

SOME MIMETIC STRATEGIES

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*And so each venture
Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate*
– T.S. Eliot, “East Coker”

I want in this discussion to clear up some obfuscations about the way poems convey information over time. Because they necessarily parcel out words sequentially, poems must present a thematic thread or story line. It is not always a clear thread, and sometimes a poem offers more than one. From the obvious fact that poems often do not proceed in a straightforward manner, controlled either by chronological narration or by syllogistic logic, observers have developed various theories and analogies to explain what is actually going on. As early as 1942, in *Philosophy in a New Key*, Susanne Langer attempted to model the movement of poems on music, thereby freeing poetic structure from its obligation to the principles of discursive logic.

Though the *material* of poetry is verbal, its import is not the literal assertion made in the words, but *the way the assertion is made*, and this involves the sound, the tempo, the aura of association of the words, the long or short sequences of ideas, the wealth or poverty of transient imagery that contains them, the sudden arrest of fantasy by pure fact, or of familiar fact by sudden fantasy, the suspense of literal meaning by a sustained ambiguity resolved in the long-awaited keyword, and the unifying, all-embracing artifice of rhythm.¹

Largely accepting Langer’s thesis, but choosing to concentrate on linguistic structure, Donald Davie in *Articulate Energy* tries to show how syntax in particular – quite apart from the actual meaning of the sentences involved – might control the movement and import of a poem. Here he struggles:

Hence we have to say that poetic syntax is like music when its function is to please us by the fidelity with which it follows a “form of thought” through the poet’s mind, *but without defining that thought*. . . . Now in poetry it is not so easy as in music to articulate without asserting, to talk without saying what one is talking about. But, as is well known, this difficulty was circumvented by the use of the objective correlative. . . .²

At another point he says,

But there is also the question of strategy, of where and how to create the new metaphor or recreate the old so that it may have the greatest effect. The right strategy is not to reveal the metaphor, the concretion, in every word used, even in prepositions like “upon” or “outside.” This is the strategy of some persons writing today; and the result is only an incessant and intolerable fidget.³

What Davie is seeking here is an understanding of the way a poem may appear to be about something, or at least to contain details that call certain conceptions to mind, while actually conveying ideas and often strong feelings about something else entirely. This is indeed a curious phenomenon that calls out for exploration. But to understand poetry merely as music, or to see its movements as determined primarily by syntax, is to ignore precisely those unique features that make language in fact *qua* language most capable of operating simultaneously on multiple channels.

Perhaps this is a good place to insert a caveat that should already be obvious: I shall adopt here the naïve assumption that a text has discernible (though often multiple and often nested) meanings on which independent readers can largely agree; that far from being fundamentally indeterminate, or a locus of unresolvable ambiguities, as some deconstructionists liked to maintain, most poems offer statements assigna-

ble, sometimes admittedly with no little ingenuity, to what most of us can agree is a simulacrum of the real world. I shall acknowledge further that such statements often have an ethical dimension which can exert strong pressure on the reader's emotional response. That is my justification for taking seriously the views of some long-dead critics whose entire world view has been called into question by what was until recently a strong and influential academic lobby.

All writers, and poets in particular, confront two seemingly contradictory aspects of human psychology when attempting to convey meaning. Readers (and listeners) respond most rapidly and viscerally to words that convey striking sensory images or impressions. The desire to reach readers with such immediacy lay behind the imagist agenda in which sensory, preferably visual impressions are paramount and their wider implications, if any, are unstated. To take a modern instance, when W.S. Di Piero writes, "the moon's dense light / pebbles through the leaves" ("Shrine with Flowers," 12), the verb brings the scene to the inner eye.

Such writing is what Marianne Moore had in mind, I think, when she called for "imaginary gardens with real toads in them." But vivid language speaks to only one human need. The second imperative is to be stirred, to be moved beyond merely sensuous response. The reader seeks a deeper intellectual and emotional understanding of something manifestly important. T.S. Eliot, in his introduction to Valéry's *The Art of Poetry*, refers to this quality as "seriousness": "the question of how [a poem] is related to the rest of life in such a way as to give the reader the shock of feeling that the poem has been to him, not merely an experience, but a serious experience."⁴

So as readers we want to be struck – as if by a direct encounter with the tangible world – and then we want to be moved, to feel that our perceptions of things that deeply matter to us have been altered or expanded. The contradiction between the desire for an immediate response to physical stimulus and the urge to be touched on a deeper level motivates most of the strategies that poets employ. Obviously not all poems can accomplish both of these objectives with equal success, and not every poet sets out to do so in every poem she writes. But the capabilities that make such achievements possible, even within the small compass of the lyric, derive from language, and not just its syntactic and prosodic features but most especially its semantic structures.

It is the peculiar genius of language that its component words may readily be given extended – or even quite different – meanings. This capacity is the basis for all metaphor. It allows a writer to invest a word or phrase with ad hoc meanings that go well beyond accepted denotation. And just as a word can be used metaphorically, so can an entire passage, so that sentences that seem to mean one thing may instead (or in addition) mean something else entirely.⁵ Such a capability was recognized, of course, by Langer and by Ernst Cassirer, her major philosophical influence, but its implications were not fully appreciated. In her discussion of human linguistic communication, Langer introduces the term *discursiveness*, and says, "by reason of it, only thoughts which can be arranged in this peculiar order can be spoken at all; any idea which does not lend itself to this 'projection' is ineffable, incommunicable by means of words."⁶ But we shall shortly examine several strategies for doing exactly that: verbally communicating ideas not in themselves amenable to linear (i.e. discursive) presentation.

This ability to shift meanings, to instantaneously create them or multiply them, informs both our everyday speech and our poetry. If a friend says, "We all felt a chill when she walked into the room," we know it isn't because someone turned up the air conditioning. And when Wallace Stevens writes, "Every time the bucks went clattering / Over Oklahoma / A firecat bristled in the way," some readers, with a little ingenuity, will deduce that he is describing a railroad train. Others, with still more ingenuity, will draw highly inventive conclusions.⁷ But beyond the potential for creative ambiguity, this quality of language has a profound potential to affect the *structure* of poems. It frees the poet from the need to convey material in a

strictly linear or discursive fashion and instead makes it possible to present two or more levels of meaning, and sometimes two or more narratives, at once.

Indeed, what most excites the Romantic imagination is a poem that brings together disparate associations and manages to connect them by an intuitive leap. Such a feat is thought to reveal the hidden workings of the unconscious and in so doing to widen awareness, deepen insight, and heighten aesthetic pleasure. It is true that some poets are more ingenious – even profligate – in their associations than others. It is also true that a poem invoking remote associations risks losing its reader. Certain theories of poetry tend to encourage tangential associations, while others are less hospitable.

As a starting point, consider the ordinary sort of poem that makes no attempt to superimpose one narrative upon another. Such a poem lays out the details of an argument or description step by step. This is the simplest structure, usually found in short portraits, like Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Reuben Bright," or reasoned discourse in verse, like Don Paterson's "The Error":

As a bird is to the air
and the whale is to the sea
so man is to his dream.

His world is just the glare
of the world's utility
returned by his eye-beam.

Each self-reflecting mind
is in this manner destined
to forget its element,

and this is why we find
however deep we listen
that the skies are silent.

The poem is full of comparisons – bird is to air as whale is to sea as man is to dream – but the comparisons are illustrative; they do not tell an alternate story or direct the movement of the poem, which remains simply a short disquisition on human perception and its limits.

Or one can say X (physical description) and allow the feelings (Y) associated with X to fill the emotional space of the poem. This was the mission of Imagism, a program to which HD, Pound, and Williams all adhered for a time. HD's "Oread" will serve as an example.

Whirl up, sea—
Whirl your pointed pines.
Splash your great pines
On our rocks.
Hurl your green over us—
Cover us with your pools of fir.

By personifying the sea (using the second-person pronoun) and enhancing her description by equating waves with trees, HD adds a quality of awe-struck reverence to the brief poem. But the poem makes no attempt to tell a second story – to propose (for example) the inundation of the shore as a stand-in for the devastation of one's life by overwhelming events.

But I am concerned here, additionally and primarily, with the effect of associative language on the structure of poems. Without hoping to list exhaustively the possible channels in which poetic themes may be developed by such means, I will catalog here some of the most commonly used, offering some illustrations as I proceed.

1. X is like Y

One can occasionally make an entire poem out of a simile, saying, “This is like that.” Such a statement is not a metaphorical disguise. The poet may revel in the connection between two seemingly dissimilar elements and play with the terms of the likeness, as Robert Frost does in “The Silken Tent” and as Richard Wilbur does in “Mind”:

Mind in its purest play is like some bat
That beats about in caverns all alone,
Contriving by a kind of senseless wit
Not to conclude against a wall of stone.

It has no need to falter or explore;
Darkly it knows what obstacles are there,
And so may weave and flitter, dip and soar
In perfect courses through the blackest air.

And has this simile a like perfection?
The mind is like a bat. Precisely. Save
That in the very happiest intellection
A graceful error may correct the cave.

What seems to tell a second story in this poem is not the simile itself, but the implied comparison: bat is to cave as mind is to world. The turn comes when we discover our mistake: the true analogy is: bat is to cave as mind is to an *idea* of the world – an idea that is corrigible.

But a simile, however ingenious, will only get us so far as a structural basis for a poem. A poet who sees a remarkable likeness between two phenomena will soon need a more robust way of illustrating the truths of one through the actions of the other. That need leads him to allegory.

2. X means Y

One can write so that the nominal subject is understood to mean something else. This is an ancient and time-honored mechanism, the basis for lengthy poems like “The Faerie Queene.” In spite of the danger that the “real” message (Y) can so dominate the ostensible message (X) that the latter will seem stilted and contrived, some writers are still able to use allegory with considerable skill and wit. Melvin Tolson offers a shrewd contemporary version in “The Sea-Turtle & the Shark”:

Strange but true is the story
of the sea-turtle and the shark –
the instinctive drive of the weak to survive
in the oceanic dark.
Driven,
riven
by hunger
from abyss to shoal,

sometimes the shark swallows
the sea-turtle whole.

The sly reptilian marine
withdraws,
into the shell
of his undersea craft,
his leathery head and the rapacious claws
that can rip
a rhinoceros' hide
or strip
a crocodile to fare-thee-well;
now,
inside the shark,
the sea-turtle begins the churning seesaws
of his descent into pelagic hell;

then ... then,
with ravenous jaws
that can cut sheet steel scrap,
the sea-turtle gnaws ...
and gnaws ... and gnaws
his way in a way that appalls –
his way to freedom,
beyond the vomiting dark
beyond the stomach walls
of the shark.

In the context of this poem (declaimed by a character in Tolson's *Harlem Gallery*), it is clear that this narrative describes the subjugation of African peoples by white society, and their re-emergence to freedom through their own persistence, cunning, and strength. The poem makes no claim to literal truth, but asserts a psychological reality.

3. X reminds me of Y

Stepping beyond allegory, a poet can abandon the notion of a pre-established one-to-one correspondence between two sets of actions (the narrated events and the intended ones), and can instead simply assert an association – usually between a physical phenomenon (X) and a metaphysical or psychological one (Y) – allowing the one to illustrate or illuminate the other. This is the method of Matthew Arnold in “Dover Beach.” The success of such poems will depend in part on whether the reader views the connection as ingenious or contrived. The danger is that the poet may find himself forced into an awkward gesture as he works to show the essential resemblance of Y to X. So Arnold, attempting to move from surf sounds to a reflection on the loss of faith, resorts to the language of a motivational speaker: “we / Find also in the sound a thought, / Hearing it by this distant northern sea.”

4. X implies Y

A more contemporary – and subtler – approach is exemplified by Robert Lowell's poem “Water,” in which a few hints allow readers to discern the true subject in a scenic description, and in the process to understand the subject on a more visceral level.

It was a Maine lobster town –
each morning boatloads of hands
pushed off for granite
quarries on the islands,

and left dozens of bleak
white frame houses stuck
like oyster shells
on a hill of rock,

and below us, the sea lapped
the raw little match-stick
mazes of a weir,
where the fish for bait were trapped.

Remember? We sat on a slab of rock.
From this distance in time
it seems the color
of iris, rotting and turning purpler,

but it was only
the usual gray rock
turning the usual green
when drenched by the sea.

The sea drenched the rock
at our feet all day,
and kept tearing away
flake after flake.

One night you dreamed
you were a mermaid clinging to a wharf-pile,
and trying to pull
off the barnacles with your hands.

We wished our two souls
might return like gulls
to the rock. In the end,
the water was too cold for us.

The first three stanzas are straight description; only the word “us” in the third stanza suggests that someone other than the speaker is involved. The second person is addressed in the fourth stanza, and the way the recollection is evoked suggests a relationship that existed some time ago. However, these are only hints; the focus remains on the physical scene of the shore and the rocks.

In the last three stanzas the human figures become slightly more prominent. The reference to the mermaid dream in the seventh stanza informs us that the person addressed is female, and the mention of “two souls” in the last stanza suggests a close bond. With only these clues, we recast the scene in metaphoric terms: the sea becomes a force that envelopes and wears away even the solidest things; the woman imagines herself clinging to some stable bulwark while trying to rid herself (or it) of afflictions. The rock – stability, solidity – is the goal, but the water (experience, the world at large) proves inimical, and the rela-

tionship fails. All this is seen as a past event, not narrated sequentially and in fact not really narrated at all. The poem creates an aura of recollection and its associated feelings while keeping the ostensible gaze focused resolutely on ocean, rocks, and gulls.

5. X and Y comment on each other

One can say both X and Y and have the larger meaning arise from their juxtaposition. A fine example occurs in Seamus Heaney's sestina "Two Lorries," in which a recollection of a lorry operated by a coalman who flirts with the poet's mother merges with the memory, much later during the "Troubles," of a second lorry that exploded in the town of Magherafelt, destroying the bus station. The perceptions of innocence, romance, and random violence are now fused for the reader and cannot be decoupled.

As a second example, consider Elizabeth Bishop's short poem, "The Shampoo":

The still explosions on the rocks,
the lichens, grow
by spreading, gray, concentric shocks.
They have arranged
to meet the rings around the moon, although
within our memories they have not changed.

And since the heavens will attend
as long on us,
you've been, dear friend,
precipitate and pragmatical;
and look what happens. For Time is
nothing if not amenable.

The shooting stars in your black hair
in bright formation
are flocking where,
so straight, so soon?
– Come, let me wash it in this big tin basin,
battered and shiny like the moon.

One thread in this poem is the patterns of lichen formations on rocks. Another is the flecks of gray ("shooting stars") forming in the friend's hair. Both threads are tied to the inexorable progress of time, reflected in celestial motions. The final two lines of the poem bring the themes together with the intimate gesture of the proffered shampoo in the moonlike basin.

6. X is revealed to be Y

One can write ostensibly about a scene but it gradually becomes clear one is really writing about a more important matter. William Carlos Williams' well known poem "The Yachts" provides a fine illustration. The first eight stanzas appear to concern themselves strictly with the preparations for a race among well tended boats, although very subtle hints (sharp prows, ant-like crews) may seem like warnings in retrospect. But in the final three stanzas the scene becomes one of horror as the waves turn to a shambles of desperate, grasping arms and hands, of faces and bodies sliced through by the indifferent yachts. The same strategy is employed on a smaller scale in Thom Gunn's "The Bed":

The pulsing stops where time has been,

The garden is snow-bound,
The branches weighed down and the paths filled in,
Drifts quilt the ground.

We lie soft-caught, still now it's done,
Loose-twined across the bed
Like wrestling statues; but it still goes on
Inside my head.

The first stanza helps to fix in the reader's mind the belief that the title refers to a flower-bed, seen in the depth of winter. But the second stanza makes it clear that the first must be understood metaphorically: the real scene is an actual bed, immediately following a sexual act.

7. Surreal X suggests real Y

One can describe an event or a scene that is superficially implausible or incomprehensible, and let the reader's ingenuity infer a rational situation or statement behind it. This is a popular contemporary style of which there are many variants. It places the onus on the reader to make sense of something that initially seems incoherent. An example is the poem "Glut" by Gerald Stern:

The whole point was getting rid of glut
for which I starved myself and lived with the heat down
and only shaved oh every five days and used
a blunt razor for months so that my cheek
was not only red but the hair was bent not cut
for which I then would be ready for the bicycle
and the broken wrist, for which—oh God—I would be
ready to climb the steps and fight the boxes
with only nothing, a pair of shoes, and once
inside to open the window and let the snow in
and when the fire was over climb down the icy
fire escape and drop the last twenty
feet with notebooks against my chest, bruises
down one side of my body, fresh blood down the other.

The diction of the poem is an imitation of offhand, rambling speech. Syntactic connections are loose and misleading. The referent of the phrase "for which" in line 2 is evidently "getting rid of glut" in line 1. But the referent of "for which" in line 6 is not to be found, nor is the referent of the same phrase in the following line. Both are used as repetitive connectors pushing the narrative forward without concern for causality. The described details are likewise obscure, though they seem to represent a dwelling in a state of great disarray, catching fire in the midst of winter and affording the narrator a precarious egress (thanks to his remarkable fitness) via the fire escape. He emerges banged up and bleeding but with his notebooks intact. Such pleasure as there is in this poem comes from its imitation of a tall tale in the style of an insistent but rather spaced-out raconteur. A reader who wishes to see the poem as a testament to the value of words or poems (the notebooks) amid the rubble and chaos of disordered life, and the heroic measures needed to preserve them, is free to do so.

I have just cited a currently popular style which, I believe, will soon play itself out. But there is another way to make surreal details speak in a poem, an approach as old as religious mysticism but still capable of

considerable power. Handled properly, it promotes a kind of hyperawareness, a multidimensional way of seeing. Here is Edgar Bowers' poem, "The Mirror":

Father, I loved you as a child, and still,
When trouble bruises him I can retrace
Back to the time I cannot know, I fill,
By my desire, the possible with grace,
And wait your coming. Then I see my face,
Breathed by some other presence on the chill
Illumination of this mortal glass,
Gleam from the dark and struggle in your will.

In that fixed place, around me, others move,
Vivid with long conclusion, who, once dead,
Quickened the little moment I could prove;
And, though I seem to live, there at my head,
As if the thought translating all I see,
He stands, who was my future, claiming me.

The poem is an address to a God no longer quite believed in, but still treated as a possibility. In that state of mind the poet sees himself as if from the outside, surrounded by many who have gone before him and have helped to form him. Unmoored from time, he recognizes his present vitality as an illusion. In this state of hyper-reality he is already one of the dead, a figure in a procession of the dead, who claims and subsumes the mere momentary troubled individual staring into the mirror. The counterfactual elements in the poem can be readily identified; together they conspire to validate the interpretation I have just given (or one much like it) and, enhanced by the solemnity of the poem's regular meter and rhyme scheme, contribute to its moving and slightly eerie eloquence.

I intend all of these examples to illustrate ways of controlling the progression of thought in a poem rather than to indicate the range or types of ideas that a poet may introduce. But of course the matters are related, for the ingenuity of a poem's juxtaposed details may be a primary source of its attraction, whether those details serve as guideposts directing the poem into new paths or merely as momentary opportunities for depth and insight. It is here that Langer's comments become useful, as she calls attention to "the aura of association of the words, the long or short sequences of ideas, the wealth or poverty of transient imagery that contains them . . ." It is well understood that some poets specialize in ingenious and exotic imagery, while others remain committed to what is sometimes called the plain style.⁸

Still, the question remains whether it is possible to construct a poem entirely out of overtones, out of the *associations* of words rather than their primary meanings. Or, as Davie put it, "to articulate without asserting, to talk without saying what one is talking about." I think the answer is that it is possible (we've all heard portentous conversations conducted entirely in euphemisms), but it is not easy. Such a poem, whose course is directed by the auras of its words rather than by their literal or even metaphorical meanings, might constitute an eighth element in our typology. It might be best exemplified by John Ashbery's "Like a Sentence." The poem is longish. I quote the first half:

How little we know,
and when we know it!

It was prettily said that "No man
hath an abundance of cows on the plain, nor shards
in his cupboard." Wait! I think I know who said that! It was . . .

Never mind, dears, the afternoon
will fold you up, along with preoccupations
that now seem so important, until only a child
running around on a unicycle occupies center stage.
Then what will you make of walls? And I fear you
will have to come up with something,

be it a terraced gambit above the sea
or gossip overheard in the marketplace.
For you see, it becomes you to be chastened:
for the old to envy the young,
and for youth to fear not getting older,
where the paths through the elms, the carnivals, begin.

After the first two lines we are invited (tempted, challenged?) to add a conclusion to the unfinished sentence before the exclamation mark: “How little we know, / and when we know it ...” *It is too late!* In the second section the fictitious saying, looking like folk wisdom, appears to mean that all people live with inadequacy. And in the third section the statement “the afternoon / will fold you up” suggests our lives will end with the close of day. We are beginning to see the poem as dealing with transience and the inevitability of death. Once the stage has been cleared (except for the child on the unicycle – the next generation), in what surroundings will we find ourselves? We will have to come up with something, whether fantastical (a “terraced gambit,” whatever that might be) or far-fetched (the gossip of the marketplace). Of such wisps is heaven made. And then, in the speaker’s nearest approach to direct statement, we’re told it’s proper to be chastened, for the old to envy the young, and for youth to fear – not just getting older but also, and even more, *not* doing so, as we begin to stray among trees and our imagined entertainments.

Once a few suggestions have been put into the mind, many of the madcap details in the poem support them. By the last section the language comes to achieve a certain eloquence.

The meter will be screamingly clear then,
the rhythms unbounced, for though we came
to life as to a school, we must leave it without graduating
even as an ominous wind puffs out the sails
of proud feluccas who don’t know where they’re headed,
only that a motion is etched there, shaking to be free.

Death, which has never been mentioned, is by now treated unmistakably in two metaphors: first as leaving (but not graduating from) a school of life, and second as the “ominous wind” filling the sails of the small boats that “don’t know where they’re headed.” And now we see that the *sentence* of the poem’s title is in fact the death sentence we all carry. Without employing any of the sequential conventions (consistency of reference, temporal or logical order) that writers ordinarily use to communicate ideas, Ashbery has composed a meditation on human finality whose apparent flippancy belies its fundamental seriousness.

Not many writers can do this – nor would we want them to. But as an exploitation of the remarkable ability of language to convey extra-literal meaning on very little provocation, this sort of poem deserves a place in our survey.

To place this discussion in perspective, it should be re-emphasized that a great many poems do not attempt to convey multiple story lines, however much they may rely on figurative language to amplify meaning. It would be a futile exercise to pore through an anthology with the intention of identifying every

poem in it as belonging to one or another of the categories I have laid out here. My intention is not to provide a Swiss army knife capable of prying extra layers of meaning out of every poem encountered. None of these strategies resembles the profligate juxtapositions of details used by Pound in the later Cantos. And none quite accounts for what Yvor Winters calls the post-symbolist technique in which certain words in a poem become imbued because of their context with an extended or metaphorical meaning that goes well beyond their ordinary range of reference.⁹ That technique, oddly enough, is closely related to the methods I described in Ashbery's writing, but it is used by Stevens and Valéry, the poets Winters cites, more subtly and more sparingly.

Concision has always been the goal of poets: the conveyance of the maximum amount of information in the minimum number of syllables. And not just information; the concurrent aim is to stir a response equal to the importance of the matter being conveyed. What better way to do this than to say several things at once? And what better medium than language itself, a system of symbols whose referents, circumscribed by convention, can yet be multiplied at will? *Sound, tempo, image, aura* – all these features of language are important in poetic composition, but poets are fundamentally artisans of meaning, and it is by the artful manipulation of meaning that poems achieve their most penetrating and far-ranging effects.

NOTES

¹ *Philosophy in a New Key*, 2nd ed., 1951, pp. 260-66; author's italics. Langer, a trained musician herself, blurs many of the distinctions between the expressive techniques of music and those of poetry in order to make her point.

² *Poetry of Diction in English Verse and Articulate Energy* (combined volume), Manchester: Carcanet, 1992, p. 273; author's italics.

³ *Ibid*, p. 323.

⁴ *Collected Works of Paul Valéry*, ed. Jackson Matthews, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958, p. xxiii.

⁵ The reader who reflects on the operation of the West African proverb "The ax forgets but not the tree" will understand some of these complexities.

⁶ *Philosophy in a New Key*, p. 66.

⁷ See, for example, Bart Eeckhout, "Wallace Stevens' 'Earthy Anecdote'; or, How Poetry Must Resist Ecocriticism Almost Successfully," *Comparative American Studies* 7:2 (2009), pp. 173-192. I have not seen any recognition by commentators that one meaning of "buck" is "the body of a cart or wagon" (OED); cf. "buckboard," a vehicle in common use in nineteenth-century America.

⁸ In an essay called "Looking for Dragon Smoke," Robert Bly makes a case for what he calls freedom of association, by which he means a wide play of imagination in connecting ordinarily distant meanings. Citing his admiration for poets like Blake, Novalis, and Hölderlin, he laments that "passionate association is not to be found in the work of Eliot, Pound, or Williams," and he observes perceptively that Pound "does not go by secret paths of the imagination – he does it [i.e. makes associations] primarily by juxtaposition of texts; he simply abuts one anecdote to another or one fact to another." *Naked Poetry*, ed. Stephen Berg & Robert Mezey, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969, pp. 162-63.

⁹ See Yvor Winters, *Forms of Discovery*, Denver: Swallow, 1967, pp. 251 ff.; especially the discussion on p. 276.