what this had meant to me, and I could not find any words that seemed to me worthy, or as lovely as that sudden emotion. And that evening, as I went home along the Rue Raynouard, I was still trying and I found, suddenly, the expression. I do not mean that I found words, but here came an equation… in little splotches of colour (Pratt 133).

Pound’s “Doctrine of the image” thus contributed to the literary movement’s intriguing character. Describing the image as “that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time” and adding that he uses “complex” in a psychological sense, reveals nothing about the essence of an image and only adds to the mystery (Materer 2). That is why I decided to include Amy Lowell’s preface to the 1916 anthology “Some Imagist Poets.” She here enumerates six Imagist principles that the poets who contributed to the series of anthologies agreed on and consistently applied in their writings and she provides concrete clarification and examples of each of them (Lowell 3). Below I will sum them up in Lowell’s order, each accompanied by how Pound presented them and further clarification. Although Amy Lowell played an entirely different role in the Imagist movement than did Ezra Pound, as I will point out further below, the way she explains the tenets offers at least some clarity about Pound’s enigmatic definitions, which provided me with a stronger basis to commence my analysis.

3.3.1 Le mot juste

To begin her enumeration with, Lowell mentions the use of the language of common speech, the related focus on the exact word and wariness of excessive decoration (Lowell 4). In Pound’s “A Few Don’ts by an Imagiste” then, it correspondingly reads: “Use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something” and “use either no ornament or good ornament” (“A Few Don’ts” 201-202). Language of common speech is, Lowell explains, “a diction which excludes inversions and the clichés of the old poetic jargon” (Lowell 4). The
main condition common speech has to satisfy is that it has to be original. Metaphors and other sorts of poetic language are thus not to be excluded per se, as long as the diction feels natural to the poet himself. *Le mot juste* is the key concept here and central to Pound’s Imagist doctrine. Achieving an expression constructed out of such *mots justes* as the result of thorough contemplation is the pre-eminent way to convey a distinct impression, something clichés on the other hand would hinder (Lowell 4). Pound considered good writers as those who succeeded in keeping their language, a person’s main means of communication for that matter, as clean and efficient as possible, as he argued in his *ABC to Reading*. Hemingway’s admiration for Pound was very much nurtured by this search for le *mot juste*. Reminiscing his apprenticeship years in Paris, he praised his mentor in his memoir *A Moveable Feast* with good reason as “the man I liked and trusted the most as a critic then, the man who believed in the *mot juste* – the one and only correct word to use (A Moveable Feast 120).

### 3.3.2 New rhythms for new ideas

Lowell continues with the importance of a poet’s freedom in choosing a form of expression. She claims not to insist on the use of free verse, but she does underscore its added value in expressing new ideas: “new rhythms for new moods, old rhythms echo old moods”. Modern subjects require corresponding expression (Lowell 3-5). Pound stressed the importance of a musical yet still natural rhythm, which not only addresses the reader’s eyes, but also his “imaginative ear”:

> Don’t chop your stuff into separate iambs. Don’t make each line stop dead at the end, and then begin every next line with a heave. Let the beginning of the next line catch the rise of the rhythm wave, unless you want a definite longish pause (“A Few Don’ts” 204).

As I said before, a poet’s language should at any cost remain the most natural means of expression to him and it should be constructed in a way that resonates in the reader’s head, allowing him to reflect and see things for himself from different perspectives:

> Naturally, your rhythmic structure should not destroy the shape of your words, or their natural sound, or their meaning (...) There is, however, in the best verse a sort of
residue of sound which remains in the ear of the hearer and acts more or less as an organ-base. A rhyme must have in it some slight element of surprise (“A Few Don’ts” 205).

*The Cantos*, being the pinnacle of Pound’s poetic career (although contested by many, due to its obscurity), form of course the most evident example of Pound’s use of free verse, to construct his images. Trying to give expression to a new reality and new sorts of meaning, demanded a new form indeed.

**3.3.3 Foreign tongues**

What Amy Lowell does not elaborate on but is very much emphasized by Pound and can be related to the use of free verse and natural rhythms, is the importance and added value of foreign tongues:

> Let the candidate fill his mind with the finest cadences he can discover, preferably in a foreign language so that the meaning of the words may be less likely to divert his attention from the movement (...) if he can dissociate the vocabulary from the cadence” (“A Few Don’ts” 202-203).

Pound considered the writer’s own language often inadequate to express an invisible, emotional reality behind perceived events, which reminds again of his Symbolist heritage. This all implies that there is so much more to be said, than can be achieved with one language (Pratt 24). Pound was known among his artist friends as a very educated man, who had immersed himself in the study of several languages (Chinese, German, French, Latin, Greek,...) and he of course tried to incorporate them as accurately as possible. He includes historically important, foreign tongues, to enrich his language and the meaning he was trying to convey with it (Pratt 132). Both by using foreign words and inventing new words, the artist tries to stretch the boundaries of human mental capacities and tries to reveal experience’s capacity to make language fall short of expressing meaning (Pratt 24).
3.3.4 The image: the writer’s primary pigment

Then Lowell moves on to discussing Pound’s key concept, the image. Imagism here has more to do with the way in which a thing is presented and the emotional undercurrent it brings about, rather than sheer representation of the actual thing. Imagists explore objects and scenes in great detail and turn them into vehicles that transport that particular emotion the writer wants to convey to the reader (Lowell 6). As Pound wrote in his ABC of Reading, great literature was “simply language charged with meaning to the utmost degree” (ABC 36). He considered poetry to be the most concentrated means of expression, which could create images containing the maximum amount of concentration. Images he therefore defined as: “that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time” and called them “the primary pigment” of the writer (Pratt 130). Pound as well showed the extent to which the definition could be stretched, by first creating short and then ever longer poems, characterised by more and more complex dynamics. Hugh Selwyn Mauberley (1920) for example is very different from “In a Station of the Metro” (1913). Both poems illustrate the evolution that Pound’s oeuvre underwent. “In a Station of the Metro” focuses on one static image:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough (Pratt 133).

Hugh Selwyn Mauberley on the other hand, is constructed out of a chain of images that affect each other dynamically. A further step would be the evolution towards chains of images that interacted so dynamically as to provoke clashes, out of which satire and irony emerged, both being the central characteristics of the new modern style that wanted to sing the chaos rather than gloze over it (Pratt 128). A consequent and seemingly paradoxical lesson of modern poetry is the importance of silence, resulting in radical experiments with elliptical techniques. Imagist poems are built up around seemingly independent fragments, with no transitions between them (Pratt 25). Poems get a fragmented feel that is reflective of the poet’s own mind and his reception of the fragmented post-war society. Imagist techniques were however not limited to poetic writings, as this plea may suggest. Extending the chains of images even further, it is possible to discern Imagist prose as well in the oeuvres of for example Marcel Proust and James Joyce, Sherwood Anderson and of course Ernest Hemingway. They made up a group of so-called prose imagists (Pratt 17).
3.3.5 Concentration and discipline

To end her enumeration with, Lowell mentions concentration as that which constitutes the essence of poetry (Lowell 6). Ezra Pound was more serious about his poetry and about poetry as a craft, than any of his contemporaries. Robert McAlmon once stated: “If Ezra Pound spoke of tradition and discipline it could be worth listening to, because Pound has interiorly disciplined his craft (when he is not scolding, but being the poet he can be) (Cohassey 17). In guiding his apprentices he repeatedly advised them to work their writings out in several drafts. Hemingway for example regularly sent his mentor such drafts and got them back completely blue-pencilled (Cohassey 16).

To conclude this section with, I would like to point again to the basis out of which all these Imagist tenets have obviously emerged. Pound as well strived for a maximum amount of truth in his writings, a truth that included about all dimensions of human experience and thus able to evoke the largest emotional response possible. The accurate words, natural rhythms and overall musicality, the inclusion of foreign tongues, the construction of images as vehicles for communicating emotion and finally his emphasis on severe discipline, are all crucial steps on his quest.

3.4 From “Amygism” to Vorticism

As Timothy Materer argues in his article “Make it Sell! Ezra Pound Advertises Modernism,” Pound could not have predicted the movement’s success and the (negative) democratization this would eventually impose. To make his Imagism as influential as possible, Pound was willing to expand the original limited group of four Imagist poets (Aldington, H.D. Flint and himself). But in doing so, he gave mediocre artists who appeared in his anthology Des Imagistes the opportunity to claim the title of Imagist poet, which would eventually lead to his own downfall as architect and epitome of the movement. Amy Lowell used the connections her appearance in the anthology provided her to take over Pound’s leadership. Pound decided that he did not want to be part anymore of this version of Imagism, which he came to call “Amygism.” he wanted the name ‘Imagisme’ to retain some sort of meaning. It stands, or I should like it to stand for hard light, clear edges. I can not trust any democratized committee to maintain that standard” (Materer 2). Pound indeed liked to surround himself with people
who were equally intelligent and talented as he was and promoted an aesthetic elite (Cohassey 18).

Pound did not have enough money to constitute a new anthology, so he was left no other option than to “break “with Imagism by midsummer 1914 (Wees 56). He even decided to change the title of an article he was working on in 1914 from “Imagism” to “Vorticism”. The kind of literary “Vorticism” Pound describes in his essay “Vortex”, published in the Vorticist journal BLAST reads as nothing more than an improved alternative for “Amygism” that did answer to Pound’s elitist aspirations (Materer 3). See for example Pound’s statement that “elaboration, expression of second intensities or dispersedness belong to the secondary sort of artist,” which reminds of his Imagist principles of economy and the focus on le mot juste (“Vortex”). He also dedicates a paragraph to “the primary pigment,” which he here calls “Vortex,” which is in fact thus just a different name for his images (“Vortex”). Because of such than obvious similarities which prove that Vorticism was just Pound’s claimed version of Imagism, I will not dedicate any specific attention to it in my analysis, but I decided to discuss it briefly here for it does shed extra light on Pound’s attitude, values and position in the literary landscape of his time.
PART II: LITERARY ANALYSIS

In the following analysis I will try to give an overview as extensive as possible of how Hemingway’s early poems contain characteristics inspired by Pound’s Imagist principles, as I discussed them in the previous chapters. I decided to focus the analysis mainly around Hemingway’s early poems, all written before 1926 that were printed in several little magazines. It were these poems that caught Pound’s attention and convinced him that Ernest Hemingway was a new talent that deserved to get the recognition he craved. I will sometimes deviate from this pattern, whenever I find other poems published in Gerogiannis’ revised edition of Complete Poems equally demonstrative of Pound’s Imagist doctrine. As I mentioned in the first chapter, these early poems are also not of lesser value than later works, seen the fact they date from the same period as Hemingway’s first influential prose works In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises. These prose works have received a lot more critical attention in general and several scholars have dedicated their research to how Imagism affected the books’ lyrical structure and content. Therefore I will commence every section of my analysis with a brief overview of the most relevant scholarly comments on these two prose works, which I will then apply to Hemingway’s poems. The analysis is divided into four main parts: economy, musicality, images and concentration, conform Amy Lowell’s enumeration. My main objective is to prove that there are significant differences between poems written before and after the two artists’ meeting and to demonstrate how Pound helped Hemingway in sharpening his final credo, focused on his lifelong quest for truth. Therefore I will always provide examples of earlier poems, to show that basics were already present and then continue with later poems, to show how Pound helped Hemingway perfect these basics and to show how Hemingway interpreted the Imagist principles in his own manner.
CHAPTER 1: ECONOMY AND LE MOT JUSTE

In her discussion of Hemingway’s *In Our Time*, Wendolyn Tetlow mentions one of Pound’s letters to Hemingway, written on the 21th of December 1926, in which he reacts to a story Hemingway sent him earlier:

> Do you onnerstan what I mean about being licherary. Being licherary mean that the reader (even the interested, and in my case abnormally HOPING reader) has to work to keep his eye on the page during the introductory pages… ANYTHING put on top of the subject is BAD. Licherchure is mostly blanketing up a subject. Too much MAKINGS. The subject is always interesting enough without blankets (Tetlow 14).

Pound here insists on keeping language, as the main means of human communication, clean and efficient, for he wanted poets to be able to convey a distinct impression and emotion using *les mots justes* (ABC 32). The subject should be captured in a language that lies closer to common speech than classic literary language, which is bound to numerous restrictions. He insisted on remaining wary of poetical constructions or phrasings that do not add anything valuable to the subject: no clichéd metaphors or imagery that would blur the emotion and no superfluous attributes, focusing mainly on adjective + noun constructions. He always encouraged writers to keep their language concise and remain wary of excess, referring both to the actual amount of words, the complexity of sentences and words and the attributive colouring of representations. In the following section I will explore these kinds of reduction on different levels, starting with Wendolyn Tetlow’s relevant remarks about *In Our Time*, to then continue with a corresponding analysis of Hemingway’s poems.

1.1 *In Our Time*: reduction on several levels

When we take a look at Hemingway’s revisions of the prose vignettes that appeared in *In Our Time*, we can get a clear idea of what Pound has effectuated with his emphasis on economy and accuracy. No manuscript copies of Pound’s criticism have been retrieved, but fortunately there are three drafts of chapter 2 of *In Our Time*. The first version was a newspaper article written for the *Toronto Star* (1922), then reworked it into a publication for *The Little Review*.
(1923) and his last revision dates from 1923, the one published in *In Our Time* itself (Fenton 229). Between the first and the last version the total number of words was reduced from 241 to 121 and the initial total of 30 attributes was brought back to ten (Hurwitz 476). As Malcolm Cowley stated “the total effect was to make the reader see events for themselves instead of just hearing about them” (Hurwitz 476):

Minarets stuck up in the rain out of Adrianople across the mud flats. The carts were jammed for thirty miles along the Karagatch road. Water buffalo and cattle were hauling carts through the mud. No end and no beginning. Just carts loaded with everything they owned. The old men and women, soaked through, walked along keeping the cattle moving (…) there was a woman having a kid with a young girl holding a blanket over and crying. Scared sick looking at it. It rained all through the evacuation (Tetlow 23).

Furthermore this inter-chapter reflects Pound’s recurrent emphasis on keeping language concise and concentrated. The fragment counts 112 words in total, of which 48 are repeated (sometimes even more than once) and of which only 20 count more than one syllable (Tetlow 20).
1.2 Hemingway’s poems

1.2.1 The earliest witness of Hemingway’s poetics: make every element count

The poems that reflect these convictions most are “Blank Verse” (1916), “On Weddynges Giftes” (1921), “Chapter Heading” (1921), “Roosevelt” (1922), “The Earnest Liberal’s lament” (1922) and most of all “Neothomist Poem” (1926). I selected poems that represent several stages of Hemingway’s apprenticeship. The first one is in fact not part of his actual apprenticeship, but I believe it can be considered an early manifestation of Hemingway’s poetics and especially his emphasis on making every word and every punctuation mark count. “Blank Verse” reads:

“
!
, :
, , .
, , ;
, ; !
, (Complete Poems 6).

As I have mentioned several times before, Hemingway’s admiration of Pound was much nurtured by the latter’s quest for *le mot juste*. In “Blank Verse,” written as early as 1916 still living in his hometown, we find a play with ellipses and all sorts of punctuation marks, both alluding on the respective importance of silence and how even the choice of punctuation marks affects the conception and understanding of a poem thoroughly.
1.2.2 The right words and the right punctuation marks

In a 1921 poem, in fact the last one he wrote before he left for Paris, “On Weddynge Gyftes”, he treats the issue in a similar way:

Three traveling clocks
Tick
On the mantelpiece
Comma
But the young man is starving (*Complete Poems* 39).

Even the punctuation mark, “Comma,” gets emphasized attention here. The poem is yet again an example of Hemingway's terse style, carefully selecting *les mots justes*. One year further into his apprenticeship, Hemingway again demonstrates his skill of making every element as crucial as the next one. In “Riparto d'Assalto” the greatly varied use of punctuation marks creates the impression that he chose them all for a specific reason, otherwise he would probably not dedicate so much attention to making every sentence end with the fitted mark:

Drummed their boots on the camion floor,
Hob-nailed boots on the camion floor.
Sergeants stiff,
Corporals sore.
Lieutenants thought of a Mestre whore –
Warm and soft and sleepy whore,
Cozy, warm and lovely whore:
Damned cold, bitter, rotten ride,
Winding road up the Grappa side.
Arditi on benches stiff and cold,
Pride of their country stiff and cold,
Bristly faces, dirty hides –
Infantry marches, Arditi rides.
Grey, cold, bitter, sullen ride –
To splintered pines on the Grappa side
At Asalone, where the truck-load died (*Complete Poems* 46).
1.2.3 Reduction of attributive constructions

“Chapter Heading”, written in 1921, then is one of the most concise poems that Hemingway has written up to this point of his career, having finished some apprenticeship years with several American newspapers. The extensive set of 110 rules from The Kansas City Star of which Pete Wellington emphasized the importance of “avoid the use of adjectives, especially such extravagant ones as splendid, gorgeous, grand, magnificent etc.,” left a great impression on Hemingway (Fenton 33). “Chapter Heading” shows clear evidence of his conviction that good poetry is more about how nothing else can be left out, than about how nothing else can be added:

    For we have thought the longer thoughts
    And gone the shorter way.
    And we have danced to devil’s tunes,
    Shivering home to pray;
    To serve one master in the night,
    Another in the day (Complete Poems 34).

The reduction of attributes is particularly striking after Hemingway’s time with the Kansas City Star. A logical question would thus be how Pound’s influence can be detected then, this conviction being already present with Hemingway even before the two met. When we look at poems written around 1922 and later, it is striking that the number of adjectives decreases even more drastically and that there is also a difference in choice of adjectives. Before, Hemingway would often still use attributes that were very colourful, while after 1922 they became more and more neutral, being even more careful in colouring the reader’s perception with the author's subjective impression, which could hinder a truthful representation.

“Roosevelt,” for example, written in 1922 and thus after Hemingway met Pound, consists of 13 lines and contains no adjectives or other attributes, except for one past participle in the last sentence: “unhampered now by his existence.” Written in the same year, “The Earnest Liberal’s Lament” contains no adjectives either, this being probably the result of several corrections. The poem existed indeed in four different versions, titled: “the earnest liberal’s lament,” “the liberal’s prayer for guidance,” the liberal’s prayer for quidance (god is love)”
and “to earnest liberals,” yet again bearing witness of Hemingway’s professional discipline in perfecting his craft (Young, Mann 85).

The best example of Pound’s influence in reducing the number of attributes and in fact also the overall length of a poem, the poem that is thus most representative of the Imagist axiom of economy is “Neothomist Poem,” published in 1927 as one of the last poems Hemingway would ever publish. “The Lord is my shepherd / I shall not want him for long”, it reads. The poem was a favourite of Pound’s, who asked Hemingway to write prose pieces equally simple and concentrated. Pound also had his share in the construction process, as becomes clear from the multiple drafts for the poem. The original typescript, counting ten lines, was much longer than the published version, counting only two lines, and the other manuscript written in pencil contains a lot of corrections, accompanied by four pages of notes in a notebook (Young, Mann 79). This collaboration became the perfect illustration of both authors’ wariness of excess (Complete Poems 146). It is also remarkable that Hemingway wrote such a short poem in a time where he dedicated his time to creating longer montages such as “They All Made Peace – What is Peace”. “They All Made Peace” itself contains in fact no more than 4 adjectives, spread over a total of 41 lines. “I Like Americans” and “I Like Canadians” contain respectively 1 and 2 adjective + noun constructions, spread over 32 and 49 lines and “The Soul of Spain with McAlmon and Bird the Publishers, a 49-line long poem, contains only 6 adjectives.
1.2.4 Deviations from the pattern: functional use of adjectives

However, there are some deviations from the pattern that cannot be ignored, for they show a crucial nuance in Hemingway’s use of the journalist’s principles of restraint and Imagist axiom of economy. I will provide a comparison between the poems “Shock Troops” (1922) and “Riparto d’Assalto” (1922), which render the same theme in a radically different manner. I will use the comparison to show how Hemingway sometimes used the Imagist tenets in a functional rather than restrictive manner. The former poem contains only one real adjective + noun construction, “obscene song”:

Men went happily to death
But they were not the men
Who marched for years
Up to the line.
These rode a few times
And were gone
Leaving a heritage of obscene song (Complete Poems 43).

“Riparto d’Assalto” does not show similar restraint at all. Over a total of 16 lines we can find 24 adjectives, of which some are repeated but most of them even appear in enumerations of three or more adjectives. “Use either no ornament or good ornament,” Pound said, but Hemingway seems to deliberately leave this path here and uses the abundance of adjectives in a functional way. It is as if he is doing the wrong thing, to give expression to a bad thing, namely the trip and eventual death of the truck-load. There is also a sharp contrast to be noted in this abundance of adjectives. Most of the them are negative, like “sore,” “cold,” “bristly,” “dirty,” “bitter” etc. except for those describing the whore: “warm,” “soft,” “sleepy” and “lovely,” yet again creating a functional and meaningful contrast by means of adjectives.

The same goes for “Along With Youth,” a poem about how the past passes and becomes unrecoverable. The poem is clearly divided into two parts: the first part being the actual detailed image, the second part containing the conclusion of the poem. The image itself is laced with adjectives, 8 adjective + noun constructions spread over nine lines. It is as if he wants to hold on to the past by bringing up so many details, to then move on to the next part of the poem in which it becomes clear indeed that the past is gone. This last part contains only
one adjective, the uninformative “big”, and becomes thus a rather empty part that tries to catch the writer's resignation. Here again you can see how Hemingway applies the principles concerning adjectives in a functional way: the image gets a lot of adjectives, the second and ironic part gets barely any form of colouring.

What should have become apparent by now is that although Hemingway had already learned with the *Kansas City Star* to remain wary of an excessive use of adjectives, it was Ezra Pound who inspired him most to leave out anything that would blur a truthful representation and to stick with *les mots justes*. This shows both in the reduction of the overall length of texts and complexity of sentences, but most of all in the decline in adjective + noun constructions, that became more drastic as his apprenticeship years under Pound’s guidance passed. Hemingway would not be Hemingway however if he did not add his own touch to this Imagist influence, as shows in his decision to use Pound’s restrictive, economic tenets in a functional way that evoked an extra layer of meaning.
CHAPTER 2: MUSICALITY

The second section of my analysis deals with Hemingway’s choice of free verse and rejection of restricted metrical rhythms and bland rhyme schemes. Yet again I will use scholarly remarks about In Our Time and the Sun Also Rises as a starting point, which among others identifies techniques like catching the content of a poem in its rhythm, the use of enjambments and juxtaposition of sentences of different degrees of complexity etc. Thereafter I will also point to Hemingway’s use of what Pound called “a residue of sound” and to conclude this chapter with, I will discuss the importance of the inclusion of foreign tongues. Yet again Hemingway succeeds in interpreting Pound’s Imagist tenets in his own manner, resulting in crucial deviations from the latter’s path.

2.1 In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises: speed, rhythm and rhyme

Wendolyn Tetlow gives a number of examples of In Our Time to illustrate both Hemingway’s use of free verse and his talent in catching the content of a poem also in its rhythm on the surface. The second inter-chapter that would become chapter IX in In Our Time goes as follows:

The kid came out and had to kill five bulls because you can’t have more than three matadors, and the last bull he was so tired he couldn’t get the sword in. he couldn’t hardly lift his arm. He tried five times and the crowd was quiet because it was a good bull and it looked like him or the bull and then he finally made it (…) (Tetlow 21-22).
In this first part we can discern Hemingway’s use of enjambments. It reads as an uninterrupted sequence of actions, which adds to the speed and natural rhythm of the passage. In this second paragraph, Hemingway’s use of specific consonants is significant:

When he started to kill it was all in the same rush. The bull looking at him straight in front, hating. He drew out the sword from the folds of the muleta and sighted with the same movement and called to the bull. Toro! Toro! And the bull charged and Villalta charged and just for a moment they became one. Villalta became one with the bull and then it was over. Villalta standing straight and the red hilt of the sword sticking out dully between the bull’s shoulders (Tetlow 42).

The l’s in “kill,” “bull,” “Villalta,” and “dully” make the fragment move forward rhythmically, to emphasize the bullfighter’s skills. The f and s sounds in respectively words like “front,” “from” and “folds”, and “same,” “sword,” “standing” and “straight” should give the passage a smoothness that is reminiscent of the bullfighter’s movements. Hemingway here achieves harmony, a rhythmical unity between sound and meaning, just like the bullfighter and the bull have become one in the fight (Tetlow 42). At a certain point Hemingway also succeeds in catching the rhythm of the sea and its waves, by repeating several monosyllabic words: “the sea broke in a long line in the rain and slipped back and down the beach to come up and break again in a long line in the rain” (Tetlow 42).

In her Imagism-focused analysis of The Sun Also Rises Wagner-Martin adds to the aspects discerned by Tetlow in In Our Time, the way in which Hemingway succeeds in creating a sense of speed in the novel by letting different passages follow each other without any logical transition and by letting sentences of different lengths and complexities alternate (“One Debt to Imagism” 91). Hemingway here often combines sentences of varying lengths and composition to achieve the right tonality, a tonality that may in fact be contrary to the visible content. The first sentences are short and simple, but then Hemingway starts to build up emotional tension as he elongates his sentences and makes them more complex, up until the final sentence that seems to complete the circle again:
In the morning it was all over. The fiesta was finished. I woke up about nine o’clock, had a bath, dressed and went down-stairs. The square was empty and there were no people on the streets. A few children were picking up rocket-sticks in the square. The cafés were just opening and the waiters were carrying out the comfortable white wicker chairs and arranging them around the marble-topped tables in the shade of the arcade. They were sweeping the streets and sprinkling them with a hose (…) a waiter wearing a blue apron came out with a bucket of water and a cloth, and commenced to tear down the notices, pulling the paper off in strips and washing and rubbing away the paper that stuck to the stone. The fiesta was over (The Sun Also Rises 227).

Repeating the refrain “the fiesta was over” can be considered an example of what Pound called “a sort of residue of sound which remains in the ear” and it serves as a baseline for establishing a specific mood. Hemingway was well aware of the effect the repetition of single words and entire sentences could create and acknowledged using the technique to Lillian Ross, who quotes: “in the first paragraph of farewell, I used the word and consciously over and over the way Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach used a note in music when he was emitting a counterpoint” (“One Debt to Imagism” 93).

### 2.2 Hemingway’s poems: an early preference of free verse

Arthur Waldhorn claims that only “Riparto d’Assalto” forms a fitting illustration of Hemingway’s talent to create natural rhythms. Its stomping, repetitive rhythm reflects its content very well indeed, but I am convinced that there are several other examples to be found in his oeuvre, both before and after Pound’s years of guidance. I would also like to add the importance of rhyme schemes, which deserves the same nuance I mentioned in my discussion of Hemingway’s use of adjectives. Even in one of his earliest poems already, “How Ballad Writing Affects Our Seniors” (1916), Hemingway gives voice to his preference of free verse.
He resolutely turns his back on classical poetic language, bound by restrictions and fixed rhyme schemes:

(...) For the future I shall promise
(if you let me live this time),
I’ll ne’er write another ballad –
Never venture into rhyme (Complete Poems 9).

But on two occasions, which I will discuss further below, the author seems to step out of this Pound-worn path and decides to use rhyme schemes functionally, bearing in mind his actual rejection of such patterns and the way he uses this to convey meaning and create rhythm, as well. Several poems published in Three Stories and Ten Poems are illustrations of Hemingway’s sensitivity to free verse and rhythm. Waldhorn found “Oklahoma” (1920-1921), written before the poets’ first encounter, not successful because of Hemingway’s use of parentheses, which would give the poem an artificial feel and could eventually throw over its entire strength:

All of the Indians are dead
(A good Indian is a dead Indian)
Or riding in motor cars.
(The oil lands, you know, they’re all rich)
Smoke smarts my eyes,
Cottonwood twigs and buffalo dung
Smoke grey in the tepee –
(Or is it myopic trachoma?) (…) (Complete Poems 25).

But since it is indeed one of Hemingway’s earliest poems and he was still fully exploring his options that, to my opinion, could be negligible. Moreover, the sentences between parentheses make Hemingway’s early preference for free verse very clear. They contain personal considerations, questions he asks himself and shares with the reader and colloquial interjections like “you know,” in the first paragraph.
2.2.1 Enjambments and sentences of alternating complexity

Both “Shock Troops” (cited above) and “Roosevelt” (1922) are later examples of Hemingway’s use of enjambments and these poems more specifically for how he had learned from his mentor to construct a poem in such a way that the growing complexity of the sentences lead up to a kind of climax. The entire last sentence of “Roosevelt” for example is the most complex of the entire poem and expresses its ultimate meaning, Hemingway’s admiration for Roosevelt:

Workingmen believed  
He busted truths,  
And put his picture in their windows.  
“What he’d have done in France!”  
They said.  
Perhaps he would –  
He could have died  
Perhaps,  
Though generals rarely die except in bed,  
As he did finally.  
And all the legends that he started in his life  
Live on and prosper,  
Unhampered now by his existence (Complete Poems 45).

I also believe that Hemingway’s use of enjambment in those two poems evokes meaning in that in “Roosevelt”, which expresses Roosevelt’s immortality or at least that of the legends about him, the enjambments suggest eternal movement. In “Shock Troops” the writer does something similar, mentioning in its last line the “heritage of obscene song.” I believe that the most important way in which Pound’s influence on Hemingway here should be interpreted is his conviction that rhythm and rhyme are two natural means of conveying meaning. As Pound said, the choice of words and construction of sentences should not damage the meaning of the words, contrary, meaning has to erupt from these choices themselves.
2.2.2 Rhythm, rhyme and other meaningful consonants

“Captives” (1920-1921) rhythm then, a poem also published in *Three Stories and Ten Poems* and with good reason one of those that caught Pound’s attention, is also noteworthy:

Some came in chains
Unrepentant but tired.
Too tired but to stumble.
Thinking and hating were finished
Thinking and fighting were finished
Retreating and hoping were finished.
Cures thus a long campaign,
Making death easy (*Complete Poems* 26).

Hemingway recreates the sound of the stumbling soldiers right in the middle of the poem with the lines “thinking and hating were finished / thinking and fighting were finished / retreating and hoping were finished” (*Complete Poems* 26), making them serve as a kind of connection between the first part in which the exhaustion and stumbling are literally stated and the last two lines in which he verbalises the end of that “long campaign”, embodied in the repeated word “finished”. In “Oily Weather” (1922) as well he succeeds in catching the sound and movement of the waves of the sea, something comparable to what he did in *The Sun Also Rises*. Although Waldhorn finds this poem one of Hemingway’s least succeeded ones, this rhythmical quality does make it stand out and bears clear witness of Imagist inspiration:

The sea desires deep hulls –
It swells and rolls.
The screw churns a throb –
Driving, throbbing, progressing.
The sea rolls with love,
Surging, caressing,
Undulating its great loving belly.
The sea is big and old –
Throbbing ships scorn it (*Complete Poems* 44).
Especially a phrase like “driving, throbbing, progressing” catches the sound of the rolling waves. Furthermore, the image of the rolling, overwhelming sea is also strengthened by concrete vowels and consonants. Take for example more rounded consonants, like $d$, $b$, $l$ which are very present in a sentence like “Undulating its great loving belly”, and even the soft $s$ sounds in the first two lines. They are in, literally, sharp contrast to the consonants in the last line, $t$, $s$, $p$ and $c$: “throbbing ships scorn it.” Yet again, an extra dimension of meaning is evoked in this conscious use of sounds, making the last sentence that is content-wise the sharpest stand out even more.

But the two poems in which Hemingway succeeded most in making the rhythm equally important as his chosen words, are “Mitraillatrice” (1921) and “Riparto d’Assalto”. The meaning of the poem relies on the detailed image and mechanical, rhythmical exploration of the typewriter (corona), which is being presented as a machine gun operated by the writer’s hands (Waldhorn 80). Although written before meeting Pound, it shows how Hemingway was already concerned with rhythm and sounds:

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The mills of the gods grind slowly;
But this mill
Chatters in mechanical staccato.
Ugly short infantry of the mind,
Advancing over difficult terrain,
Make this Corona
Their mitrailleuse (Complete Poems 37).
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“Chatters in mechanical staccato” is a strong phrase, both rhythm-wise as overall sound-wise. The “ugly short infantry of the mind”, being the writer’s hands, advances stutteringly: it is all in the short, sharp consonants in “chatters,” “mechanical,” and “staccato” and the alteration of the $a$’s with the other vowels makes it sound very repetitive and mechanical as well. In “Riparto d’Assalto” (1922) Hemingway perfects this mechanical, drumming rhythm on different levels. The overall construction of the sentences, composed mainly out of monosyllabic or disyllabic words, which are often included in enumerations, contributes to the sensation of the thumping and bumping.
2.2.3 Deviation from the pattern: functional use of rhyme

What makes “Riparto d’Assalto” stand out most from previous works then, is the functional use of the rhyme scheme, which I announced at the beginning of this analysis. Despite Hemingway’s early promise to not fall into bland rhyme scheme he here shows that bland rhyme schemes can evoke meaning on yet another level. The rhyme scheme entirely revolves around two vowels: i’s and o’s. Their alternation recreates the sound of the stomping boots on the floor and the bumps in the road and by placing them in such a simple rhyme scheme this is emphasized even more.

Another example of Hemingway breaking his promise is “Valentine” (1927), his audaciously ironic contribution to the last publication of The Little Review:

Sing a song of critics
pockets full of lye
four and twenty critics
hope that you will die
hope that you will peter out
hope that you will fail
so they can be the first one
be the first to hail
any happy weakening or sign of quick decay.
(All are very much alike, weariness too great,
sordid small catastrophes, stack the cards on fate,
dope fiends, soldiers, prostitutes,
men without a gallus*)
If you do not like them lads
one thing you can do
stick them up your asses lads
My Valentine to you.

*…….. (Complete Poems 93).
In the letter that accompanied the poem, Hemingway wrote: “Enclosed please find a piece for the Final Number of yr. esteemed weekly. I hope this will meet your qualifications that it should not be literature” (Complete Poems 151). With this letter in mind, the simple rhyme scheme makes a lot more sense and contributes to the ironic content. The functionality here lies in Hemingway’s pretending that the poem is not literature and his consequential use of techniques that he considered literary inferior (note in this respect also his abundant use of adjectives).

2.2.4 Residue of sound

Lastly I would like to stand still with what Pound called a “residue of sound”. As mentioned above, there is “in the best verse a sort of residue of sound which remains in the ear of the hearer and acts more or less as an organ-base” (“A Few Don’ts” 205). Hemingway acknowledged his awareness and use of this technique in The Sun Also Rises and also in his poetry several examples can be found. “Valentine” can already serve as an example here, with its parallel construction of: “hope that you will die/hope that you will peter out/hope that you will fail” (Complete Poems 93). The poem that reminds most evidently of the refrain “the fiesta is over” from The Sun Also Rises is “The Age Demanded” (1922) with a similar refrain:

The age demanded that we sing
And cut away our tongue.
The age demanded that we flow
And hammered in the bung.
The age demanded that we dance
And jammed us into iron pants.
And in the end the age was handed
The sort of shit that it demanded (Complete Poems 53).

By repeating the phrase it leaves an echo in the reader’s head, so he remains aware of the absurdity of the Great War and how Western society forever silenced thousands of young men. In “Riparto d’Assalto” it is mainly the repetition of the adjectives “stiff” and “cold” that creates the residue of sound, leaving the reader with the same frigid kind of cold the soldiers
there experienced. In “The Soul of Spain with McAlmon and Bird the Publishers” (1923), Hemingway yet again does his own thing with one of Pound’s principles and uses it in a functional way:

(...) Democracy is the shit.
Relativity is the shit.
Dictators are the shit (...)
Dada is the shit.
Dempsey is the shit.
This is not a complete list.
They say Ezra is the shit.
But Ezra is nice (...) (Complete Poems 70).

By providing this repetitive enumeration and breaking it off right at the end, which in the book also coincides with the end of the page, Hemingway leaves his reader startled and he sheds more light on the section about Ezra Pound himself that follows. The most meaningful residue of sound then hides in “First Poem to Mary in London”: “Practice make perfect make practice make perfect make practice” (Complete Poems 103) perfectly embodies everything such a residue of sound is supposed to do: making the reader persistently conscious of how practice is crucial to any process towards perfection and consequently, truth.

2.3 Foreign tongues

What Amy Lowell does not elaborate on but is very much emphasized by Pound and can be closely linked to the use of free verse, is the importance and added value of the inclusion of foreign tongues:

Let the candidate fill his mind with the finest cadences he can discover, preferably in a foreign language so that the meaning of the words may be less likely to divert his attention from the movement (...) if he can dissociate the vocabulary from the cadence” (“A Few Don’ts” 202-203).
The language at the writer’s disposal Pound considered inadequate to express an invisible, emotional reality behind perceived events. Both using foreign words and inventing new words, the artist tries to stretch the boundaries of human mental capacities and tries to reveal experience’s capacity to make language fall short of expressing meaning (Pratt 24). Hemingway was not in the slightest as educated as his mentor. He would take a more experiential approach to life and this is clearly reflected in how and when Hemingway decided to use foreign words. They are always linked to his personal experiences or possessions, like respectively his war experience and his Corona typewriter, and it becomes obvious that Hemingway too used foreign words in order to provide his readers the truest possible reproduction of these experiences. Dating from before the two poets’ first encounter, only “Mitrailliatrice” can count as an example. Hemingway’s use of foreign words like the title itself (the French word for machine gun fire) and mitrailleuse, ties in neatly with the theme of the poem; the difficulty to grasp thoughts with language and how the writer is in a constant fight with his language, considering it insufficient (Complete Poems 137). As to his poems written under Pound’s literary guidance, there is an obvious increase in his use of foreign words. “Riparto d’Assalto” contains three foreign references: Riparto d’Assalto, camion and Arditi, respectively the Italian words for storm troops (or literally, attack division), a truck or wagon and Italian shock troops (Complete Poems 138). Not the theme of the poem, but the importance Hemingway attached to his war experiences here encouraged him to use the Italian words, which he most likely picked up while residing at the Italian front himself. Moving some years further into his apprenticeship, “Part Two of the Soul of Spain with McAlmon and Bird the Publishers” and “The Poem is by Maera” are laced with foreign words. See for example the Spanish words Veronica, estocada, banderillos, diestro, epada and puntillo in the former and miuras, banderillos and paseo in the latter (Complete Poems 145-145).

In conclusion, it has become apparent that Pound inspired his apprentice to dedicate great attention to his use of free verse and corresponding rhythms and rhyme schemes. Reflecting or counteracting content in construction and rhythm forms an enormous opportunity to create extra layers of meaning, something Hemingway clearly understood and strived for, trying to provide his reader with as many sensations caught in the smallest amount of words possible. Earlier poems already bear witness of Hemingway’s sensitivity to rhythm and sound, but as his apprenticeship progressed, he yet again succeeded in perfecting the Imagist tenets and giving them his own functional twist.
CHAPTER 3: IMAGES AS THE WRITER’S PRIMARY PIGMENT

In this final and probably most essential section of my analysis, I will discuss what Ezra Pound called “the primary pigment” of any writer: his images, defined as “that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time” (“A Few Don’ts” 200). These images are in fact incarnate emotions: objects and scenes the writer perceives, then explores into their smallest details and in doing so turns them into vehicles for communicating emotion. The meaning of these explorations hides not so much in the physical construction and words themselves, but especially in the emotional undercurrent they evoke. Everything that I have discussed up to this point contributes to a successful construction of such images and Hemingway was with good reason one of Pound’s favoured apprentices. Not only did he succeed in creating pungent images, he also followed Pound’s guidance in exploring the boundaries of these images by linking them to each other in longer poems and making them interact dynamically. Out of such clashes then emerged another meaningful dimension, often offering a harsh ironical critique on society. All these different layers add up to one concise, accurate representation that should approximate the emotional truth the author wants his readers to experience.

3.1 In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises: sensuous language and juxtaposition

Cowley has argued that the prose-vignettes in the In Our Time sequence were indeed experiments to explore Pound’s “doctrine of the image”. Pound was therefore very pleased when reading Hemingway’s prose vignettes, because these chapters were laced with a great amount of poetic techniques. Hemingway’s vignettes do not serve as narrative pieces but rather as crystallisations of moods and states of mind in one specific moment (mainly moments of crisis) (Stewart 102). The book’s entire structure is in fact lyrical, in that we get a succession of emotional and intense centres instead of action-filled sequences (Tetlow 14).

First of all the images in the prose vignettes represent mental states, not actions, caught in detailed explorations of specific objects or situations. Many passages in In Our Time can be isolated from the context that the rest of the novel offers and can thus serve as images. The following scene for example contains a set of sharp details that are supposed to evoke Jake’s
conflicting emotions when he sees Brett enter, accurately caught in the last sentence (“One Debt to Imagism” 91).

A crowd of young men, some in jerseys and some in their shirt-sleeves, got out. I could see their hands newly washed, wavy hair in the light from the door. The policeman standing by the door looked at me and smiled. They came in, as they went in, under the light I saw white hands, wavy hair, white faces, grimacing, gesturing, talking. With them was Brett (page number)

Furthermore, in order to create these emotional sets, the authors use a sensuous language that is supposed to appeal to all the reader’s senses (Tetlow 13). Such sensuous details make the image perceivable in several dimensions, as if the reader can not only read about it as it is written but, as Hemingway once told his friend Donald Wright when living in America: “you’ve got to see it, feel it, smell it, hear it” (Fenton 88). Take for example Hemingway’s description of an Indian, primitive birth scene:

Inside a wooden bunk lay a young woman. She had been trying to have her baby for two days. All the old women in the camp had been helping her. The men had moved off up the road to sit in the dark and smoke out of range of the noise she made. She screamed just as Nick and the two Indians followed his father and George into the Shanty. She lay in the lower bunk very big under a quilt. Her head was turned to one side. In the upper bunk was her husband. He had cut his foot very badly with an ax three days before. He was smoking a pipe. The room smelled very bad (Tetlow 53).

The descriptions of the image of the woman, the sound of the screaming, the feel of the rough bunk, the smell of the room and the pipe’s smoke, the pain of the cut... all call upon one of the reader’s senses, in order to evoke the largest emotional response possible (Tetlow 53). Hemingway also makes functional use of vowels and consonants for the same purpose. The opening piece of Hemingway’s first attempt at writing a sequence of sensuous prose vignettes appeared in 1923 in The Little Review. The piece remained chapter 1 in the definitive publication of In Our Time:

Everybody was drunk. The whole battery was drunk going along the road in the dark. We were going to the Champagne. The lietutenant kept riding his horse out into the
fields and saying to him, “I’m drunk, I tell you, mon view. Oh I am so soused.” We went along the road all night in the dark and the adjudant kept riding up alongside my kitchen and saying, “You must put it out. It is dangerous. It will be observed.” We were fifty kilometres from the front but the adjudant worried about the fire in my kitchen. It was funny going along that road. That was when I was a kitchen corporal (Tetlow 19).

This fragment possesses the same emotive quality that concentrated sensuous poetry has, in its juxtaposition of different emotionally suggestive initial consonants of words. Take for example the hard d’s of “drunk,” “dark” and “dangerous” in the opening sentences that are being counteracted in the final sentence by the softer sounding f’s in “fifty,” “front” and “funny”. These contrasting sounds are supposed to reflect the contrasting emotions of humour and an underlying sense of fear that the passage should evoke (Tetlow 19-20). What is also important for understanding the Imagist qualities of these prose vignettes is how Hemingway tried to remain as objective as possible when painting his images. The first person account of the soldier in the first inter-chapter for example, bears clear witness of Pound’s emphasis on directness. By describing the situation from the soldier’s point of view and by using his own language to describe the scene, Hemingway creates a separation between himself as an interpreting writer, the interpreting reader and the first-hand account which is supposed to give a representation as objective and yet emotive as possible (Tetlow 20). The fragment also needs no further details concerning its position in time and space because its essence lies more in evoking emotions and addressing the reader’s sensibility rather than providing a mimetic representation of characters and events. Experience here is objectified and in this way the inter-chapters become autonomous emotional entities, exactly like Pound’s images (Tetlow 21).

The prose vignettes are also responsible for turning In Our Time into an exemplary work of another crucial Imagist technique: juxtaposition. Pound’s influence is very tangible here in that he enjoyed poetic texts in which connective sentences and other guideposts were left out (Stewart 32). Yet again the first inter-chapter can serve as a good example, as it is constructed out of images that are not necessarily logically linked to each other, contrary, they are juxtaposed in order to create a different kind of tension toward a shocking, ironic image at the end (Tetlow 21). Linda Wagner-Martin also points to the way in which Hemingway succeeds in creating a sense of speed in his novel, by letting different passages follow each other
without any logical transition. This juxtaposition is typically Imagist, in that it creates a fragmented feel that is reflective of the author’s own view on the world as it was left after the World War, which completely erased the last remnants of the nineteenth century (“One Debt to Imagism” 91).

3.2 Hemingway’s poems: images

When turning to Hemingway’s poetry then we can see that he already tried his hand at constructing images in his earliest works. See for example “The Tackle” or “The Punt,” both written in 1917. “The Tackle” reads:

Two big red fists pawing in the air,  
A drawn, sweat-stained face,  
Tufts of blonde hair sticking out of a yellow headguard,  
Long gorilla arms, reaching and searching,  
A heaving, gasping chest,  
Alert, shifting, mud-stained legs.  
A quick pull, a thrust, a headlong dive at a  
Group of rushing legs.  
A crashing, rocking jar,  
And the crowd yells:  
“Yeah! Threw him for a two yard loss!” (Complete Poems 11).

Both poems contain beautifully detailed images, but detailed in a sense that Hemingway drowned them in adjectives in order to give them a bright colouring. It seems as if he has trouble finding and selecting the right words here, which would be exactly what Ezra Pound would later hammer on. 1917 however was the year he joined the Kansas Star, where he got the advice to get rid of this abundant use of adjectives and where the first seeds of his terse style would be sown. Pound’s role would mainly lie in perfecting Hemingway’s skill in selecting les mots justes and making his writings even more concentrated.

According to Arthur Waldhorn, only one of Hemingway’s early poems actually succeeds in carrying out this, at that point only supposed, Imagist inspiration and further analysis of the
poems confirms this bald statement. The seven lines long “Mitraillatrice” is constructed around one image, with which the writer tries to convey the idea of an artist’s battle with his thoughts and how to express them in words (Waldhorn 79). The meaning of the poem relies on the detailed image and rhythmical exploration of the typewriter (corona), which is being presented as a machine gun operated by the writer’s hands. But a man’s mind, the difficult terrain, is really hard to grasp and conquer (Waldhorn 80). The image of the typewriter as a machinegun is hard and clear and the choice of words and rhythm contribute to the mechanical effect of the poem.

Among the poems written after the two writers’ first encounter there are numerous other examples of detailed explorations of images, see “Oily Weather,” “Riparto d’Assalto,” “Along With Youth,” “Grass Smooth on the Prairies…,” “The Soul of Spain with McAlmon and Bird the Publishers” and many others. These images are distinctly sharper and subtler than those in any of his previous poems, in more than one case contributing to the intended harsh ironic effect Hemingway wanted to achieve.

3.2.1 Sensuous language

An aspect crucial for the success of Hemingway’s “Imagist” poems is the sensuous language I mentioned in my discussion of In Our Time and The Sun Also Rises. Already in one of his very first poems, “The Inexpressible,” written in 1917, Hemingway gives expression to how he wants to catch his everyday sensations in adequate wordings:
When the June bugs were a-circlin’
Round the arc light on the corner
And a-makin’ shooty shadows on the street;
When you strolled along barefooted
Through a warm dark night of June
Where the dew from off the cool grass bathed your feet –

When you heard a banjo thunkin’
On the porch across the road,
And you smelled the scent of lilacs in the park
There was something struggling in you
That you couldn’t put in words –
You was really livin’ poetry in the dark (Complete Poems 13)!

The poem contains the basics of describing experience. It is packed with sensuous descriptions and they literally appeal to all our senses: our eyes, ears, nose, how we experience temperature… He here even succeeds in creating something that looks like Pound’s images, but it is done in obvious and coloured wordings that are not very thought through yet and that still needed refinement.

Hemingway’s early experiments reach their pinnacle in “Oklahoma,” the poem that would really mark the transition to subtle sensuous poetry and attract Pound’s attention. Wagner-Martin defines “Oklahoma” as Imagist exactly because of this subtlety (“One Debt to Imagism” 88). She does however not go into further detail. The entire poem indeed contains several descriptions that appeal to the reader’s senses. Take for example “smoke smart my eyes,” “pounding it throbs in the night,” the visual rendering of the landscape and how he mentions “myopic trachoma”, an eye infection affecting both eyes, between parentheses.

After meeting Pound, the sensuousness gets only more and more subtle. “Riparto d’Assalto” and “First Poem to Mary in London” mark the final stages of this development. “Riparto” is subtle in its use of functional rhythm and rhyme, appealing to the ears and it also evokes the iciness and bitterness of the ride in its repetition of “cold,” “stiff” and “bitter”. “First Poem to Mary” then seems to be the very pinnacle of the entire evolution. Almost every section of the fragmented poem contains one or more references to several physical sensations. “Eyes
burned from the sun on the water,” “now come to this city tired and shy and living with my true headache who is faithful and true and never leaves me,” “the five inch bath instead of the long plunge into the differing temperatures of the pool in Summer,” “not as when sighting her rising we closed dry mouthed but happy” and combining several of these sensations: “Coming small-voiced and lovely to the hand and eye to bring your heart back that was gone” (Complete Poems 103-104). The sensuousness is persisted throughout the entire poem that counts no less than 74 lines.

3.2.2 Objectivity and distance

In my discussion of the novels also the importance of objectivity is noted. This importance is twofold. On the one hand it covers taking images out of their position in time and space and in doing so objectify experience. The essence lies more in evoking emotions than in providing references to reality. On the other hand it covers the objective tone with which the author describes experience, in order to create a distance between himself and the audience so the transfer of emotion does not become blurred by the author’s own interpretation. I will also link this objectivity to the omnipresence of understatement and irony in the poems, which I will also elaborate on in my discussion of juxtaposition and fragmentation below.

The objective tone is apparent in poems belonging to different stages of Hemingway’s apprenticeship, but it becomes more and more neutral as time passes. “Captives” to begin with, catches the image of exhausted troops marching in World War I. Already here, Hemingway remains distant, although we can assume that he has seen this for himself during his time at the battlefront. The objectivity eventually reaches a climax in the last line, “making death easy”. This ironic ending enhances the intended harsh effect from the previous lines as well. Wagner-Martin also mentions earlier poems like “Champs d’Honneur” and “Ultimately” and the post-Pound poem “The Age Demanded” as equally objective and ironic, but I feel like “Riparto d’Assalto” and “Montparnasse”, both written after the poets’ first meeting, are the two poems most relevant for further discussion.

In “Riparto d’Assalto” the reader most likely notices that despite Hemingway’s repeated efforts to appeal to his reader’s senses, there is no sense of compassion in his objective rendering of the events at all (“A Note on Hemingway as Poet” 59). By using “truck-load” to
appoint the soldiers that would find their death at the end of the travel, he dehumanizes them
and creates a distance, which both enhances the ironic effect of the poem and makes
everything in a way more neutral, as not to let the reader’s perception be coloured too much
by his own emotions. “Montparnasse” then is probably the best example of Hemingway’s
distant tone and how this affects the intended satire. Written in 1922, “Montparnasse” is a
poem about how suicidal expatriates are saved by their friends and by afternoon, can be found
in cafés again:

There are never any suicides in the quarter among people
one knows.
No successful suicides.
A Chinese boy kills himself and is dead.
(they continue to place his mail in the latter rack
at the Dome)
A Norwegian boy kills himself and is dead.
(no one knows where the other Norwegian boy has gone)
They find a model dead
alone in bed and very dead.
(it made almost unbearable trouble for the concierge)
Sweet oil, the white of eggs, mustard and water, soap suds
and stomach pumps rescue the people one knows.
Every afternoon the people one knows can be found at
the cafe (Complete Poems 50).

At first sight the poem is very distant again, but when Hemingway provides the enumeration
of ways to rescue desperate people, “sweet oil, the white of eggs, mustard and water, soap
suds and stomach pumps rescue the people one knows,” as if he has experienced something
similar before, the poem gets an intimate feel that makes the irony even harsher in the same
way as his war poems that are entirely based upon personal experiences, do. The
understatement is clear in sentences like “a Chinese boy kills himself and is dead,” “A
Norwegian boy kills himself and is dead,” “they find a model dead / alone in bed and very
dead.” The ironic climax hides in the last line: “every afternoon the people one knows can be
found at the café (Complete Poems 50). “They All Made Peace – What is Peace” also
deserves brief mention concerning Hemingway’s objective tone. He here draws portraits of
the politicians who attended the Lausanne Peace Conference, but he includes barely any humanizing qualities in these portraits and constructs them out of funny stories, that the present journalists used to tell each other. Louis Zukowsky, author of the manifesto “Program: ‘Objectivists’ 1931” in which he distinguished some characteristics of what he called “objectivist” literature, printed Hemingway’s poem as an example of the kind of poetry he was looking for (Gerogiannis 142). But the main difference with the previous poems I mentioned lies in how the intended irony here prevails over the distance Hemingway so purposefully created in these other poems. His main goal here seems in fact to colour the poem to such an extent that the reader feels equally disgusted with the hypocritical gathering, as he was.

As to Hemingway’s effort to objectify experience by lifting it out of its referential context in order to universalise the emotion, it is important to note how he seldom uses tags naming specific emotions. “Along With Youth” and “The Age Demanded” are most relevant here. The respective feelings of transience and disgust toward the war are nowhere stated literally (in “The Age Demanded” only one adjective refers to the war: “iron pants”). Hemingway chooses his words so carefully that this emotional undercurrent strengthens the feelings he wants to imprint upon his readers’ imaginative eye even more. Yet again this bears witness of the subtlety and restraint his mentor would always be advocating for.

3.2.3 Juxtaposition

The last Imagist technique related to the construction of images and chains of images that I mentioned was juxtaposition. Images are being linked seemingly without any logical connection. Authors build such dynamical chains in order to make the enclosed images clash and out of such clashes the authors’ harsh satirical critique on and deprecation of society’s hypocritical values erupt. Especially Hemingway’s poems written during his apprenticeship years in Paris and later bear an equally fragmented feel, reflective of the author’s disillusioned post-war worldview. An early example of Hemingway juxtaposing images might be found in “Oklahoma” (1920-2921). Arthur Waldhorn calls it “a sermon about appearance and reality” but finds it unsatisfying and unable to fulfil its potential (Waldhorn 81). It would be reckless at this stage of his career to talk about Imagist-inspired juxtaposition, but the fact that he
inserted the image of the prairies between two non-images does create a bit of a montage-feel already:

All of the Indians are dead
(A good Indian is a dead Indian)
Or riding in motor cars.
(The oil lands, you know, they’re all richt)
Smoke smarts my eyes,
Cottonwood twigs and buffalo dung
Smoke grey in the tepee –
(Or is it myopic trachoma?)

The prairies are long,
The moon rises,
Ponies
Drag at their pickets.
The grass has gone brown in the summer –
Or is it the hay crop failing?)

Pull an arrow out,
If you break it
The wound closes
Salt is good too
And wood ashes.
Pounding it throbs in the night –
Or is it the gonorrhoea) (Complete Poems 25).

Linda Wagner-Martin mentions “Along with Youth” as a good example, with its juxtaposition of concrete images without clear transition (“A Note on Hemingway as Poet” 61). But for the best examples of such montages we have to move some years further into his apprenticeship. First of all it is very remarkable that from the end of 1922 onwards, Hemingway’s poems seem to become longer and longer. He seems to be undergoing the same evolution as did Ezra Pound, like I mentioned above. Where the early “In a Station of the Metro” focused on one static image, Hugh Selwyn Mauberley and The Cantos were constructed out of long chains of
images that affected each other dynamically and clashed and were thus illustrative of Pound’s effort to stretch textual boundaries.

Take for example “They All Made Peace – What is Peace”, that would become the longest poem Hemingway had written up to that point of his career, counting 41 lines. From then on the majority of his poems counted relatively more lines than any of the poems written before 1922. “The Soul of Spain” would become 49 lines long and in some of his last published poems, “First Poem to Mary in London” and “Poem to Mary (Second Poem),” Hemingway articulated his thoughts in respectively up to 74 and 227 words. In “They All Made Peace” the author juxtaposes the ridiculing images of the present politicians at the Lausanne Peace Conference, building up to a harsh satirical effect, which should not surprise since he found the “gathering of so-called ‘peace-makers’” a joke anyway, as he wrote to Edmund Wilson (Complete Poems 142). “The Soul of Spain” as well demonstrates the use of this technique, as a means to create satire. Here different sections reflecting influence of and bearing reference to several people Hemingway met in the course of becoming a published author, are juxtaposed and more than once he does not eschew explicit ironic remarks (“A Note on Hemingway as Poet” 60). In his Pound-inspired section for example Hemingway mentions numerous people that had vexed him in the past. In the third last line of the poem he drops the names “The Dial” and “Proust”, unmistakably satirizing the Dial’s issue dedicated to Proust, following his own conviction that it was ridiculous that dead writers like Proust were praised, but Ezra Pound did not receive the recognition, and especially the Dial’s, that he deserved (Complete Poems 144). Finally, in my discussion of “Poem to Mary (Second Poem)” at the end of this analysis, I will add some concluding remarks on how Hemingway in fact even stretched the boundaries of experimenting with montage to not only juxtaposing images, but also different sorts of texts.
3.2.4 Irony

To conclude my analysis of Hemingway’s construction of Images, I would thus like to retain this ironic momentum and stand still with how central irony was to Hemingway’s writing and what role Ezra Pound played in further sharpening it. The clashes between sections in poems that I have mentioned before cause irony and satire to emerge. Irony was in fact an identifying aspect of the new modernist style, directly related to the aftermath of the Great War. The conflict had severely traumatised a generation of young writers and had caused great disgust with how Western society wrapped the conflict in hypocritical patriotism. Hemingway, among all other modernist writers, wanted honesty, instead of palliating what had happened. It would thus be logical to consider irony as more of a personal quality caused by experience, than an inspired quality. But it is obvious that from Pound’s verse Hemingway learned how to artistically express his anger through tropes like understatement and (anti-)climax (Hurwitz 478).

*The Sun Also Rises* contains some good illustrations of Hemingway’s talent to play with these tropes. Take for example the passage in which he presents, as if in mirror image, how Jake undresses himself and talks about his wound. Or better, how he does not talk about his wound:

> Undressing, I looked at myself in the mirror of the big armoire beside the bed. That was a typically French way to furnish a room. Practical, too, I suppose. Of all the ways to be wounded, I suppose it was funny (“One Debt to Imagism” 95).

The only descriptive adjective in the passage, “big”, is used as an attribute with the piece of furniture. This focus on the armoire makes the reader’s attention deviate from the main concern here, before being pulled back by more ironic understatement in the last sentence (“One Debt to Imagism” 95).

Linda Wagner-Martin mentions “Riparto d’Assalto” as illustrative of such ironic constructions, laced with understatements and building towards a sudden turn at the end, either climactic or anticlimactic. I will return to this poem later, because there are some earlier examples as well that I want to cite first, in order to be able to point out the differences. “Captives” (1920-1921) reveals the final outcome of the long, exhausting march of the
soldiers in WWI only at the very end. “All Armies are the same…” is the first poem written in Paris that bears clear witness of Hemingway’s disgusted response towards the war, cast into an even harsher mold than “Captives.” Instead of spending an entire poem on expressing how bewildered he felt by certain events, Hemingway chooses to save his climax until the last line and in doing so, leaves it ironically understated:

All armies are the same
Publicity is fame
Artillery makes the same old noise
Valor is an attribute of boys
Old soldiers all have tired eyes
All soldiers hear the same old lies
Dead bodies have always drawn flies (Complete Poems 43).

“Riparto d’Assalto” is constructed similarly, its last line stating “At Asalone, where the truck-load died.” The difference here with an earlier poem like “Captives”, is how Hemingway reduces the human passengers to a mere “truck-load.” The combination of this extreme objectivity, which I already discussed above, with the understatement makes this poem even harsher in its satire. “The Age Demanded” then, is probably the most ironic poem Hemingway ever wrote up to that point of his apprenticeship in which he comes to defend the generation of talented men irretrievably wounded by the War. Written in 1922 and borrowing its title and refrain literally from a line of Pound’s poem Hugh Selwyn Mauberley, it goes as follows (Cohassey 35):

The age demanded that we sing
And cut away our tongue.
The age demanded that we flow
And hammered in the bung.
The age demanded that we dance
And jammed us into iron pants.
And in the end the age was handed
The sort of shit that it demanded (Complete Poems 53).
Pound wrote *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, his ironic portrait of the artist, at the end of the Imagist decade, right at the time when English literature became recognizably modern. The second section of the poem contains the phrase that Hemingway would later use in his own “The Age Demanded”. Pound too was of course very much affected by the war, for he had lost several dear friends as well. The section Hemingway based his poem on, expresses Pound’s anger accurately: In *A Preface to Ezra Pound*, Peter Wilson describes these losses and the effect it had on the poet: “Pound had met most of those with whom he had a major artistic and/or emotional relationship in the first half of his life (…) many of them died in the trenches of the first world war (Wilson 19). He states: “Pound would respond to such loss with a bitter and obsessive rage against those he reckoned to be responsible for the deaths of his friends”, which very precisely describes the attitude Pound translates into his poem (Wilson 19):

The age demanded an image
Of its accelerated grimace,
Something for the modern stage,
Not, at any rate, an Attic grace (*Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* 23).

Hemingway’s poetry gained the reputation for being obscene and he could only agree with that himself. His irony was harsh, he never made any effort to keep his language clean or chaste. The world that was remote from the war areas had remained spared from all the actual horrors that it had helped to cause. The writer could not find any reason to make a distinction between the hypocritical refinement of the one part and the filthiness of the other (*Complete Poems* xx). The thing about the poems I mentioned here is that in fact, they need no further analysis or explanation, because they are so obvious in their ironic construction that they can speak for themselves.
Amy Lowell concludes her enumeration with an emphasis on concentration, as the essence of poetry (Lowell 6). As I mentioned before, Ezra Pound was more serious about his poetry and about poetry being a craft than any of his contemporaries (Cohassey 17). He taught his pupils discipline and made them aware of the seriousness of a writer’s task. Hemingway always used to write poems as a means to answer an immediate need, but manuscripts of the poems he wrote before even meeting Ezra Pound do however already wear marks of multiple corrections and sometimes even exist in several drafts (Complete Poems xix). But flipping through Philip Young and Charles Mann’s book The Hemingway Manuscripts: an Inventory, it becomes apparent that Pound clearly inspired his pupil to become even more meticulous in perfecting his writings, ridding them from superfluous words and trying to achieve a condensed language.

From the thirty poems written before 1922 published in Gerogiannis’ revised edition of Hemingway’s Complete Poems, only three are mentioned in The Hemingway Manuscripts as existing in more than one draft, or being marked by corrections: “Oklahoma” (1920-2921), “Killed Piave – July 8 – 1918” (1921) and “Bird of Night” (1921) (Young, Mann 74-80). When we proceed to 1922 and the following years, it is striking that fourteen out of the fifty-eight poems published in Complete Poems exist in more than one draft or are marked by corrections, some of them to a great extent. I will limit my enumeration here to the most extreme examples, for these appear to be also the ones I have mentioned as marked by Pound’s Imagism most in the previous analyses.

Amongst the heavily corrected or drafted poems are many of those that I labelled in my analysis as the best examples, containing the most relevant characteristics, of Imagist poetry. “Montparnasse” exists in two typescripts: one marked by ink corrections, the other marked by many ink corrections and several additions. “Along With Youth” underwent several adaptations through different drafts and was eventually written down in a corrected typescript. There are also two corrected typescripts and one corrected manuscript to be found of “Valentine.” “Neothomist Poem” and “Poem to Miss Mary” are the two poems that have travelled the longest way. The former exists in three versions: a corrected typescript, which is much longer than the published version, a heavily corrected, page-long manuscript and three
pages of drafts in a notebook. The latter comes in five versions: an eight pages long corrected manuscript (containing also an early draft of the “Second poem” to Mary), a seven pages long typescript, another typescript marked with several corrections and additions, more assorted manuscript drafts counting 21 pages in total and seven more typescripts.
CHAPTER 5: POEM TO MARY (SECOND POEM)

In this final chapter of the literary analysis, I would like to dedicate specific attention to “Poem to Mary (Second Poem),” written in 1944. In his Reader’s Guide to Ernest Hemingway, Arthur Waldhorn calls this poem “Hemingway’s best poem – in a sense, his only poem” (Waldhorn 85). I find the second part of his statement too bald, but I do agree with the first part. I think it is interesting to see whether Hemingway’s artistic association with Pound was durable enough to even exert influence at this final stage of his career. In order to prove this point, I will provide a separate analysis of this poem. I will limit the analysis however to the principles that are most important and most apparent in this poem.

To begin with, “Poem to Mary (Second Poem)” counts 277 and is thus the longest poem Hemingway has ever written. It seems like there is not much left of Hemingway’s characteristic restraint, as the poem slips into abundance in which all control and economy have disappeared. This abundance is on the one hand justified when you interpret it as an effort to leave nothing unsaid. He saturates his reader as if he tries whatever is in his power to reveal truth (Waldhorn 85). On the other hand, there is in fact control to be found in Hemingway’s seemingly conscious demarcation of areas. He alternates poetic and colloquial parts, with pragmatic fragments containing but dates, numbers and names.

Furthermore, this extremely long poem counts only fourteen different adjective + noun constructions and what is particularly striking is that six of these are in fact past participles, thus not “real” adjectives such as “old” (which is in fact repeated five times). Also in this poem Hemingway seems to use his adjectives functionally. See for example one of the most ironic passages, very straightforward in its indictment of the war:

All officers, warrant officers and enlisted men will be provided with a copy of their own true loves that they will never see again and all these copies will be returnable through the proper channels (Complete Poems 108).

Yet again the author seems to intentionally apply the wrong poetics for constructing the most ironic passages of his poems.
When looking at the musicality of this poem, it first of all exists out of the largest variation of sentences: different lengths and complexities, different rhythms, different tonalities etc. The poem is in fact the largest montage he has ever created, juxtaposing not only several images without clear transitions, but also several sorts of texts: wedding vows, a song, repetitions creating a residue of sound, such as “In the next war we shall bury the dead in cellophane / In the next war we shall bury the dead in cellophane” (Complete Poems 107). Hemingway ends his poem with an actual letter, written to his love Mary, which serves as a literal reference to reality. Realism, especially concerning war and love, would always remain Hemingway’s biggest source of inspiration.

The penultimate paragraph of the poem, before ending with his letter, exists out of the brightest image of the entire poem:

   It is no longer Christmas
   And from this hill, bare-topped,
   Its flanks covered with Christmas trees,
   Many further hills are seen (Complete Poems 112).

The image seems to serve as the conclusion of his entire plea, bearing in it the final step in his quest for truth.
CONCLUSION

Having reached the end of this dissertation, I hope that by now it has become clear that there was so much more to Ernest Hemingway and Ezra Pound’s literary association than what meets the eye, both figuratively and equally literally. My dissertation has been dedicated to an investigation of the Imagist affinities between the poetics of Ezra Pound and the poems of Ernest Hemingway. In discussing the two artists’ close friendship and other aspects that contributed to their successful apprentice-mentor relationship in a motional modernist climate, I wanted to find out whether Hemingway’s poems could be considered honest witnesses of his mentor’s Imagist poetics.

Convinced that this was the best method to reach a conclusion, I divided my dissertation into two main parts. Part I provides a relevant framework of the historical and literary background that serves as a solid basis for the literary analysis in Part II. This part has shown how and why Ezra Pound was able to transfer certain values and attitudes onto his pupil and sharpen the latter’s final key principles and credo as well. Not only did they spend a lot of time together in Paris, engaging in both literary as extra-literary activities, young Hemingway also shared crucial beliefs and convictions with his favoured mentor that he had acquired during his previous apprenticeship years in America working for newspapers. But what was most central to their close association and the strongest argument for stating that Hemingway gladly became a susceptible student, willing to accept even major adjustments to his works and suggestions to sharpen his overall credo, was their shared quest for truth. Both artists dedicated their entire career to achieving a presentation of reality that exceeded any kind of mere mimetic representation, for it also comprised an emotional truth, which would appeal to all the reader’s senses. This would evoke the intended emotional response with the reader, which would allow him to become aware of and reflect upon those dimensions of reality that were equally, if not more, crucial to truthful representation. From Pound’s quest for truth have emerged all the Imagist principles, which would prove to be the perfect tools for approaching truth, something Hemingway as well would soon come to realise.

Therefore, my second part was entirely dedicated to an in-depth analysis of these Imagist principles, conform the enumeration Amy Lowell provided in her article “On Imagism,” which would be of incredible use in clarifying Pound’s own enigmatic definitions. It has
appeared that all of these tenets can be applied to Hemingway’s poetry, which yet again adds proof to my statement that it is relevant indeed to investigate such Imagist affinities in Hemingway’s poems, marked by the concrete influence of Ezra Pound. The smaller chapters, respectively called “Economy and le mot juste,” “Musicality,” and “Images as the writer’s primary pigment,” were each initiated by a discussion of Hemingway’s prose works *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises*. Scholarly and Imagism-oriented reviews of these novels have distinguished concrete techniques, which I would then apply on Hemingway’s poems as well. The first chapter, “Economy and le mot juste,” has shed light on how Hemingway interpreted Pound’s emphasis on remaining wary of any kind of excess, avoiding superfluous ornament that could blur a truthful representation. It shows in the drastic reduction of the overall length of poems and complexity of sentences, but most of all in the conscious decline in adjective + noun constructions. Nevertheless, Hemingway added his own twist to it, as shows in his decision to use Pound’s restrictive tenets in a functional way, evoking an extra layer of meaning. The second chapter dedicated to “Musicality” has shown how Hemingway also adopted Pound’s insistence on the use of musical rhythms, on avoiding bland rhyme schemes and using what he called “a residue of sound”. Hemingway clearly understood how he could capture the meaning of a poem in its musicality and again evoke extra layers of meaning, allowing the descriptions to resonate in the reader’s head and making him reflect upon them more thoroughly. Yet again Hemingway uses these tenets according to his own interpretation, for example in his functional use of simple rhyme schemes in strategic places. Hemingway also succeeded in successfully including foreign tongues, a tenet much emphasized in Pound’s Imagist doctrine.

Lastly and probably also most importantly, chapter 3 deals with Hemingway’s construction of images. He has proven to be an expert in turning detailed explorations of objects and scenes into Imagist vehicles for communicating emotion. The first means with which he succeeded in evoking a strong emotional undercurrent, were his sensuous wordings that would appeal to all the reader’s senses. However, he also always remained objective, necessary for the detachment of images out of their referential context, which would allow the represented emotion to become universalised. The technique in which Hemingway excelled the most, especially towards the end of his career as a poet, was juxtaposition. He too stretched the boundaries of imagist constructions, by making them interact dynamically and let them cause ironic clashes. The construction of such ironic sequences would prove to be one of Pound’s most useful lessons, as it is closely related to both poets’ quest for truth and endeavour to
bring the barbarities of war back to society. Chapter four then provides examples of how Hemingway puts his mentor’s remarks about concentration into practice. Poems dating from after their first meeting were drafted and edited in a larger extend, showing that Hemingway’s quest for accurate language and truthful representation had become sharper indeed.

All of the foregoing, each and every single aspect providing more evidence, adds up to the conclusion that Ezra Pound indeed exerted long-lasting influence on his favoured apprentice Ernest Hemingway. So many elements have contributed to the establishment of their successful and lifelong lasting association, unique such a turbulent modernist climate. My final analysis of “Poem to Mary (Second Poem)” yet again confirms this bald statement, as it seems to be a deliberate summary of about everything Hemingway had learned from his mentor. In this poem, written in one of the final stages of his career, Ernest Hemingway seems to have finally succeeded in building a monument to Ezra, using the Imagist principles and related poetic techniques as the strongest building blocks. Ernest Hemingway embarked on his quest for truth alone, but met Ezra Pound long the way and allowed him to become his foremost guide and a lifelong friend.


