

1988

"to Enter Arcanum": Gnosticism In Ezra Pound's "cantos"

Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/digitizedtheses>

Recommended Citation

Tryphonopoulos, Demetres P., "'to Enter Arcanum': Gnosticism In Ezra Pound's 'cantos'" (1988). *Digitized Theses*. 1686.
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/digitizedtheses/1686>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Digitized Special Collections at Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digitized Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact tadam@uwo.ca, wlsadmin@uwo.ca.



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, tests publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30.

"TO ENTER ARCANUM": GNOSTICISM IN EZRA POUND'S CANTOS

by

Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos

Department of English

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
February 1988

© Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos 1988

Permission has been granted to the National Library of Canada to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author (copyright owner) has reserved other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her written permission.

L'autorisation a été accordée à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur (titulaire du droit d'auteur) se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits, de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation écrite.

ISBN 0-315-40799-9

ABSTRACT

Despite the painstaking work of Pound scholars, the mythos of the Cantos has yet to be properly understood, because its occult sources have not been examined sufficiently. The "occult" here includes the body of speculative, heterodox religious thought which lies outside all religious doxologies--including Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Neoplatonism, Cabalism, and Theosophy. As well, occultism involves belief in gnosis or direct awareness of the Divine which can be attained through myesis or ritual initiation.

Drawing upon recently published material and unpublished Pound letters, the thesis traces Pound's intimate engagement with specific occultists (Mead, Upward, and Orage) and their ideas, and argues that speculative occultism helped shape his aesthetic theories and poetry. Special attention is paid to Mead's work on Gnosticism and its contribution to Pound's extraordinary aesthetic and religious sensibility much noticed in Pound criticism.

The discussion falls into three sections. Chapter I sees the Cantos as "palingenesis" and argues that the poem should be read symbolically. Chapters II and III discuss the intense public interest at the time of Pound's arrival in London. Chapter II also details Pound's interest in particular occult movements and describes modern philosophical occultism. Then Chapter III establishes, first, that Pound's contact with the occult began at least as early as his undergraduate years and that he came to London already primed on the occult, and second, that many of his London acquaintances were unquestionably occultists. They include Upward, Mead, Orage, Yeats, and Olivia and Dorothy Shakespear (Pound's future mother-in-law and wife). The occultism of Upward and Mead was most congenial to Pound and was adopted in the Cantos. Chapters IV and V examine selected cantos (17, 23, 45-51, and 90-91) in light of Pound's occult interests. Chapter IV outlines a tripartite

schema for the Cantos called katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia. It is argued that the Cantos are structured on the model of an initiation rather than a journey, but that the poem does not so much describe an initiation rite as enact one for the reader. The last chapter is an analysis of cantos 90 and 91. The emphasis is placed here on the spiritual drama enacted by the illuminated soul undergoing an initiation. The discussion of canto 90 reveals that it can be read palingenetically and a reading of canto 91 interprets that canto as an account of paradise as a higher plane of being in occult terms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a pleasure to record my grateful thanks to those who have, in various ways, made this study possible. For his considerable patience, advice, generosity and encouraging criticism, I wish first to thank Professor Leon Surette. Professor Surette's contributions have been so numerous that it would be impossible to acknowledge them as they occur in the text. I am also deeply indebted to Professor Stephen J. Adams, not only for his judicious suggestions and advice, but for his constant encouragement and patient energy over several years.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help of my examination committee: Professors M. Groden, D.M.R. Bentley in the English Department, and Professor M.J. Moscovich in the Classics Department, all of the University of Western Ontario, and Professor Timothy Materer of the University of Missouri at Columbia--I am especially indebted to Prof. Materer for his advice and encouragement.

I would also like to thank most gratefully the following persons for various kinds of help, advice, and encouragement: Professors R.M. Stingle, R.J. Shroyer, D.F. Chapin and Mrs. Pat Dibsdafe.

I am extremely grateful to my parents for a lifetime's encouragement to study and learn. Most of all, I am grateful to my wife Litsa, for her support and confidence in me which made this work possible. I dedicate this study to her with gratitude and love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
ABBREVIATIONS	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I -- THE CANTOS AS PALINGENESIS	
1. The Cantos as Palingenesis	9
2. Poetry as Revelation	21
3. "The Celestial Tradition"	25
4. Notes to Chapter I	35
CHAPTER II -- THE OCCULT TRADITION	
1. "The Rising Psychic Tide"	39
2. A History of the "Occult Tradition"	47
3. Notes to Chapter II	81
CHAPTER III -- POUND'S OCCULT EDUCATION	
1. "Catechumen"	89
2. American Beginnings: Katherine Ruth Heyman and H.D.	92
3. Pound's Catechesis in London (1): Yeats and the Sheakespears	98
4. Pound's Catechesis in London (2): 2) Upward and Orage	108
5. "Echoes from the Gnosis": G. R. S. Mead and Pound	119
6. Notes to Chapter III	140
CHAPTER IV -- KATABASIS/PALINGENESIS/EPÓPTEIA	
1. Katabasis/Palingenesis/Epopteia	155
2. "The Cave of Nerea": Canto 17	164
3. "Never with this Religion/ will you make men of the Greeks": Canto 23	190
4. "The Dimension of Stillness": Cantos 45-51	210
5. Notes to Chapter IV	232
CHAPTER V -- THE SUBTLE BODY	
1. "Out of Erebus": Canto 90	240
2. "The Subtle Body": Canto 91	254
3. Notes to Chapter V	275
APPENDIX 1	279
APPENDIX 2	281
WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED	283
VITA	298

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the text and in endnotes to designate reference works.

<u>ABCR</u>	<u>ABC of Reading</u>
<u>Eleusis</u>	<u>Surette, Leon. A Light From Eleusis</u>
<u>EP/JT</u>	<u>Ezra Pound and John Theobald</u>
<u>EZ/DS</u>	<u>Ezra Pound and Dorothy Shakespear. Their Letters: 1909-1914</u>
<u>G-D</u>	<u>Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir</u>
<u>Guide</u>	<u>Guide Guide to Kulchur</u>
<u>Letters</u>	<u>Selected Letters of Ezra Pound. 1907-1941</u>
<u>LE</u>	<u>Literary Essays</u>
<u>SP</u>	<u>Selected Prose. 1909-1965</u>
<u>SR</u>	<u>The Spirit of Romance</u>
<u>Translations</u>	<u>The Translation of Ezra Pound</u>

The author of this thesis has granted The University of Western Ontario a non-exclusive license to reproduce and distribute copies of this thesis to users of Western Libraries. Copyright remains with the author.

Electronic theses and dissertations available in The University of Western Ontario's institutional repository (Scholarship@Western) are solely for the purpose of private study and research. They may not be copied or reproduced, except as permitted by copyright laws, without written authority of the copyright owner. Any commercial use or publication is strictly prohibited.

The original copyright license attesting to these terms and signed by the author of this thesis may be found in the original print version of the thesis, held by Western Libraries.

The thesis approval page signed by the examining committee may also be found in the original print version of the thesis held in Western Libraries.

Please contact Western Libraries for further information:

E-mail: libadmin@uwo.ca

Telephone: (519) 661-2111 Ext. 84796

Web site: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/>

INTRODUCTION

Most of Ezra Pound's sympathetic readers have begun with the assumption that "the significance and the form [of the Cantos] are hidden in an iterative and kaleidoscopic pattern for the assiduous and intelligent to discover" (Surette, Eleusis 1). Daniel S. Pearlman's The Barb of Time: On the Unity of Ezra Pound's Cantos is representative of this kind of criticism which usually attempts to prove that the Cantos displays "perfect coherence." Since there is no narrative line in the Cantos, Pearlman defines the major form of the poem in terms of temporal modalities: ephemeral/recurrent/eternal. Pearlman's study, like many others, is well researched and knowledgeable; it fails, nonetheless, to catch the true nature of the Cantos' structure.

I submit that, despite all the painstaking work which has been done on the Cantos, the poem's mythos has yet to be properly understood. In A Light from Eleusis, Leon Surette brings us closer to a proper understanding of the poem's mythos by chronicling Pound's revisionist rendering of the Odyssean myth in terms of the Eleusinian mysteries (40-66). According to Surette, the mythos of the Cantos is based on a fantasy history which can be traced in part to Joséphin Péladan, a French Rosicrucian of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (34-9, 57-60). This finding raises one aspect of Pound which has been almost entirely neglected: his involvement with the occult. It is the aim of this study to consider the relationship between Pound's ideas about poetry and his lifelong interest in the occult. It is suggested here that the poem cannot be understood without some familiarity with the occult and that a proper understanding of Pound's "occultism" sheds new light upon the mythos of the Cantos. The present study builds upon Professor Surette's pioneering work which initiated this discussion but which also

seriously underestimated the extent of Pound's involvement with the occult.

Before going any further, a brief account of what the term "occult" is taken to mean in this study is called for. The term "occult" is widely applied today to the study of supernatural or unusual phenomena: from psychic experiences in seances to Black Magic and such pseudo-sciences as Numerology and Astrology. These are areas of human interest which many "true occultists" would reject as involving the degradation of humanity. However, in this study, the emphasis is placed on "metaphysical occultism"--which is different from the practice of occult arts or theurgy. Thus "occult" is taken to mean the whole body of speculative, heterodox religious thought which lies outside all religious orthodoxies and includes such movements as Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Neoplatonism, Cabalism, and Theosophy. As well, occultism involves belief in the possibility of gnosis or direct awareness of the Divine (Pound's "Divine and permanent world") which can be attained through myesis or ritual initiation. This distinction between the popular notions of occultism and "metaphysical occultism" must be maintained from the outset because Pound, unlike Yeats, was not at all susceptible to the attractions of theurgy or Magic.

During his London years (1908-21) Pound was closely associated with a number of people (W. B. Yeats, G. R. S. Mead, Allen Upward, A. R. Orage, and Olivia Shakespear among others) who had strong connections with various occult groups. That Yeats was interested in all sorts of occult doctrines and practices is well known, and there is evidence that Pound observed some of Yeats's occult experiments (Harper, Yeats and the Occult 165). Less well understood is Pound's association with G. R. S. Mead, Allen Upward, and A. R. Orage. The recently published correspondence between Pound and his future wife, Dorothy Shakespear, and that between Pound and John Theobald, reveal more clearly than heretofore the

depth of Pound's interest in the occult during the years preceding the genesis of the Cantos. Additional evidence for Pound's interest in the occult is provided by the unpublished Pound letters at the Lilly Library (William Bird Collection at Indiana University at Bloomington), the Beinecke (Ezra Pound Collection at Yale University), and the British Museum (Patricia Hutchins Collection). Drawing primarily upon Pound's published letters and the still unpublished letters to his parents (in the Beinecke Collection), this study traces Pound's intimate engagement with specific occultists (Mead, Upward, Orage, Yeats, Olivia Shakespear) and their ideas, and argues for the importance of speculative or "metaphysical" occultism in the shaping of his aesthetic theories and poetry. In other words, it is argued here, first, that it is implausible to suppose Pound could have been ignorant of those occultists who at the turn of the century were the constant subject of gossip in the press of the day, and second, that Pound is often drawing on a body of opinion, belief, and experience that he encountered first hand among friends and acquaintances.

For a study of this nature, the state of Yeats scholarship is instructive. With regards to the significance of the occult for Yeats, Yeats scholars can be divided into two camps: those who have sought to evade the fact of Yeats's intense, lifelong interest in occult doctrines and activities of every sort because they have regarded them as embarrassing; and those who either share or are attracted to the occult themselves. An example of this critical dichotomy may be found in the work of Richard Ellmann and Kathleen Raine.

Though Yeats's interest in the occult is still regarded as embarrassing by some, recent criticism can no longer avoid discussion of the subject. In his introduction to Yeats and the Occult, George Mills Harper writes that "the time has passed when it was necessary, in order to preserve intellectual respectability, to express either

astonishment or dismay at the nature of Yeats's intellectual pursuits" (xv). As a result, a number of critics have written books devoted to Yeats's long search in hermetic studies. The same cannot be said of Pound. The little that has been done on Pound and the occult usually does not go far enough--the extent and nature of Pound's connection with occultism remains largely unexplored.

With regards to the question of Pound's occultism, scholars may be divided into three camps. Mainstream Pound scholarship--with Hugh Kenner representing the most authoritative and orthodox position--has entirely missed this dimension of Pound. Even when the subject is broached by mainstream critics, Pound's occult connections are either denied or described in terms of Neoplatonism, a more legitimate philosophical tradition. For example, in her discussion of Pound's understanding of myth, Wendy Flory states that the poet "is not committed to occult study as Yeats is" (14); and James J. Wilhelm, who notes that Pound's "philosophical training was very heavily influenced by the Neoplatonists" (Dante and Pound 137), returns time and again to the poet's Neoplatonism. Other critics are less categorical than Flory in their estimation of the importance of the occult for Pound. Thus, the second camp is made up of critics who recognize Pound's involvement with the occult but are not willing to concede that it has any importance other than its role in shaping his aesthetic theories. For example, James Longenbach identifies Pound's intense interest in the occult during his London years, and more specifically during his time with Yeats at Stone Cottage (1913-16), but concludes that "[i]t is finally not so much the subject matter as the allusive, aristocratic attitude of the occult that was most important for modernism [and for Pound]." (398) In this second camp we may include Sharon Mayer Libera, Herbert N. Schneidau, Ian F. A. Bell, and A. Walton Litz. The best approach to the impact of the occult on Pound's aesthetics is still Schneidau's early study Ezra

Pound: The Image and the Real (1969), in which he briefly discusses Pound's early poetics at the time when Pound "was entertaining esoteric ideas from people like Mead and Upward" (125).

The third camp is made up of critics who recognize the centrality of the occult in Pound's work, both in terms of aesthetics and content. Akiko Miyake, Carroll F. Terrell; Leon Surette, Noel Stock, Kevin Oderman, Angela Elliott, Colin McDowell, William French, and Timothy Materer are the critics who belong to this camp. The earlier of these critics, including Surette, treat the occult dimensions of Pound's poetry and prose with excessive respect, labelling it his "arcanum," "secretum," "mysterium," or "Eleusis." Of these critics Leon Surette, In A Light from Eleusis, goes much further than anyone before or since with his discussion of Joséphin Péladan and the seed planted in Pound's mind (as a result of his reading this French Rosicrucian) about the existence of an underground mystery cult and "the idea of formulating history in terms of such a secret cult" (37). Pound's belief in this secret cult which he calls "Eleusis" was encouraged, Surette stresses, by his contact "with the unusual interest in the religious backwaters of G. R. S. Mead, Allen Upward, A. R. Orage and Yeats" (37). Most of the other critics identify the occult elements in Pound's work for what they are, but their approaches are usually limited to source hunting and explication of specific texts.

As a result of the work done by critics belonging to the third camp, and as new evidence accumulates, Pound's serious interest in the occult is becoming increasingly clear. Consequently, in their discussion of Pound and Yeats's early acquaintance, Colin McDowell and Timothy Materer can conclude that "both poets were in fact deeply committed to occult studies" (345) and go so far as to state that Pound initially sought Yeats because he was interested as much in his mystical themes as he was in his diction and rhythm. Though these conclusions seem true,

the subject of Pound's occultism has yet to receive comprehensive study and Pound scholarship remains largely ignorant of this dimension of the poet's preoccupations.

Unlike Yeats, who used his involvement in various occult movements (Golden Dawn, Blavatsky's Theosophical Society, Spiritualism, etc.) to learn to construct a system, Pound never attempted anything similar but remained to the end an Odysseus fishing "by obstinate isles." It is, nevertheless, possible to show how the Cantos reflect, and to a great degree are shaped by, Pound's esoteric studies. This study does not address the question of whether or not Pound was an occultist; there is no evidence that he ever joined any occult group. It can also be stated with some certainty that the motivating force behind Pound's interest in the occult was very different from Yeats's. For example, unlike Yeats, Pound was very skeptical about "parapsychological phenomena."

The discussion in this study falls into three large sections. The opening section (Chapter I) deals with the Cantos as "palingenesis"--that is, it is argued here that the Cantos are intended to be read in a way similar to the Hermetic writings on rebirth. Also noted here is the fact that both Pound's cultural and aesthetic theories are coloured by his interest in the occult. A Guide to Kulchur is taken as the text which records Pound's occultism most clearly. A case is also made here for Pound's unbroken interest in the occult, despite such claims as that advanced by William French, who argues that the poet's long dormant interest was only rekindled in the early 1950s when he proofread for republication The Spirit of Romance.

The first part of the second section (chapters II and III) begins with a discussion of what I call, borrowing the phrase from Mead, "the rising psychic tide," or intense public interest in the occult which began prior to Pound's arrival in London and continued unabated during his stay there. Chapter II also deals with

Pound's interest in particular occult speculative movements and seeks to develop a coherent account of modern philosophical occultism. It is emphasized here that the intellectual content of the occult is almost all derived from the Hellenistic period; that the historical continuity claimed by the occult is a constantly rediscovered fiction; and that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were periods of unusual vitality in the history of occultism. The stream of occult ideas in the 1890s can be explained in part as a reaction against the scientific positivism of the nineteenth century. In addition, some references are made here to the character and the ubiquity of occult ideas within literary culture from the pre-romantics to the moderns.

Then by integrating information from personal letters and biographical and critical sources, Chapter III relies on hard data to establish, first, the fact that Pound's contact with the occult began at least as early as his undergraduate years and that he came to London already primed on the occult, and second, that many of his London acquaintances were unquestionably occultists. This chapter traces the poet's involvement in the underground intellectual community to which Pound himself, Upward, Mead, Orage, Yeats, and Olivia and Dorothy Shakespear, Pound's future mother-in-law and daughter respectively, belonged. It is argued that it was Upward's and Mead's varieties of occultism that he found most congenial, and substantially adopted for the Cantos. Special attention is paid here to Mead's work on Gnosticism (hence the title of this thesis) and its contribution to the formation of Pound's Hellenistic religious speculations. It can be argued that Gnosticism is the root of modern occultism; "Gnosticism" is thus used in this study as an all-inclusive term for all the movements which belong to the body of speculative, heterodox religious thought.

The last section (chapters IV and V) is devoted to an examination of a number

of selected cantos (17, 23, 45-51, and 90-91) in light of Pound's occult interests.

The purpose of the close analysis of the selected cantos is to determine to what extent Pound's interest in occultism contributed to the final shape of his "tale of the tribe"--in the course of this exercise, a number of correspondences between the content of these cantos and occult literature are outlined. Chapter IV begins with a discussion of a tripartite schema for the Cantos called:

katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia. It is argued that the Cantos are structured on the model of an initiation rather than a journey (as most critics have argued, taking the Commedia and the Odyssey as Pound's models), and that the poem does not describe or report on an initiation rite but instead enacts an initiation for the reader. Thus it is suggested here that Pound read Dante's Commedia and Homer's Odyssey as palingenetic texts.

The last chapter is an analysis of cantos 90 and 91. The emphasis is placed here on the spiritual drama enacted by the illuminated soul undergoing an initiation. It is proposed that canto 90 illustrates the motif of palingenesis or rebirth to a higher plane of existence, and that canto 91 illustrates the nature of that higher plane as understood through the doctrine of the "subtle body"--which Pound encountered in reading Mead's essays on the subject.

CHAPTER I
THE CANTOS AS PALINGENESIS

1. THE CANTOS AS PALINGENESIS

Pound's "religious" ideas form a mosaic out of elements selected from a wide variety of pagan mystery religions and occult movements. The mosaic would seem to be pieced together out of randomly chosen bits. Being neither a systematic philosopher nor a methodical student of religions, Pound nowhere takes the step of attempting to organize his religious ideas into a coherent system. And yet there is a governing principle directing the process of selection and presentation. As with many occult writers and thinkers, Pound's predilection for some elements and his rejection of others were determined by a functional need to serve the purposes of a value-system with more or less defined perimeters. Pound formulated a framework on a priori grounds, and kept enriching it (sometimes overburdening it) with analogies drawn from diverse systems. Gathered in this way, the analogies are later used as proof for the legitimacy of the original structure. The Cantos constitute, I think, such a structure: a collection of fragments gathered according to a definite plan for the purpose of validating the author's original value system. This is a perception which the reader of the Cantos must bear in mind while examining the poem's evolution, which the poet himself, contemplating upon his labours, describes in one place in this way:

From time's wreckage shored,
these fragments shored against ruin (110/781).¹

For Pound, "The essential thing in a poet is that he builds us his world" (SP 7). And Pound's world (as well as his poetic technique) is built out of his sense and understanding of the "mysterium." Noel Stock is absolutely correct when he points

out that while Pound has never been a deep student of the Christian religion, his work "is the work of a man with a theory, and that theory, deriving after a fashion from the mysteries of Eleusis, has no real connection with the 'Credo in unum Deum'" (Poet in Exile 16). The most important point in Stock's statement is the recognition that Pound's approach to religion is from a certain, definite perspective. "He has a theory." Stock goes on to quote a relevant passage from A Visiting Card:

Latin is sacred, grain is sacred. Who destroyed the mystery of fecundity, bringing in the cult of sterility? Who set the Church against the Empire? Who destroyed the unity of the Catholic Church with this mud-wallow that serves the Protestants in the place of contemplation? Who decided to destroy the mysteries within the Church so as to be able to destroy the Church itself by schism? Who has wiped the consciousness of the greatest mystery out of the mind of Europe--to arrive at an atheism proclaimed by Bolshevism? (SE 317)²

Pound's rhetorical questions allude here to a number of his lifelong concerns, all of which find poetic expression in the Cantos: the importance of language; the connection between mystery rites and fecundity; the "emptying out" of the real meaning in the present-day Church ritual of the Mass; and the suppression of the mystery which has reduced the collective consciousness of Europe to a state of atheism, robbing Europe of the capacity to experience that theos that Pound calls the "eternal state of mind" (SP 47). The common element in all this is Pound's harping on the claim that the church's decline is the direct result of its neglect of the mysteries.

Elsewhere in A Visiting Card, Pound describes historical events and conditions as products generated through the interaction of two antithetical forces:

We find two forces in history: one that divides, shatters, and kills, and one that contemplates the unity of the mystery....

There is the force that falsifies, the force that destroys every clearly delineated symbol, dragging man into a maze of abstract arguments, destroying not one but every religion.

But the images of the gods, or Byzantine mosaics, move the soul to contemplation and preserve the tradition of the undivided light (SE 306-07).

The rhetoric of antithesis is used here to build a polarized structure of values contrasting the sterile, labyrinthine, blurring, destructive, dark force, which Pound usually identifies with Usury and personifies as "Usura" or "Geryon," with the sacred, fecund, clear, dynamic force identified with the "unity of the mystery," and symbolized by the "tradition of the undivided light."

Throughout the Cantos, Pound is concerned with delineating these two opposing forces, "Usura," and all that Pound associates with it, is represented in the imaginative world of the Cantos as the evil, fatal force which stands in diametrical opposition to the ἐνεργεια (energeia) or creative, vital force derived through the act of the contemplation of "the unity of the mystery." In Pound's cosmos the mythical opposition between the corn goddess, Demeter, and Pluto, the god of the Underworld, is replaced by the poet's own antithesis of the "mystery" and the abstract, demonic "Usura." Of course, Pound's imagination is firmly rooted in the mythical cosmos, and the terms of the "mystery"/"Usura" antithesis are always being transformed and replaced so that the single antithesis has a polymorphous, proliferating activity. The protean character of the antithesis allows Pound to include in his epic examples from many different realms: mythical, cultural, historical, religious, and economic. The paradigmatic rendition of the antithesis is found in Canto 51 where the opposition is between the forma "That hath the light of the doer" or beholder of the mystery, and the "sour song" arising from the belly of the usurious Geryon.³⁵

The importance Pound attaches to the "mystery," and his insistence upon an arcanum point to his primary concern in the Cantos, a concern which I shall call palingenetic, a term which will be explained in the discussion that follows. In a recent study, Scott Thomas Eastham also argues for Pound's concern with the "mystery." Approaching Pound from the perspective of contemporary theories of the

human yearning after paradise, Eastham suggests that in the Cantos the poet acts as a ψυχοποιός (psychopomp), a guardian of souls ascending to a paradisaical existence on earth.⁴ Eastham discusses Pound's concern with man's birth into a higher life and concludes by asserting that

Through Pound's work we have been able to fathom somewhat the human role as priest or mediator in the ongoing sacred marriage of Heaven and Earth, interpreter of the ever-recurrent hieros gamos by which all the elements of the entire reality are colligated into a whole. As Pound has aptly demonstrated, the poet/shaman, [or psychopomp] is no longer just a relic of bygone innocence, but the architect of an integral awareness, the hierophant who holds open the threshold of the ever-deepening mystery of life. (205)

I agree with the general thrust of Eastham's thesis, but I think that he fails to explain the source of Pound's concerns and outlook--primarily because Eastham's overriding concern is to place Pound's epic within contemporary theories of the significance of paradise for the modern psyche. I think that by labeling Pound's primary concern palingenetic we can arrive at a more accurate picture of both the source as well as the nature of Pound's understanding of "the mystery of life."

Pound's concern with apotheosis, with man's ascent into a higher or divine life, is closely linked with his interest in palingenesis or rebirth. It has often been noted that scenes of transformation can be found in the Cantos and many of Pound's early poems, and that his source is usually Ovid. In Guide to Kulchur, Pound takes up the issue of the value of Ovid's poem for man and, in the process of responding to Eliot's "What Mr. Pound believes?" by blaming modern ills on the fact that "our time has overshadowed the mysteries by an over-emphasis on the individual," he offers the following personal belief:

I assert that the Gods exist....
I assert that a great treasure of verity exists for mankind in Ovid and in the subject matter of Ovid's long poem, and that only in this form could it be registered. (229)

The subject-matter of Ovid's poem is metamorphosis, and in speaking about it Pound

is thinking of metamorphosis "not as a poetic fiction but as a metaphor for the relationship between the human and the divine, the third subject of the Cantos, 'the magic moment or moment of metamorphosis, bust thru from quotidien into 'divine or permanent world'" (Surette, Eleusis 100).⁵ Pound often tries to catch the fluid nature of metamorphosis. But why, then, are Ovid's myths the only "form" in which these moments could be registered?

In his discussion of the development of initiation mystery rites during the Hellenistic period, Richard Reitzenstein turns to Apuleius' Golden Ass (written in the second century A.D. and based apparently on a Greek story by Lucius of Patras) in order to trace the idea of palingenesis, that is, the notion of the death of the old life and the rebirth to a new and higher life of the μύστης (mystes or initiate). Through god's miraculous power, the mystes is elevated into a better nature.⁶

Reitzenstein writes that

This rebirth is a transformation of essence, the assumption of a new form; renasci alternates with reformari, and even the transformation from the form of an ass into human form means for the community a part of that divinely wrought rebirth. The word παλιγενεσία is in fact also used in Hellenistic literature for the "migration of souls", the assumption of a new form. Underlying it is the view that in that migration through the twelve hours of the night which is reenacted in the mystery the deceased person, like the deity, assumes twelve different forms, the forms of animals, before he attains or regains the divine form. A transfiguration, a μεταμορφώσις or μετασχηματισμός, is for this conception indissolubly bound up with the rebirth, the παλιγενεσία; hence the account can form the conclusion of a book of "Metamorphoses". (39-40)

The connection between μεταμορφώσις (metamorphosis) and παλιγενεσία (palingenesis) as outlined by Reitzenstein points to the possibility that Pound read Ovid's Metamorphoses as an account of initiations, of palingenesis of the soul. It is possible that Pound interpreted the transformation of animals in Ovid as representations of the soul's journey to apotheosis or σωτηρία (soteria)--hence Pound's assertion that the Metamorphoses contains a thesaurus of aletheia or wisdom which is hidden in the poem, an aletheia whose nature is revelatory once it is

understood.

Let us assume that Pound read Ovid's Metamorphoses as a sacred text containing aletheia. This assumption, in turn, could go a long way in helping us understand the often obscure, dense, and impenetrable surface of Pound's own epic. A common assumption by sympathetic readers of the Cantos has been that the poem's "significance [is] often hidden in an iterative and kaleidoscopic pattern for the assiduous and intelligent to discover" (Eleusis 1). It is possible, however, that mere assiduousness and intelligence are not enough for a complete understanding of what Pound intended his poem to signify.

Noel Stock, in Poet in Exile, has discussed Pound's religious ideas and beliefs in terms of Pound's early reading of the Italian humanists, using for this discussion a delightful book on Renaissance art by Edgar Wind entitled Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance. But Stock misses the opportunity; he does not follow the implications of Wind's argument to its logical conclusion.

Professor Wind begins his discussion by emphasizing that the term "mysteries" has several meanings. He distinguishes between three. The first and original meaning of mysteries, exemplified by the festival of Eleusis, is of a popular, secret ritual of initiation in which the neophytes were given assurance of a higher status, the sense of a closer relationship with the divine, the hope of some sort of blessedness in the hereafter, and were bound to observe the secrets of the mystery. The second meaning is to be found in Plato who used the imagery and terminology of initiation, playfully in the Euthydemus and with the most solemn seriousness in the Symposium, and, as the Seventh Letter shows, was convinced that any deeper understanding of the universe could not be communicated as mere information or technique. Finally, Plato and his Neoplatonic disciples grafted into philosophy a figurative use of the language of the popular rites. But, as Professor Wind is careful

to emphasize, "the adoption of the ritual terminology to assist and incite the exercise of intelligence, proved exceedingly useful as a fiction, but ended, as such fictions are likely to do, by betraying the late Platonists into a revival of magic" (4-5).

The Renaissance Italian humanists, among them Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino, seeing the mysteries through the eyes of Platonic philosophers, fell into a historical misconception in assuming that the figurative interpretation was part of the fabric of the original mysteries.⁷ Given that Pound first became acquainted with the mysteries through his reading of the Italian humanists (circa 1906), he would have encountered a mixture of the ritual, the figurative, and the magic found in their texts. Stock suggests that later, under the influence of Frazer and Frobenius, Pound devoted more attention to the original, ritualistic phase of the mysteries. I will argue that Pound's initial acquaintance with the mystères littéraires (Festugière's term for the figurative use as opposed to mystères cultuels, his term for ritual initiation⁸) was later reinforced by the ideas he encountered in his association with G. R. S. Mead and his circle, long before his reading of Frobenius. That Pound would be interested in mystères cultuels need hardly be argued since the Cantos itself is clearly an "odyssey" back to origins.

Stock uses Wind's arguments to establish the fact that since Pound's original acquaintance with the mysteries was through his reading of the Neoplatonists, the poet's response to the mysteries would be similar to the half-skeptical bemusement of Pico della Mirandola. Stock quotes from Wind the following passage:

The enjoyment Pico derived from occult authors was vicarious and poetical; they exercised his imagination in the employment of outlandish metaphors. It never occurred to him, as it did to less speculative minds, that the turgid love of the dialectical magi might be put to a more nefarious use than amplifying the Platonic mystères littéraires. Black magic, in the sense that it appealed to Agrippa of Nettesheim, he rejected as a vile superstition. (Wind 7)

Pound, likewise, maintained a highly skeptical attitude toward theurgy or practical magic and did not approve of Yeats's flirtation with parapsychological phenomena. Nonetheless, Pound maintained an interest in the philosophical aspects of the occult.

Having suggested that Pound's response to the mysteries parallels that of Pico della Mirandola, Stock makes no further use of Wind; he chooses, instead, to search Pound's early collections of poetry for references which echo the poet's reading in the "mysteries." If Stock had explored Wind further, he might have taken up Wind's central argument concerning the double nature of many Renaissance paintings. Wind discusses what he perceives to be a deliberate obliqueness in the use of metaphor which he finds spread in some of the greatest Renaissance paintings, and he speaks of "the presence of unresolved residues of meaning" in many of these (15). When Wind writes that some Renaissance works "were designed for initiates, hence they require initiation," he is speaking, we can safely infer, about the exoteric/esoteric nature of "cryptic art" (15). In his discussion of Michelangelo's Last Judgement, Wind deals with Pietro Aretino's criticism of Michelangelo's cult of the enigmatic and notes the basic paradox of cryptic art: "it addresses itself to the very audience from which it professes to be hidden" (189-90). Thus the discourse presented by such works as Michelangelo's Last Judgement is both esoteric and exoteric, both private and public; the art and its meaning can be appreciated by the vulgar (at least up to a point) as well as, more fully, by the few learned who possess the key to a cryptological meaning.

This dual, cryptological nature of Renaissance works of art as discussed by Wind is made even more clear in his discussion of hieroglyphs:

Unless one knows what a hieroglyph means, one cannot see what it says. But once one has acquired the relevant knowledge "unfolded" by more or less exoteric instruction, one can take pleasure in finding it "infolded" in an esoteric image or sign. (208)

According to this cryptological theory (which can be applied to literature as well as

art), the "esoteric" meaning can be deciphered when one comes to the possession of the appropriate key, that is, when one comes to the possession of the rule of "infolding," a possession gathered by "exoteric" instruction or learning.

A cryptological reading of the Cantos, where the exegesis is governed by the logic of concealment and where enlightenment and obscurantism are tightly linked, seems like an attractive project; but I do not think that such a reading, even though Pound's art in the Cantos is often cryptic, gives, ultimately, an accurate picture of Pound's intentions. The example of Forrest Read's '76: One World and the Cantos of Ezra Pound must be avoided.⁹ The poet and his art, I think, would be better served and understood by a pneumatic or gnostic reading--that is, a reading which takes into consideration Pound's familiarity with and appreciation for the writings of the ancient wisdom tradition.

I suggest that the Cantos are intended to be read in a way similar to the Hermetic writings on rebirth. The author plays the role of the mystagogue and presents a description of a "mystery" in the hope that his presentation will exert upon the reader the same effect as an actual revelation or mystical experience and the latter will experience such a revelation in his imagination. But only the willing initiand will be able to perceive and experience the mystery; the non-initiate or unbeliever will remain ignorant of the import of the words he is reading. As Richard Reitzenstein explains,

Anyone who published these mysteries [the literary mysteries of the Hermetic writings] as books expected that the reader, if God chose to favour him, would upon reading them, feel the same effect as Thoth [the Egyptian god of wisdom, learning and literature] felt upon hearing; the miraculous power of God's message functions even in the written word: the vision, the experience, occurs. But he also expected that the unbeliever into whose hand the book might fall would not understand it; indeed, for him it must remain dead, just because the vision does not occur. (62)

There is an exoteric as well as an esoteric side. The text can be read and understood on a superficial level; but the text is specifically designed to bring about,

in those readers who are open pure of heart and willing to hear, the "full Eleusis [sic]" (81/520)--that is, true and complete seeing and knowing. The text can be the bridge ("a bridge over worlds" (Notes for CXVII et seq./802)) through which the initiate can attain revelation, the unmeditated vision of the deity. At the same time, there is no danger that the esoteric dimension of the mystery might be perceived by the profane.¹⁰

Pound himself seems to have read certain texts in this way. I have already discussed his reading of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Guide to Kulchur provides additional examples. In the section entitled "The Promised Land" Pound criticizes Luigi Valli's Il Linguaggio Segreto di Dante e dei "Fideli d'Amore" because that author's "wanderings in search of a secret language (for Dante, Guido and the rest of them) are, at mildest estimate, unconvincing" (294). Pound's position is stated even more clearly in his "Cavalcanti" essay. In that essay Valli is blamed because Pound cannot find justification for his "theories re secret conspiracies, mystic brotherhoods, widely distributed (and uniform) cipher in 'all' or some poems of the period, etc" (LE 173). And yet, despite appearing unconvinced by Valli's arguments about Dante's employment of a secret language in the Divina Commedia, Pound seems to have read Dante's poem as an esoteric document.¹¹ Also, in speaking of the Chinese Classics, Pound says:

When one knows enough one can find wisdom in the Four Classics. When one does not know enough one's eye passes over the page without seeing it. (Guide 17)

Again, much more directly and near the spirit of this discussion this time, in his discussion of the differences between prose and poetry, Pound shifts into a consideration of the art of poetry in terms of the "mysteries":

Beyond its doors are the mysteries. Eleusis. Things not to be spoken save in secret.

The mysteries self-defended, the mysteries that can not be revealed. Fools can only profane them. The dull can neither penetrate the secretum

— nor divulge it to others. (Guide 144-5)

One could hardly wish for a clearer and less uncompromising appeal to the exoteric/esoteric principle.

I suggest that the Cantos is a text designed to produce initiates as much as or more than it is for initiates; it is a text whose purpose is to occasion a palingenesis achieved through participation in the "mystery." For the initiates who are able to participate in this mystery, the text constitutes a leitourgia (from leitōs, "people" and ergon, "work"), a service or act which is performed for the benefit and common interest of the participants. Since the "mystery" Pound has in mind belongs to an esoteric tradition, only the "catechumen" (Guide 145) are expected to participate and understand fully the experience of the poem's mythos. The Cantos, it is suggested, can be seen as a text which is intended to be read esoterically and by those who are willing to engage themselves with the text as mystai or initiates. The mythos of the Cantos enacts the experience of the initiate in the "mysteries," an experience which the text seems designed to recreate in the reader.

The obscurity of the Cantos may be the result not merely of the intractability of its cryptic allusions or its polymorphous, heterogeneous surface. I suggest that the poem's obscurity is deliberate; meant as an esoteric document, the poem has an esoteric as well as an exoteric side. In addition, the poem's obscurity has a rhetorical purpose: the enlightenment of the reader! Whether or not the committed reader ever achieves the enlightenment Pound sought is another matter. Finally, the poem's obscurity can be penetrated somewhat by knowledge of the wisdom literature. Presumably, Pound himself knows exactly what it is that he wants to reveal in the "mystery" of the poem, but he refrains from stating this anywhere in the Cantos (or anywhere else for that matter).

Pound's method is perfectly consistent with the idea found in the Hermetic

tradition regarding the secrecy of the esoteric side of the sacred text. Secrets are "[t]hings not to be spoken save in secret." At the same time, the "mysteries" include cultic practices carried out in concealment.

2. POETRY AS REVELATION

Pound's interest in esoteric ideas shows up in a number of essays, spanning his early London years to the late 1930s; but most importantly in Guide to Kulchur (1938), that rather curious, idiosyncratic effort which resembles the Cantos in terms of organization and content. Despite Stock's assertion that Pound's occult interests faded between his early London years and the time of the writing of Guide, a number of observations Pound makes in his prose writings suggest his continual interest in things occult.¹²

In defense of the "ideogrammic method" Pound states, early in Guide, that his aim as a writer is "revelation" (51). The word "revelation" is used in this early chapter, "ZWECK or the AIM," as a poetic term which expresses the moment of gnosis in the text, the moment when "one gets off the dead and desensitized surface of the reader's mind, onto a part that will register" (Guide 51). Commenting on the ideogrammic method as presented in this quotation, Laszlo Géfin writes that Pound's purpose here is to show

that the accumulated data will at one point cease to be just a "heap" of detail. As in a flash, the whole subject or phenomenon will appear, in the form of an image, in the reader's consciousness. What Pound avers here is that revelation is a process, the final stage of a cumulative agglomeration of detail. (38)

Thus Pound is interested in the "rain of factual atoms [particular things]," not so much for their own sake but because they are a necessary part of a process of revelation. Elsewhere in the Guide, Pound uses an analogy, borrowed from science, to explain both his method as well as the aim of his poetry:

The forma, the immortal conceito, the concept, the dynamic form which is like the rose pattern driven into the dead iron-filings by the magnet, not by material contact with the magnet itself, but separate from the magnet. Cut off by the layer of glass, the dust and filings rise and spring into order. (152)

Herbert N. Schneidau observes that this expresses the Vorticist conception of the ideal artist who projects the force of his "will and consciousness" into his material aiming at inducing form which is latent in the material itself (150). In addition, Pound is interested here in that moment of perfect repose and equilibrium during which a metamorphosis takes place so that out of the whirl of facts springs and is manifested the "immortal conchetto."

But despite the display of scientific language, it is important to recognize that during his London years, the major years of Pound's activity as a theoretician, his statements are equally full of the language and attitude of the visionary experience.¹³ Pound's prose is full of descriptions of the poetic moment of revelation, none more important or famous than the third item in his outline of the main scheme of his Cantos: "The 'magic moment' or moment of metamorphosis, bust thru from quotidien into 'divine or permanent world.' Gods, etc" (Letters 210). And, finally, the metaphor used by Pound in "A Retrospect" (1918) to define the "Image," a metaphor which is central to Pound's aesthetic, is also concerned with the moment of revelation:

An "Image" is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time....It is the presentation of such a "complex" instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art. (LE 4)

The purpose of poetry for Pound is to help the reader arrive at the "full Erlebnis"; the aim of the poetics of the ideogram is to give the reader "a sudden insight." The language of the "mysterium" is to be found everywhere in Pound's statements, from the Spirit of Romance (1910) to Gaudier Brzeska (1916). "Sudden insight," "ecstasy," "Great art is made to call forth, or create, an ecstasy," "sudden liberation," "revelation," "delightful psychic experience" and direct Knowledge ("An Image...is real because we know it directly") are terms or expressions which one

finds scattered throughout Pound's prose writings. In general, all of Pound's poetic theories, ranging from his theory of "language beyond metaphor" in The Spirit of Romance and his discussion of the "luminous detail" in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" (1911-12) to his formulation of the "image" and the "vortex," are concerned with an artistic process that has as its ultimate objective a "revelation" and its registration in art.

In addition, Pound displays an aversion for vague visions and, in the case of the Troubadours for example, he finds that "ecstasy is not a whirl or a madness of the senses, but a glow arising from the exact nature of the perceptions" (SP 91). Thus, even when registering moments of vision, Pound "predicated exactness, precision, definition as the life-giving component" (Schneidau, The Image and the Real 124). This explains in part the cohabitation in Pound's aesthetics of the impulse to register moments of revelation together with the insistence on the use of language that is clear and painstakingly precise. To emphasize the importance of precision, Pound uses scientific terms to define his aesthetic ideals. Thus, in "Psychology and Troubadours" he talks about the need for "hyper-scientific precision" and defines poetry as "a sort of inspired mathematics, which gives us equations, not for abstract figures, triangles, spheres and the like, but equations for the human emotions" (SR 14). Elsewhere he speaks of "the arts, literature, [and] poesy, [as] a science, just as chemistry is a science" (LE 42). Later, in describing the ideogrammic method, he likens poetry to the science of biology:

That, you see, is very much the kind of thing a biologist does (in a much more complicated way) when he gets together a few hundred or thousand slides, and picks out what is necessary for his general statement. (ABC 22)

These examples make clear Pound's preoccupation with couching moments of vision in a language which registers the exact nature of the perception.¹⁴

Schneidau notes that in Pound's definition of Imagism there is heavy emphasis

on its visionary potential and adds that this, in no way, compromises his quest for precision and exactness.¹⁵ To prove his point that Pound cannot have felt any conflict between experiencing phantasmagoric states and his desire to create a "poetry of reality," Schneidau quotes from Pound's obituary article on Ford Madox Ford: "That Ford was almost an halluciné few of his intimates can doubt. He felt until it paralysed his efficient action, he saw quite distinctly the Venus immortal crossing the tram tracks" (145-46). Schneidau, like most other critics, takes these remarks figuratively; I suggest that they should be taken literally. And since Pound sees nothing paradoxical about Ford's visionary experiences and his insistence on exactness and precision, one has to assume that Pound would not view his own mix of activities as paradoxical either.

3. "THE CELESTIAL TRADITION"

Guide is composed in much the same way as the Chinese and Adams Cantos dating from the same period (circa 1938); the "ideogram" with which we are finally presented in the prose work seems to be the result of the author's registration of whatever happened to be at hand at the moment of composition. For example, in the latter part of the book Pound includes in his discussion, among other things, such varied topics as Père Lacharme's Latin translation of the Chinese "Odes," Eckart von Sydow's anthology of folk-literature, a commentary on the Neoplatonic School, Professor Pollard on Chaucer, a review of the 1922 edition of Hardy's Collected Poems, and, finally, a long rebuttal of Aristotle's arguments as found in H. Rackham's edition of Nichomachean Ethics. It is difficult to see how these, and the innumerable other bits of information found in these pages, are related, or to discover the principle of synthesis which brings them together.¹⁶

In his discussion of Guide in Gnomon, Hugh Kenner notes that one of the three ways in which Pound's mind works, and which "accounts for the bulk of his writing," is "to seize a new fact and set it in relation with known facts" (133). In the same study, Kenner discusses Pound's wish to incite curiosity in his reader's mind:

His own limitless curiosity has made him the poet he is, and it underlies the fact that virtually every sentence in the Guide registers a mental effort, an inquiry, a setting of things in relation, a reach for the appropriate analogy. (137)

"A reach for the appropriate analogy" is a fitting description of the mode of Pound's composition in both the Guide and the Cantos. The difficulty is that while Pound himself, one has to assume, is perfectly clear about the significance of his analogies, the reader is forced to become involved in a demanding game of mental acrobatics if he hopes to make any sense of what to him appear disparate subjects.

Before passing on to a discussion of Pound's interest in the wisdom tradition as

this interest is depicted in Guide and certain of his essays, it is worth pausing for a minute over Stock's comments on this point. It is precisely because of the close connection between Pound's understanding of visionary activities and his aesthetics (during what I have already called his major years as a theoretician) that I must disagree with the following assumption by Stock:

[Pound] was much interested in this subject [mysticism, the occult, old religions] before he arrived in London and the influence of people like Yeats, Mead and Upward kept his interest alive even when he was giving most of his attention to other matters. (21)

I assume that by "other matters" Stock means Pound's activities as a theoretician and poet; but, in my mind, the two activities cannot and should not be separated.¹⁷

Pound's position with regards to the technique of registering moments of vision in poetry becomes much clearer in his chapter on the "NEQ-PLATONICKS ETC." in the Guide. The major criterion here involves the kind of language employed and Pound distinguishes between "prose rhapsody" of which he disapproves and the quest for "real theology" which he applauds. The first, he says, "undoubtedly excites certain temperaments, or perhaps almost anyone if caught at the right state of adolescence or in certain humours" (222). Having criticized the "prose rhapsody" for its vagueness and abstruseness, he nevertheless goes on to assert that there is nothing wrong with describing mystical experiences when the proper, precise, disciplined language is employed:

Man drunk with god, man inebriated with infinity, on the one hand, and man with a millimetric measure and microscope on the other. I labour and relabour the discipline of real theology or of any verbal combat or athletics that forces or induces him to define his terms clearly.

And this can NOT be limited to mere definition of abstract concepts. There is no doubt whatsoever that human beings are subject to emotion and that they attain to very fine, enjoyable and dynamic emotional states, which cause them to emit what to careful chartered accountants may seem intemperate language,...(222-23)

Pound then distinguishes between two mystic states in terms reminiscent of those used in distinguishing between the "mysterium" and "usura":

Two mystic states can be dissociated: the ecstatic- beneficent-and-benevolent, contemplation of the divine love, the divine splendour with goodwill toward others.

And the bestial, namely, the fanatical, the man on fire with God and anxious to stick his snotty nose into other men's business or reprove his neighbour for having a set of tropisms different from that of the fanatic's, or for having the courage to live more greatly and openly.

The second set of mystic states is manifest in scarcity economists, in repressors etc.

The first state is a dynamism. It has, time and again, driven men to great living, it has given them courage to go on for decades in the face of public stupidity. It is paradisaical and a reward in itself seeking naught further...perhaps because a feeling or certitude inheres in the state of feeling itself. The glory of life exists without further proof for this mystic. (223-24)

Those who belong to the first group form a sort of brotherhood whose concerns are philanthropic and whose reward is a feeling of equanimity and certitude; those who belong to the second group are fanatical, dogmatic, and concerned with repressing anything and everything they perceive as different from their own set of petrified beliefs.

"NEO-PLATONICKS ETC." opens with another glimpse of this brotherhood; Pound observes that "Alongside or rather a long way from alongside of factual study, for 2000 or more years has run the celestial tradition [italics mine]" (222). The first group obviously belongs to the "celestial tradition," which he claims has a long history stretching back to Hellenistic times. Sharon Mayer Libera observes that Pound sees Neoplatonism as "part of a 'celestial tradition'" and that the "ETC." of the chapter's title "seems to justify the inclusion of a curious assortment of figures, such as Gemisthus Plethon, Swedenborg, and G. R. S. Mead" (40). However, as far as Pound is concerned, this is not at all a "curious assortment of figures."

Although Pound places a digest of Confucius' Analects at the beginning of his Guide and the subject of economics is a constant thread, the real spine of the book is a Gnostic, Hermetic or Rosicrucian reading of history which Pound calls Secretum. It is even possible that the stimulus behind the writing of Guide was his recent

reading of Francesco Fiorentino's Storia della Filosofia which, as Pound notes, "shows the pagans to advantage, because the later philosophers and/or theologians whom he discusses are mainly from them." (332)

Pound's list of philosophical heroes and villains in the Guide reveals his own commitment to a gnostic or Rosicrucian tradition. This list is very similar to the list of magi which Frances Yates has retraced in her Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition. Pound includes Pythagoras, Plato,¹⁸ Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Psellos, Plethon, the Corpus Hermeticum, Erigena, Grosseteste, the Masons, Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Heydon, Blavatsky, Mead and Yeats. To these names others can be added from the pages of Guide: Hermes Trismegistus, Albertus Magnus, Swedenborg, Orage, Upward, Brancusi, Cocteau and Gurdjieff. The tradition that Pound is tracing is the Hermetic or Gnostic one which he calls "Eleusis" (294-95). The centrality of this tradition is made clear in the frontispiece where his reverence for Plethon is manifested. It is underlined later on in Guide when the tradition is named:

Gemistus Plethon brought over a species of Platonism to Italy in the 1430s....And they say Gemisto found no one to talk to, or more generally he did the talking....

At any rate he had a nailed boot for Aristotle, and his conversation must have been lively. Hence (at a guess) Ficino's sinecure, at old Cosimo's expense, trained to translate the greek neoplatonists. Porphyry, Psellos, Iamblichus, Hermes Trismegistus....

Whence I suppose what's-his-name and the English mystics with reference to greek originals sometimes (John Heydon etc.). (224-25)

After outlining the two kinds of mystic states, Pound also mentions Blavatsky and Mead who, too, belong to the "celestial tradition." Of course, there are a number of other names that belong to this tradition (for example, Upward, McGregor Mathers and Péladan who is mentioned elsewhere by Pound); but the list is nevertheless quite complete as it stands and there can be no mistake in recognizing the Gnostic/Hermetic/ Rosicrucian tradition which Pound wants to reveal and discuss in

the Guide, even if finally he does not avow his intention clearly.

Pound's hesitation is not translated into silence in the Guide. In spite of himself it would seem, he comes back to the ideas, general concepts and some of the names involved in the "celestial tradition." As I will explain more fully in a subsequent chapter, this "celestial tradition" involves four more or less distinct strands: Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Neo-Platonism and the Cabala. A few additional examples of Pound's insistence on the "celestial tradition," complementing the ones already cited above, should suffice at this point.

The idea of a secret, hidden, mysterious cultural tradition is a constant motif in Pound's "paideuma." In the chapter on "ROYALTY AND ALL THAT" in Guide, for example, Pound identifies the participants of this tradition in its medieval phase and baptises it as a "conspiracy of intelligence" which, he says,

outlasted the hash of the political map. Avicenna, Scotus Erigena in Provence, Grosseteste in Lincoln, the Sorbonne, fat faced Frankie Petrarch, Gemisto, the splendour the XVth century, Valla, the over-boomed Pico, the florentine collectors and conservers.... (263)

Pound goes on to explain that the "secret history" appears in two distinct and opposed manifestations, a negative one which he associates with the "marasmus" of usury and a positive one which he associates with the sacredness of grain, fecundity and the rite of *ἱερός γάμος* (*hieros gamos*):

Shallow minds have been in a measure right in their lust for "secret history". I mean they have been dead right to want it, but shallow in their conception of what it was. Secret history is at least twofold. One part consists in secret corruption, the personal lusts, avarices, etc. that scoundrels keep hidden, another part is the "plus", the constructive urges, a secretum because it passes unnoticed or because no human effort can force it on public attention. (264)

He who would look for an explicit and unambiguous description of the secretum in the Guide must be disappointed. The secretum and the arcanum exist and Pound is very categorical about this point: "Sober minds have agreed that the arcanum is the arcanum. No man can provide his neighbour with a Cook's ticket thereto" (292).

But Pound continuously harps on the utter blindness and deafness of his contemporaries, who refuse to acknowledge the revelation he tirelessly holds up before them. Thus, he seems to believe that modern man has lost the ability or insight needed to absorb and comprehend the gnosis which is "perceptible in our own minds only 'with proper lighting', fitfully and by instants" (295). The gnosis communicated through the mysteries will always be secret, "the mysteries will never be legal" and, Pound warns, the "law should keep from them" (156). Posing to himself a rhetorical question about the suitability of the gnosis for modern man ("the truth having been Eleusis? and a modern Eleusis being possible in the wilds of a man's mind only?" (294)), Pound gives his own reply. He emphasizes the pressure imposed upon man by such modern phenomena as: an impatience with processes or concepts which require long periods of study, a predilection for complexity, a loss of conviction, and a knowledge which has become a market item whose rapid proliferation makes it impossible to keep up with it.

The requirements being far beyond those of merely an intelligent literary circle (which doesn't in any case exist). We lack not only the means but the candidates. Think of any modern waiting five years to know anything! Or wanting to know! If ever anything but a fanaticism could? A collection of misfits? Not flower of a civilization. Was it ever possible save with conviction and a simplicity beyond modern reach? now that knowledge is a drug on the market, said knowledge being a job lot of odds and ends having no order, but being abundant, superhumanly abundant. (294)

Besides providing some of the names of those who belong to the "celestial tradition" and hinting at the nature and history of the secretum, Pound also incorporates in his discussion some occult concepts and terms. A notable example is his discussion, along Neoplatonic lines, of nous or pleroma, the transcendent field which Pound describes beautifully as a "sea crystalline and enduring, of the bright as it were molten glass that envelops us, full of light" (Guide 44).¹⁹ Another example is Pound's version of the emanationist theory of ἐκπόρευσις (ekpyrosis) according to

which the end of the world, when all things return to the One, is pictured as a supreme conflagration (dispersal through death conceived as an act of creation):

God the architectural fire, pur texnon...
 ...The soul a blob of the first fire, apospasma, a torn-off shred, stasis
 in the human chest whence the voice proceeded, the word a creative force.
 The one individual soul an instrument of the world-soul lasting while
 the world-soul lasts, and after a new ekpyrosis be again frayed off from
 the pneuma.
 The body a dwelling-place.... (124)

Not only is Pound using ideas central to the Gnostic/Hermetic/Neoplatonic tradition here, but his language is also imbued with the terminology of this tradition.

The picture which emerges from reading the Guide is reaffirmed when one turns to Pound's essays, especially those essays which have been conveniently gathered together in Selected Prose: 1909-1965. Such ideas as the tradition of gnosis, the belief in the existence of an arcanum available to those with great intelligence, the need for the return of man to a state of pagan consciousness, the validity of pagan rituals, and the belief in "a universal religion of all men [that is, theosophy]" (Guide 141-42) are ideas which are reiterated in these essays.

Interesting in this context is Pound's reading of myths as esoteric fictional records of the psychic experiences of the most intelligent individuals of a culture and the connection between myths and the mysteries. In the well-known paragraph from "Psychology and Troubadours" (1912), Pound commits himself to the following belief:

I believe in a sort of permanent basis in humanity, that is to say, I believe that Greek myth arose when someone having passed through delightful psychic experience tried to communicate it to others and found it necessary to screen himself from persecution. Speaking aesthetically, the myths are explications of mood: you may stop there, or you may probe deeper. Certain it is that these myths are only intelligible in a vivid and glittering sense to those people to whom they occur. I know, I mean, one man who understands Persephone and Demeter, and one who understands the Laurel, and another who has, I should say, met Artemis. These things are for them real. (SR 92)

There are two points which must be emphasized here. First, the status of the

experience is never in doubt; the myths are real and true because of their "permanent basis in humanity"; second, Pound cites the possibility of "persecution" as a consequence of revealing psychic or mystic phenomena in their original form. He sees the mythmaking process as a masking or transformation of the real experience. Mythmaking, then, is an imaginative transformation or fictionalization of the real experience, a fictionalization motivated by the fear of persecution on the part of the visionary.²⁰

The status of the psychic experience is never doubted by Pound in "Psychology and Troubadours" or elsewhere. In the Guide, over twenty years later, Pound is equally emphatic:

What remains, and remains undeniable to and by the most hardened objectivist, is that a great number of men have had certain kinds of emotion and, magari, of ecstasy.

They have left indelible records of ideas born of, or conjoined with, this ecstasy. (225)

To return to the "Psychology and Troubadour" essay, an additional point of interest is Pound's testimony concerning his personal acquaintance with a number of people who have had psychic experiences. Who these people were it is difficult to say although Ford Madox Ford who "saw the Venus-immortal," as Pound wrote in his obituary article on him, was certainly one of them. Regardless of who the other friends were, one begins to see that Pound probably counts himself among those who "understand or have even 'seen' Artemis." Here we need to remember that in Pound's "rite [which is] made for the West" "A God is [simply] an eternal state of mind" which man can both "perceive" as a "Vision" as well as enter (SP 48; 47). Pound's belief that "the Gods exist" also explains the veneration he felt for Gemistus Plethon who "had distinct aims, regeneration of greek people so they wd. keep out the new wave of Barbarism (Turkish)" (Guide, 224) by reinstating the pagan gods. Pound himself echoes Plethon's aim when he says that he "wd. set up the statue of

Aphrodite again over Terracina" (Guide 191).

Besides believing in the reality of extraordinary or mystic experiences Pound also believed in the preservation of mystical insights which have their origins in the mystery cults of antiquity. "Terra Italica," an essay published in The New Review (Winter 1931-32), shows clearly his desire to return to the psychic fountain of religion which here he identifies with Eleusis, and his adoption of Eleusis as a faith which does not require dogma is also made clear.²¹ After discussing the importance of eros in the religious institutions of paganism, Pound presents the religious experience as something which should not and cannot be institutionalized into dogma. He follows this with an attempt at defining the positive elements of paganism which evokes, at the same time, all that is negative in dogma:

...The glory of the polytheistic anschauung is that it never asserted a single and obligatory path for everyone. It never caused the assertion that everyone was fit for initiation and it never caused an attempt to force people into a path alien to their sensibilities.

Paganism never feared knowledge. It feared ignorance and under a flood of ignorance it was driven out of its temples. (SP 56)

Pound's interest in the motif of the destruction of the temples becomes very important in the later Cantos. There the task of resurrecting the ancient places of worship becomes closely associated with the idea of recollection and reconstitution of the "ancient wisdom," which is part of the attempt to allow modern man to partake in the consciousness of paganism. Pound advocates a return to the pagan consciousness which can be achieved by discovering and following the principles of the "ancient wisdom" which at various points in history emerges as a light that energizes and determines the nature of exceptional human achievements. For example, Pound sees this "ancient wisdom" as "a light from Eleusis [which] persisted through the middle ages and set beauty in the song of Provence and of Italy" (SE 56).

The rediscovery or return to a pagan consciousness is, as already noted, the

basis of Pound's admiration for Plethon. At the same time, Pound's conception of "pagan consciousness" is closely linked with the consciousness of the divine, a mystic experience which for Pound is rooted in ordinary sensory experience.²² In addition, ritual sex and the significance of solar myths and rites are central to Pound's idea of what constitutes pagan consciousness. This is the point made in "Religio" (1939), which I quote in its entirety:

Paganism included a certain attitude toward; a certain understanding of, coitus, which is the mysterium.

The other rites are the festivals of fecundity of the grain and the sun festivals, without revival of which religion can not return to the hearts of the people. (SP 70)

This note contains in a nutshell Pounds's religious beliefs and provides an apt conclusion for this discussion. It defines the hieros gamos or ritual copulation as a "mysterium" central to paganism's conception of the relationship between man and the divine and calls for a "revival," a return, a nostos to the religious sense shared by the pagans through their ancient rites and mysteries which had palingenesis as their focal point and motivation.

Notes to Chapter I

1. Of course, Pound is here recollecting T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land.
2. Note that A Visiting Card was written in Italian and first published in 1942 in Rome. The English translation by John Drummond was published in 1952 by Peter Russell.
3. In Polite Essays Pound writes: "Forma to the great minds of at least one epoch meant something more than dead pattern or fixed opinion. 'The Light of the DOER, as it were a form cleaving to it' meant an active pattern, a pattern that set things-in motion" (51).
4. Of course, the psychopomp is usually perceived as the guardian who carried souls between the "worlds"--i.e. both in birth and in death. Eastham uses the word in the special sense of "guardian of souls ascending from lower to higher realms."
5. About the nature of metamorphosis in Ovid and Pound, Professor Surette has this to say:

In Ovid, metamorphosis is always akin to death as well as a means of escape--often an escape from sexual violation. It is the same in Canto 4, but the image of apotheosis in the Cantos is to lie with the goddess and live to tell the tale, rather than an escape from sexual violation. (Eleusis, 100)
6. Commenting on the Hermetic notion of "rebirth," Ernest Lee Tuveson writes that

From the grind of "getting and spending" the hermetist gnosis calls the human being, showing by both instruction and example the greatness of the human potentiality. And this potentiality is indeed within him; it is not something superadded by any gift from without. When an individual is "reborn" his true self comes into being. To the modern, it must seem that the rebirth must rise from the unconscious. (42)
7. Wind writes that "[t]hus Plato appeared to them not as a critic or transposer of mysteries, but as the heir and oracle of an ancient wisdom for which a ritual disguise had been invented by the founders of the mysteries themselves" (7).
8. These terms are borrowed by Wind from A.-J. Festugière, L'idéal religieux des Grecs et l'Évangile (1932).
9. In '76: One World and the Cantos of Ezra Pound, Forrest Read proposes that there is a cryptic plan behind the Cantos. This plan, much of it numerological as suggested by the title of his book, involves a system of correspondences between the sections of the Cantos and such documents as the Declaration of Independence, the

U.S. Constitution, a mysterious calendar published anonymously in the Little Review in 1922, and the symbols of the Great Seal of the United States.

10. In Ezra Pound and the Erotic Medium, Kevin Oderman also argues that Pound's writing has an exoteric as well as an esoteric side. Oderman begins with Ian F. A. Bell's Critic as Scientist: The Modernist Poetics of Ezra Pound, where it is argued that "Pound's use of the language of science to describe extraordinary experience was a function of the author's relations with his audience--that Pound was simply searching for an acceptable idiom." Oderman finds this argument convincing but incomplete and proposes that Pound,

following the lead of the "trobar clus," hoped to be writing essays and poems that were available on two levels, one for the crowd, one for the elect. So there is always an element of obfuscation in his treatment of "mystic phenomena." Thus, Bell's insistence on Pound's desire to "seek a public voice" (p. 140) for such phenomena, his "struggle to maintain for the modern world the value of mystical perception" (p. 141), oversimplifies Pound's intent by collapsing Pound's two audiences into "the modern world." (135)

As can be gathered from my own discussion, I am in general agreement with Oderman. However, he seems to be attributing Pound's perception of the exoteric/esoteric sides of a work of art wholly to his understanding of the "trobar clus." I, on the other hand, argue for Pound's understanding of the Gnostic/Hermeticist/Rosicrucian tradition which also colours his view of troubadour art.

11. In both the Cavalcanti essay and Guide Pound devotes a great deal of space to Valli--but he does not agree with his positions. In Provence and Pound, Peter Makin writes that

In 1928 Luigi Valli published a book called Il Linguaggio Segreto di Dante, which 'proved' that Dante and his friends were writing into their poems a cipher concerning Manichaeist 'secret conspiracies, mystic brotherhoods', and so on. (242)

Makin's claim that Valli proved anything is absurd. Valli is, of course, another eccentric who proved nothing. See also Kevin Oderman, Ezra Pound and the Erotic Medium (65-7).

12. The argument regarding the fading of Pound's interest in "things occult" after the early London years until the late 1930s or even the early 1950s, at which time it is said to have been rekindled, has been advanced by other critics besides Stock. William French argues for the early 1950s as the time for the reawakening of Pound's interest--this is the time French helped Pound proofread The Spirit of Romance. French argues that the rereading of this book helped to renew Pound's interest in the esoteric. Boris de Rachewiltz is in general agreement with French on this point (177). For details on this position, see Timothy Materer, "Ezra Pound and the Alchemy of the Word" (119-20). I suggest that Pound's interest in the occult never really waned. Pound's letters to John Theobald and Patricia Hutchins in which Pound reminisces about his London years, suggest that his interest in the occult was unbroken. An essay like "Terra Italica" (1931-32) also shows that this interest was strong in the early 1930s. Guide to Kulchur (1938), as I argue in this chapter, constitutes the strongest proof for Pound's continued interest in "things occult."

13. Max Nänny, in Ezra Pound: Poetics of a Electric Age, writes that
As paradoxical as it may sound, it was exactly Pound's "mystical" desire for immediate experience and perception that was instrumental in his replacing the purely verbal "approach of Logic" by the intuitional and factual approach of science." (63)
14. In The Early Poetry of Ezra Pound, Thomas H. Jackson compares Pound's and Yeats's reaction to and use of modern science and correctly concludes that "Pound is more at home [than Yeats] with modern science; his early critical writing is full of analogies drawn from the laboratory and from theoretical science" (59).
15. Schneidau quotes from Instigations of Ezra Pound (234), to show Pound's concept of visionary poetry: "poetry wherein the feelings of painting and sculpture are predominant (certain men move in phantasmagoria; the images of their gods, whole countrysides, stretches of hill and forest, travel with them)" (234).
16. Pound himself is aware of the "difficult" nature of his book and in at least two places admits as much. In Chapter 52, "THE PROMISED LAND," he describes Guide as "a book of yatter such as the present is" (292). Further on in the same chapter he makes a comparison between his poetry and Guide and admits that "the foregoing pp. are as obscure as anything in my poetry" (295).
17. In one of his letters to Joyce, dated 17 March 1917, Pound writes:
"I have begun an endless poem, of no known category. Phanopoeia or something or other, all about everything. "Poetry" may print the first three cantos this spring. I wonder what you will make of it. Probably too sprawling and unmusical to find favour in your ears. Will try to get some melody into it further on." (Pound/Joyce 102)
In a footnote Read concludes that "'Phanopoeia" ("Light--" or "image-making," with "melopoeia" and "logopoeia" one of Pound's "kinds of poetry") is Pound's original, provisional title for his long poem" (102). If this conclusion is, indeed, correct, we can see how closely connected are Pound's concerns regarding visionary activities, his poetics, and the thematic content of his long poem.
18. Plato is alternately blamed and praised in the Guide (222, 346).
19. In the Cantos this idea finds its way in, among many other cantos, canto 75:
Serenely in the crystal jet
as the bright ball that the fountain tosses
(Verlaine) as diamond clearness
.....
This liquid is certainly a
property of the mind
nec accidens est but an element
in the mind's make-up (74/449).

20. Pound critics have much to say about the first point; it is Ian F.A. Bell in Critic as Scientist who makes the second point: "Commentators have rightly attended to the notion of 'delightful psychic experience' but have usually ignored its coda, the possibility of 'persecution' as its consequence....As Pound's 1915 essay on Arnold Dolmetsch testified, he was concerned throughout his early years in London with a 'persecution' that took the form of mockery at all his talk of the 'gods' or consisted in calling him a liar" (138). Bell goes on to say that the status of the experiences is never in doubt in Pound's mind; instead, Pound's problem is the discovery of a discourse fit for modern audiences in the way that myth was a fit discourse for the ancients: "[the problem is to find] an available lexicon for experience that was seemingly arcane and certainly private and communicatively unintelligible; of sustaining a public, and publishable status for the myths of psychic or mystic phenomena" (138).

21. In "Ez As Wuz", James Laughlin, who knew Pound quite well, has this to say about Pound's "religion":

He believed in such cults as the Eleusinian Mysteries, not in Christianity or Buddhism. The appeal to him of Confucius was precisely that it was ethics, not religion as most of us conceive it. (26)

22. Professor Surette notes that in Canto 81 it is "just such a consciousness of the divine that represents Paradise for Pound: 'Le Paradis n'est pas artificiel/but spezzato apparently/it exists only in fragments unexpected excellent sausage,/the smell of mint, for example'" (Eleusis 212).

CHAPTER II

THE OCCULT TRADITION

I. "THE RISING PSYCHIC TIDE"

Ezra Pound's stay in London coincided with a time of intense public interest in the occult. He arrived in London in September 1908, attracted, he said later, by the prospect of meeting William Butler Yeats, whom he considered to be the most important poet alive. Pound was soon introduced to Yeats through Olivia Shakespear (his future mother-in-law) and by the middle of 1909 he was a regular in the older poet's Monday evening "at homes" in Woburn Buildings.¹ Pound boasts of his intimacy with Yeats in a May 1911 letter to his father: "Yeats I like very much. I've seen him a great deal, almost daily.... He is, as I have said, a very great man, and he improves on acquaintance."²

At the time of his first acquaintance with Pound, Yeats was, as indeed he was throughout his adult life, actively involved in the occult movement. Yeats's involvement in various occult groups (Dublin Hermetic Society, Blavatsky Lodge of the London Theosophical Society, Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn) has been well documented in a number of studies published in the last three decades.³ These studies have demonstrated, quite conclusively, the importance of the occult for Yeats, both the man and the poet. As Yeats himself wrote in one of his letters, "The mystical life is the centre of all that I do and all that I think and all that I write."⁴

The most important and lasting of all the occult influences in Yeats's case was probably that exerted by Theosophy. In 1885 Yeats, together with Charles Johnson and a few others, founded the Dublin Hermetic Society to discuss occult sciences. When Yeats moved to London in 1887 he immediately joined the London Lodge of the

Society, falling under the influence of Madame Blavatsky. Though Yeats later severed his formal ties with the Theosophical Society, it was Theosophy that gave him his first systematic introduction to the occult tradition. Graham Hough stresses the importance of Blavatsky and her movement for Yeats: "again and again we find that many obscure, puzzling and apparently original elements in Yeats's esoteric doctrine, even towards the end of his life, turn out to have their roots in the Theosophical teaching he first encountered in his early twenties [circa 1887]" (35).

Yeats was not the only one who was attracted to and impressed by Madame Blavatsky and her brand of Theosophy. Blavatsky's influence was so widespread and far-ranging that, as Warren S. Smith writes in The London Heretics, 1870-1914, her impact

on the London intelligentsia during her fleeting visit of 1884 and during her residence there in the last four years of her life [1887-1891] makes it impossible to ignore either her or her organization in any consideration of the local heresies of the day. (141-42)

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were periods of unusual vitality in the history of the occult--perhaps prompted by the complete triumph of positivist science over religion. In Yeats's case, what lured him to the occult was the promise of liberation from matter and materialism. In The Identity of Yeats, Richard Eflmann remarks on the poet's personal needs (which he sought to satisfy through his involvement with occult sects):

Yeats found in occultism, and in mysticism generally, a point of view which had the virtue of warring with accepted belief....He wanted to secure proof that experimental science was limited in its results, in an age where science made extravagant claims; he wanted evidence that an ideal world existed, in an age which was fairly complacent about the benefits of actuality, he wanted to show that the current faith in reason and in logic ignored a far more important human faculty, the imagination. (3)

Yeats's occult connections being undoubted, it is hardly surprising that he introduced Pound to a number of people involved in various occult activities. Noel Stock, although he does not concern himself with the question of who introduced

Pound to his occultist friends and mentors, speaks convincingly about the importance of occultism in the shaping of Pound's ideas:

During his years in London, from 1908 until 1921, Pound read and talked with a number of authors who were interested in mysticism, the occult and old religions, among them W. B. Yeats, G. R. S. Mead and Allen Upward [to this list I would add A. R. Orage and Olivia Shakespear]. All three of these men were well-read in their fields and Pound learned much from them. Both Professor Wind and Jessie L. Weston have testified to Yeats's knowledge of the Neoplatonists and associated matters, and Mead, who was the author of books on Gnosticism, and also editor of *The Quest*, a quarterly dealing with the occult, religion and the mysteries. Upward, author of *The Divine Mystery* and other works on mystery in religion, was somewhat unorthodox even in that unorthodox field, but there is no doubt that he had considerable knowledge of the Gnostic and the Greek mysteries. It is as well then to keep these authors in mind when discussing Pound's attitude to religion, for they contributed to it and coloured his subsequent thinking. He was much interested in this subject before he arrived in London and the influence of people like Yeats, Mead and Upward kept his interest alive even when he was giving most of his attention to other matters. (*Poet in Exile* 20-1)

I intend to return to the subject of Pound's involvement with Yeats, Olivia Shakespear, Mead, Upward, and Orage in the third chapter. At this point I would like to turn to the term "occult" in an attempt to present a brief definition of it before going on to a discussion of the London scene during the first years of Pound's stay there. Following this, the greatest part of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the "wisdom-tradition," from its origins to certain of its various manifestations during the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods. The term "wisdom tradition" is taken here to mean that branch of occultism which deals with metaphysics and history--as opposed to theurgy.

Operating outside established, orthodox religion, occultism comprises theories and practices which are based on esoteric knowledge. Derived from the Latin root *occulere* (to cover over, hide, conceal), the "occult" signifies anything hidden or secret, in the sense of being mysterious to ordinary understanding and scientific reason.⁵ It is an axiom of the occult that phenomena which appear mysterious in the present may be understood or explained in the future. However, there are other

phenomena, said to be intrinsically occult, which are inherently unknowable by scientific reason but are still said to be accessible to occult modes of cognition, latent in everyone. Science proper uses delicate instruments to aid the powers of sense and mind in observing and describing various phenomena. In what has been described as "still the best short statement of the technical meaning of the term" (and from which my discussion here is largely derived), G. R. S. Mead writes that occultism points to the limitations of normal senses and advances the belief that "the range of the senses can be enormously extended psychically, and so the imperfections and inaccuracies of the normal senses can be progressively corrected by the natural development of the powers of the human organism itself" ("Occultism" 445).⁶ Thus occultism makes a "claim to knowledge of a scientific nature which is inaccessible to the accepted methods of positive objective scientific research" (Mead, "Occultism" 446).

An ancient body of literature, formulating a profound and coherent system, is said to pass on occult esoteric knowledge whose source is divine. The title of Mead's study of the philosophies and practices of various Gnostic groups of the early centuries of the Christian era, *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, suggests both the preoccupations and the method of occult scholars. Esoteric knowledge is to be found in venerable texts supposed to embody the key to all wisdom; occultists believe that these texts were known to the ancients but have since been forgotten or lost. The occult scholar must therefore labour to discover and reassemble the scattered "fragments" in an attempt to trace the contour of the original structure of "ancient wisdom." In fact, despite the claims made by occult groups regarding their ancient origins, the intellectual content of the occult is almost all derived from the Hellenistic period--in turn, occult texts from that period attribute their wisdom to Egypt.

Even though human history presents an unbroken line in terms of man's incessant fascination with magic, the occult has had a number of periods when popular interest has peaked. As already suggested, one such period was the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The causes of this particular manifestation of interest in the occult are numerous--with the reaction against the restrictive world-view of positivism being one of the major stimuli. The dominant role which science had assumed in modern culture, and science's thirst for measurement to the exclusion of all knowledge that is not quantifiable, sparked the interest in the occult during this period. Many of the occult movements of the period begin with a denial that science was the only means of legitimate access to reality.

But science is not rejected outright by the occult. On the contrary, the occult often expresses itself in scientific or quasi-scientific terminology and derives much of its appeal from the claim that it bridges the traditional split between religion and science. Rather than repudiating science, occultism claims that it uses the methods of scientific analysis to provide empirical evidence for concepts and beliefs (such as the immortality of the soul) which religion asks that we accept on grounds of faith. The synthesis of occultism and science, aimed primarily at the educated reader, results in what Robert Galbreath calls "intellectualized versions of occultism." Galbreath sees these "versions of occultism" as seeking

to go beyond science by placing it in a higher synthesis in which metaphysical questions are joined with personal experience and systematic investigation. It is likely that it is the self-proclaimed incompetence of science to handle metaphysical questions which provides the chief justification for the intellectualized syntheses of modern occultism. ("Explaining Modern Occultism" 31)

The reaction against science during the late Victorian and Edwardian years, then, was a reaction against its monopoly and an attempt, at the same time, to resist the omnipresent threat of materialism. The occult exercised its appeal as an alternative to the strictly rational, empiricist outlook of the times. In *The*

Edwardian Turn of Mind, Samuel Hynes discusses the occult as one of a number of "often apparently unconnected movements [which] shared a common concern for the liberation of men from the restrictions of materialistic thought and materialistic values" (134).⁷ In addition to its appealing opposition "to conventional Victorian ideas," the occult also filled the gap left by the failure of Christian Churches to satisfy the need for "sacramental experiences" and personal as well as collective renovatio.⁸

Whatever the reasons for the mushrooming of occult sects during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, Pound's stay in London (1908-1921), as already noted, coincided with a time of intense public interest in occultism. In an article published in The Quest, Mead gives us a picture of the kinds of movements which Pound would have encountered and would not have failed to have taken notice of--even if (as Stock would have us believe) he was channeling most of his energy into other matters at the time. Writing in early 1912, Mead notes that "the idea of the adept and initiate in secret knowledge, the idea of the divine man or woman, of the god-inspired, or at any rate of the human with superhuman powers, is in the air" (420). And in this article, which is aptly entitled "The Rising Psychic Tide," he goes on to say that if we look for them,

In many directions we may see,.... revivals of divination, seers and soothsayers and prophets, pythonesses, sibyls and prophetesses, tellers of dreams and of omens, mantics of every description and by every sort of contrivance; astrologists and even alchemists; professors of magical arts and ceremonies; cosmologists and revelationists; necromancy and communion with spirits; enthusiasm trance and ecstasis. And with all this, as of old, keeping pace with religious interest and loss of faith in traditional beliefs and blank denial of anything beyond the range of the physical, there is what looks very much like the bringing in of new gods and new saviours and new creeds, the blending of cults and syncretism of religions; societies and associations open and secret, for propagating or imparting new doctrines, new at any rate to their adherents though mostly old enough. (410)

What Mead describes here is a city, London circa 1912, which is experiencing

the revival of Rosicrucianism, the Cabala, Hermeticism and Esoteric Buddhism, a city flooded by waves of reincarnationists, palmists, astrologers and all sorts of groups absorbed in various arcane activities. The list is impressive in breadth as well as length. Viewed from the perspective of their members, these cults, societies and associations, appeared to be wholly original. Mead, however, points out that their doctrines and rites represent a repetition of the past. Essentially, Mead's claims to a direct ancient lineage and historical continuity of the occult are fallacious. These claims which permeate all of Mead's works as well as the works of other occultists are a constantly rediscovered fiction.

Furthering his claim for the antiquity of modern occult movements, Mead searches the past to discover any periods when the "psychic tide" paralleled in intensity that of his own time. Noting that there can be no "exact parallel...in any epoch in the past," Mead, nonetheless, finds striking similarities between his London and the Rome and Alexandria of the Hellenistic period (409). In Fragments of a Faith Forgotten he describes the "rising psychic tide" one would encounter in "this city [Alexandria] where Egypt and Africa, Rome and Greece, Syria and Arabia met together" (120). Mead sees the Alexandria of Hellenistic times as a "melting pot" into which philosophy, science, religio-philosophy and theosophy of every kind were poured.

That the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a period of unusual vitality in the history of occultism is an undeniable fact. The ubiquity of occultism is reflected not only in the works of such avowed occultists as Mead but also in many literary works which had their genesis at that time, including the two outstanding examples of modernism: Ulysses and The Waste Land. James Joyce's ridicule of the occult in Ulysses and the prominent position given to Madame Sosostris in T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land reflect the ubiquity of the occult at the

time. 9

2

1

2. A HISTORY OF THE "OCCULT TRADITION"

This section must begin with a disclaimer. In the last section I pointed out that the claims made by occultists to an ancient lineage and historical continuity are fallacious. This point is worth stressing at the outset of my discussion of what I call, with reservations, "the occult tradition." The idea of such a tradition is itself a highly debatable one. "Tradition" means something handed down and, implicitly, the word suggests a linear descent. But the doctrines, myths, and symbols of the occult tradition are too various for any claims to homogeneity to be meaningful, since they have no uniting thread. The occult is a heterodox tradition constantly rediscovered by its adherents who simply borrow, steal, or reinvent religious ideas and practices that other eccentrics like themselves have kept current in all sorts of societies and publications.¹⁰ Pound himself invented his own tradition whose origin, he tells us, is to be found in the ancient cult of Eleusis.

To understand many of the elements contributing to "the rising psychic tide," one needs some knowledge of the religio-magical cults of antiquity, particularly those of the Hellenistic Age, the Age of syncretism, during which many spiritual and religious groups competed--among them, Christianity. The drama of the first three Christian centuries out of which emerged such important movements as Hermeticism, Gnosticism, and Neoplatonism, as well as Christianity itself, was enacted within the framework of "the one universal, Hellenic culture and language" (Jonas 10). Greek culture is often divided into four distinct historical phases:

(1) before Alexander, the classical phase as a national culture; (2) after Alexander, Hellenism as a cosmopolitan secular culture; (3) later Hellenism as a pagan religious culture; and (4) Byzantium as a Greek Christian culture. (Jonas 10)

Alexander's conquest of the East (334-323) brought about the first transition. The second transition was a development of the Greek-Oriental synthesis which already

was taking place in the second phase; it was the consequence, however, of the impact made by the non-Greek forces, introduced from the East, which had for a time played a rather passive role. The "defeat" at the hands of a dominant Christianity of the spiritual movements which flowered during Hellenism ushered in the age of Byzantium: twelve centuries of Greek-Orthodox culture.

Having made clear the fictional nature of the claims made by occultists regarding the continuity of their tradition, I would now like to trace these claims. Looking back to pre-classical and classical Greece, we find, besides the orthodoxy of the Olympian gods and the state cults, various mystery cults which share a number of similar doctrines and practices: 1) the doctrine of transmigration or rebirth (παλιγγενεσία, palingenesis); 2) the doctrine of salvation (σωτηρία, soteria) through communion with the divine (the desire and belief in an afterlife where the reward for the fully purified soul is "to dwell with the god(s)"); 3) certain observances such as strict ritual purity (καθάρσις, katharsis); 4) the wearing of white garments, symbolizing the practice of chastity, as well as the practice of a more or less definite ethical code; and, finally, 5) initiation rites. The members of these cults shared a sense of election and, even on earth, were rewarded with an ἐποπτεία (epopteia), or enlightenment, as a result of their communion with the divine.

The best known, and the most characteristic, of the mysteries of ancient Greece are those of Eleusis. The origin of the rites of Eleusis, which were celebrated every four years in honour of Demeter and Persephone, go back to the time before the arrival of the Hellenes. The cults of "Demeter Eleusinia" existed in Greece before the local ritual of Eleusis developed into the mysteries. Beginning as agrarian rites designed to maintain and increase the fertility of the land, the mysteries were later modified and, especially after the introduction during the sixth century of Orphic and

Dionysian elements, became charged with metaphysical meanings such as the immortality of the soul. The initiates, μυσταί (mystai), were promised Persephone's protection in the world beyond the grave--thus eschatology was added to traditional fertility rituals.¹¹

The Eleusinian myth is preserved in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, dated between 650 and 550 B.C. This Hymn narrates the abduction of Koré or Persephone, Demeter's daughter, by Hades. After an unsuccessful search for Koré, Demeter comes at last to Eleusis, disguised as an old crone. Engaged by the local prince as a nurse to the baby prince Demophon, she tries to make the baby immortal by immersion in fire. Discovered in the act, she reveals her divinity, orders a temple to be built in her honour, and, by causing the land to be barren, blackmails Zeus into restoring her daughter to her, at least for half the year. Having eaten a pomegranate seed while in the underworld, Koré must spend the other half of the year with her husband Hades. Following the return of her daughter, Demeter restores life to the crops and reveals the mysteries to the Eleusinian princes.

The Eleusinian initiation rites were secret and we have only scraps of information about them. There were two stages to the Eleusinian Mysteries: the Lesser Mysteries, a preliminary ritual which had a predominantly purificatory character and took place in the month of Anthesterion (February-March); and the Mysteria or Greater Mysteries which took place in the month of Boedromion (September-October). On the first day of the Greater Eleusinia the ephebé (youths) of Athens went to Eleusis and brought back τὰ ἱερά, the hierá or sacred objects, which they placed on the Eleusinion, at the foot of the Acropolis. The following day the mystai took a ritual bath in the sea and fasted for three days. At that point they marched in procession (πομπή, pompé) from Athens to Eleusis, guided by the statue of Iacchos, a mystic name for the ecstatic Dionysus who early on became associated with the

cult of Demeter. Arriving at Eleusis toward dusk, the mystai descended into the sanctuary (Katabasis), broke their fast by partaking of the kykeon (a mixture of barley, spices, and water), and enacted the search for Koré by torchlight. The central rite, which is clear only in its outline, involved, first, the δρομενα (dromena), during which for a whole night the mystai underwent terrifying darkness and, then, came a climax full of illumination, when the anaktoron, or inmost sanctum, was opened and a great fire burst forth. At the same time, the ιεροφάντης, the hierophant or High Priest, shouted that the goddess had given birth to a sacred child, Brimo, and showed the initiates the great mystery, an ear of corn cut in silence. A year after his initiation (μύησις, myesis), the mystes could attain the degree of epopteia by partaking in a sort of liturgical drama the subject of which is usually thought to have been the acting out of the sexual union of Demeter and Zeus (an hieros gamos), with the priestess of Demeter and the hierophant as protagonists. Whatever its exact nature, the myesis had a tripartite character: katabasis/dromena/epopteia--of this I will have more to say in a subsequent chapter.

As noted in the previous chapter, Pound refers to the rites of Eleusis a number of times in his prose writings (especially in Selected Prose but also in the Guide) as well as in the Cantos. It is believed that Pound knew Plutarch's description of Eleusinian initiation (Eleusis 50); but he probably also learned about Eleusis from Thomas Taylor's The Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries: A Dissertation, as well as from Mead's treatment of the subject.¹² Pound himself seems to have taken for a fact the hieros gamos which some scholars have guessed was the principal rite of the Eleusinian epopteia. Pound's understanding of the Eleusinian Mysteries shapes his understanding of the "celestial tradition" and is a theme of major importance, never too far from his mind. This theme is a subject which has repeatedly engaged Pound

scholars.¹³

Developing alongside the older mysteries, Orphism and Pythagoreanism seem to have been parallel phenomena (at least during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.), and the confusion between them is so complete that it is quite impossible to say definitively of any of the fragments surviving from that time that it is purely Orphic or purely Pythagorean. What is certain is that these mystery cults remained alive. Their influence can be discerned easily in the writings of the authors of the classical period, including Plato and the dramatists Aristophanes and Euripides. The attitude of the classical writers towards these cults is often mixed. For example, Aristophanes parodies the private mysteries of the Orphic type in the Clouds, while his half-serious depiction of the other world in the Frogs is based on exactly the same ideas. This ambivalent attitude should be attributed to Orphism's decline to a point where the cult's ethical code was disregarded by those practicing a lower, popular form in which interest had shifted from a concern for the moral condition of the initiates to the performance of quasi-magical rites. This decline would explain Aristophanes' attitude and, more importantly, Plato's, since in the latter's writings we find a strong Orphic-Pythagorean influence in opposition to his obvious contempt for what he perceives as Orphic charlatanism.¹⁴

Orphism, Pythagoreanism and the mysteries persisted throughout the classical age, with the Eleusinian mysteries even becoming part of the religious establishment of Athens. At the same time, certain developments were taking place which prepared the ground for the religious and ideological syncretism which was to become one of the distinctive features of the aftermath of Alexander's conquest of the East. The people of the East who had come under the control of successive despotic empires, had become politically passive and incapable of self-determination. The old political and intellectual centres of oriental civilizations, on the Euphrates and on the Nile,

after having experienced centuries of intellectual achievement, had finally arrived at a state of inertness. In addition, the practice of the Babylonian and Assyrian empires of uprooting and transplanting whole peoples had brought the disengagement of cultural and religious elements from their native soil (so that these elements became available to the cosmopolitan agora) and created a climate favourable to the mixing of the gods. Before becoming available to the cosmopolitan agora, the substance of local cultures had to be transformed into abstract doctrines so that it could be understood by people with different cultural backgrounds. This transformation took place through the process of dogmatization. The most important of these transformations were: Jewish monotheism, Babylonian astrology, and Iranian dualism. These doctrines, having already been formulated on the eve of the Hellenistic age, became great forces in Hellenistic syncretism.

The first period, one of Greek dominance and oriental submersion, is marked by the maturing of oriental systems and cults, a maturing achieved through the process of Greek conceptualization of Eastern thought. The greatest gift of the Greek culture to the world is the logos (logos), both language and reason. During Hellenism, the Greek language and Greek intellectual systems became so dominant that the East seems to have observed forced silence or have become totally inarticulate. However, the truth is that "Anyone who had something to say had no choice but to say it in Greek, not only in terms of language but also in terms of concepts, ideas, and literary form, that is, as ostensibly part of the 'Greek tradition' (Jonas 21). The Greek logos became the formal instrument which was used to transform oriental thought into concepts available to all peoples, regardless of ethnic background. Oriental thought, non-conceptual by nature, was thus given the opportunity to re-introduce itself to the world in terms the world could understand.

The first phase of Hellenism comes to an end approximately at the time of

Christ's birth. The second phase, in which Hellenism is transformed from a secular into a religious oriental culture, coincides with the first three centuries of the Christian era. This second phase is characterized by the re-emergence of the East in the syncretism, with the gods and cults of the East assuming great prestige. The elements of this syncretism have three main sources: the oriental mythological heritage, the figures and symbols of the Bible, and the doctrines and terminology of Greek philosophy. All the elements were available and any system or cult could select any combination of them to create its own synthesis.

Out of this syncretism a number of systems arose which, since they emerged from a common intellectual climate and common material, shared many common points. The main forms which arose from the Hellenization of oriental thought are the following:

the spread of Hellenistic Judaism, and especially the rise of Alexandrian Jewish philosophy; the spread of Babylonian astrology and of magic, coinciding with a general growth of fatalism in the Western world; the spread of diverse Eastern mystery-cults over the Hellenistic-Roman world, and their evolution into spiritual mystery-religions; the rise of Christianity; the efflorescence of the gnostic movements with their great system-formations inside and outside the Christian framework; and the transcendental philosophies of late antiquity, beginning with Neopythagoreanism and culminating in the Neoplatonic school. (Jonas 25)

Gnosticism is an extreme case of Hellenistic syncretism. It arose out of a mixture of mythological and religious ideas whose origins are Greek, Oriental, Jewish, and Christian. As is the case with most such movements, the syncretism is artificial, the product of a conscious effort on the part of some of the most cultured and educated minds of the time. Jacques Lacarrière observes that "the Gnostics built a pure mental construction...upon an *a priori* vision of the universe" (18). Drawing its material from the most varied traditions, Gnosticism at first appears to be an artificial synthesis with no internal unifying power or distinct character of its own. But such is not the case. As Kurt Rudolph explains, "The gnostic expositions gain

their thread of continuity or their consistency...through the gnostic "myth"...Its mythology is a tradition consciously created from alien material, which [,.however,] it has appropriated to match its own basic conception" (54-5).

Most of the gnostic documents were written in Greek. Besides the basic fact that this gave them wider influence, it also resulted in the strong links of gnosticism with the conceptual language of Greek philosophy. Nonetheless, careful consideration of gnosticism reveals that although Greek philosophical thought provided some of the terminology, its basic structure or structures cannot be made tractable to philosophical interpretation. It is quite clear that gnosticism is not a speculative but a mythological system; its affinities are not with philosophical systems but with religion (Lacarrière 60).

I have described what I would call the morphè of Gnosticism. What needs to be discussed now (even though so briefly that justice will not be done to it) is the movement's main doctrines and its mythos. Jonas defines Gnosticism as a "dualistic transcendent religion of salvation." He uses the word religion to underline the distinctively religious nature of the second phase of Hellenism during which gnosticism made its mark; dualistic is used to indicate a reality of irreconcilable opposites (God against the Demiourgos and his creation, good against evil, light against darkness, life against death, spirit against matter, soul against the body); finally, transcendent means that both God and salvation are "transmundane," beyond the material cosmos. The central doctrine of Gnosticism, like that of all mystery religions, is soteriological and eschatological; that is, it concerns itself with man's redemption or deliverance (soteria) from the material or evil world to the higher world of pure being (πλήρωμα, pleroma).¹⁵

The soteriology of Gnosticism is based on the idea of γνῶσις (gnosis) or "knowledge." Radically different from rational knowledge, gnosis is esoteric

knowledge made available to the elect through revelation. The ultimate goal of the gnostic is the knowledge of God and the salvation of man. Gnosis is received either by coming into the possession of occult lore (revealed wisdom gained through ritual participation and instruction in secret names and magical catchwords) or by undergoing a mystical experience. And gnosis is the only form that salvation can take, both as a condition and instrument. Rudolph brings together the different meanings of gnosis in this way: "All gnostic teachings are in some form a part of the redeeming knowledge which gathers together the object of knowledge (the divine nature), the means of knowledge (the redeeming gnosis) and the knower himself" (55). Thus Gnosticism involves a mystical γνῶσις θεοῦ (gnosis theou or direct beholding of the divine essence), a πράξις (praxis, human acts of self-modification which induce the proper disposition) and a γνώστης (gnostes or knower). Gnosis is a "happening" of divine activity and grace involving "knowing" God as well as "being known" by Him. Perhaps Jonas captures best the essence of the term "gnosis" when he says that "The ultimate 'object' of gnosis is God: its event in the soul transforms the knower himself by making him a partaker in the divine essence (which means more than assimilating him to the divine essence) [*Italics mine*]" (35). It might be worth pointing out here that there is a similarity between this form of gnosticism and the contemporary phenomenon of the charismatic or "born again" Christians who claim to have "met Jesus."

Gnosticism is elitist in the sense that gnosis is attained by a limited number of people (this is an elitist tendency shared by all mystery religions). Thus in most gnostic sects people are divided into three categories: πνευματικοί (pneumatikoi or spiritual), ψυχικοί (psychikoi or psychic), and ὑλικοί (hylikoi or material). Only those belonging to the first class can attain gnosis. Christians belong to the second class because they possess πίστις (pistis or faith) instead of gnosis. At the

bottom of the schema are the pagans, material men for whom there is no salvation.

The gnostic mythos is a cosmogonic-soteriological narrative which explains how a supremely transcendent God created the world which Gnosticism, being anticosmic, views as evil. The god is unknown (ἄγνωστος θεός), an alien, sometimes conceived as pure light, whose names serve to emphasize absolute transcendence (Unbegotten, Ineffable, Immeasurable, Unknowable...). From him proceed a number of beings in descending scale of dignity who in their totality make up the Pleroma, the "fullness of blessedness and perfection." The world came into being when Σοφία (Sophia or Wisdom), one of the lower powers in this gnostic emanationist system, fell from the Pleroma. The agent of creation is the Ἀρχιούργος (Demiourgos or Archegetor), usually represented as Sophia's son, who, ignorant of the Unknown God, acted unwittingly, though with no evil intent, and created the "hylic" cosmos--this Demiourgos is often identified with the God of the Old Testament. Sophia's fall disrupts the perfection of the Pleroma since it causes the loss of particles of Divine Light which are scattered in the hylic world of Darkness. Man, who is composed of flesh (ἕλη, hyle), soul (ψυχή, psyche) and spirit (πνεῦμα, pneuma), has been created by the Demiourgos and his Powers or Archons in order to enslave the divine light. Through his flesh and soul man is part of the Heimarmene (Universal Fate), the world of matter. But man is also made of spirit, which usually remains unconscious and ignorant of itself. Gnosis is the instrument through which the spiritual man is awakened and liberated from the captivity of the hylic world. As Jonas says, gnosis is "the reminder of origin, the promise of salvation, [and] the moral instruction" (81). The Divine Being that undertakes the work of deliverance of the Divine Light is the Σωτήρ (Soter or Saviour). His task includes the deliverance of the fallen Sophia and the Ἀποκατάστασις (Apocatastasis, the restoration of the Pleroma), that is, the gathering of the seeds or sparks of Divine Light. In terms of

man, the real task of the Soter is the communication of the hidden gnosis which, preserved by the Gnostic tradition, can effect the delivery and the restoration of the pneumatics to the Kingdom of Light.¹⁶

One last point that needs to be raised here is the intense mythmaking tendencies of the gnostics. What distinguishes this mythmaking is the fact that its shape is determined by a functional need to serve the purposes of a preconceived gnostic value-system. Thus, "it must be noted that this new mythology, despite some genuinely 'first' creations, was a secondary one in that it supervened upon an older mythological tradition and constructed its new object-system out of the consciously reinterpreted elements of a complex heritage" (Jonas 262).

This point is of great importance here because it demonstrates the a priori principle employed by many of the occult system-makers: first, they formulate a particular framework or value system; then, they proceed by searching, discovering and incorporating into the original system elements from various cultural heritages which appear to them to be analogues to those elements belonging to the original framework; finally, they use the resulting syncretic substructure as proof of the legitimacy of the original structure.

That Pound was familiar with gnosticism is beyond doubt. His explicit acknowledgement in his 1916 note to The Spirit of Romance (91) of his debt to Mead's gnostic interpretation of the legend of Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre is the most explicit sign in a series of acknowledged debts to gnostic tradition.¹⁷

The gnostic depreciation of the cosmos and its creator aroused the ire of the founder and corypheus of the Neoplatonic School, Plotinus (205-270), who presided over an academia in Rome and possibly had a private mystical practice.

Neoplatonism, whose cradle was the great intellectual city of Alexandria, in contrast to Gnosticism is a legitimate development of Greek philosophical thought in general

and of Plato's speculations in particular. Plotinus' philosophical ideas have been preserved in the Enneads ("Sets of Nine"), Porphyry's edition of his lecture notes.

There are certain common elements shared by Gnostic and Neoplatonic schools, such as the wholly transcendent and Unknowable God and speculative emanationism. But there are some fundamental differences as well, particularly with respect to the Gnostic obsession with evil. The title of Plotinus' treatise against the gnostics, Against the Gnostics, or against those who say that the Creator of the World is evil and that the World is bad (Enneads II. 9), reveals the reasons for his objections to this group and also suggests his essential belief in the unity of all being in the Universe. According to Plotinus' system, there are three mystic and transcendent realities (he calls them hypostases): the Godhead which he calls "the One" (τὸ ἓν) or the "Good" (τὸ ἀγαθόν) Spirit or Intellect (Νοῦς) and Soul (Ψυχή). Beneath these is the cosmos, including man, made of emanations from the One. In Plotinus' philosophy everything emanates from the One and shares of its goodness; thus, even the body and nature are not evil but only less good than the "things" above them by virtue of their distance from the One. Man himself can return to the One by a mystical experience which involves the "unity of the perceiving spirit (Νοῦς), the spiritual world (τα νοητά) and the spiritual perception (νόησις) which unites subject and object in One" (Inge 311). Man's return to the One is described by Plotinus himself as ἔκστασις (ecstasy, to stand outside one's self): "a blow, a capture, a sort of ravishment, fulfillment, and of course inebriation" (O'Brien 74). Through this we are back in the classical pantheistic world of Greece.

Plotinus himself condemned ~~magic~~ as an effective but egotistical misuse of power. But there is a theurgic side of Neoplatonism which, ultimately, overwhelmed its philosophical side. Driven by the practice as well as the vision of Greek, Egyptian, and Chaldean mysteries, Plotinus' successors, including Porphyry, Iamblichus

and Proclus, transformed Neoplatonism from a philosophic system into a system of magic, demonology and, especially, theurgy (the evocation of the gods or the practice of acting on the gods). Iamblichus "turns the ideas of hypostases of Plotinus into gods and daemons, and leaves the door wide-open for magic and theurgy," while Proclus is said to have been "frequently visited by the gods in person, and was a great miracle-worker" (Inge 317).

Neoplatonism has, of course, been recognized as an influence of considerable importance for Pound. As James J. Wilhelm notes, Pound's "philosophical training was very heavily influenced by the Neoplatonics" (Dante and Pound 137); and a number of other critics have noted the importance of Neoplatonism in the shaping of many of Pound's concepts.¹⁸ In addition, several critics have stressed the presence of Neoplatonic ideas in the thought of such writers as Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Yeats--to name but a few. It has also been pointed out, by F. A. C. Wilson among others, that the imaginative tradition of Neoplatonism was made accessible to most of these writers through the writings of Thomas Taylor (1758-1835), and that it came to them in a form "contaminated" by other occult movements. But a discussion of the ties of these writers to Neoplatonism and the "wisdom-tradition" in general would take us too far afield; therefore, the reader is referred to specialized studies in which these relations are discussed in detail.¹⁹

The teachings of Gnosticism and theurgic Neoplatonism can be seen behind many of the systems of Western occultism during the Middle Ages: alchemy, ceremonial magic, Albigenianism and the Cabala. The first two of these were concerned with the instrumental elements in the occult tradition. Albigenianism or Catharism is the best known in Western Europe of a number of gnostic sects (Paulicians of Phrygia and Thrace, Messalians of Syria, Antignani of Phrygia and Bulgaria, and Bogomils of the Balkans). It flourished between the tenth and thirteenth centuries in Southern

France.²⁰ The Albigensians derived their inspiration from Gnosticism through the Cathari. Though one of the accusations brought against them by the Church was that they were Manichaeans, this was not true--Manicheism, in fact, disappeared completely in the West during the Middle Ages and had no direct successors there. The Cathari, like the gnostics, were dualists in theology, ascetic in practice, and heretical in their intense criticism of and opposition to the Church.

Because the demands of Catharism were exceptional (extreme asceticism and austerity, rejection of marriage, of everything material, of all foods which were the product of sexual generation, of all material elements in worship, and of all involvement in things of this world), strict practice was confined to a small minority of adepts or perfects. The central rite of the Cathari, and the dividing line between the "perfects" and the believers, was the reception of consolamentum, an initiation rite of spiritual baptism by the laying on of hands that admitted the recipient into the ranks of the perfect. The consolamentum was usually performed after a year's probation and the full revelation of Cathar teaching, which was accessible not to ordinary believers but only to the Cathari or perfect ones.²¹ Their self-detachment from the evil world was best exemplified by the endura, a ritual suicide by fasting to death, poisoning or suffocation which ensured salvation (especially if it was preceded by consolamentum).

The Catholic Church attempted to convert or even subdue the Albigensian heresy--but these attempts were unsuccessful. During the first half of the thirteenth century, the Church's persecution of the Albigensians took the form of crusades which destroyed the towns and culture and nearly exterminated the Albigensian people. The most severe blow came with the fall of Montségur, the centre of Albigensian activity, in 1244. With the capture and burning of over 200 perfects at Montségur, the Cathari were effectively destroyed as an organized group.

The Albigensians form part of Pound's "celestial tradition" and he refers to them in some of his prose works as well as in the Cantos. The clearest statement of Pound's opinion on the subject of the Albigensian crusade appears in "Terra Italica" (1931-32; SP 58-9). In this essay Pound rejects the accusation that the Albigensians were Manichaeans and says categorically that "This [accusation] I believe after a long search to be pure bunkumb" (SP 59)--instead, Pound thinks that the Albigensians derived their beliefs and rites from the cult of Eleusis (Makin, Provence and Pound 219).

In addition, Albigensianism is given an important place in Pound's conception of his highly syncretic version of the "celestial tradition." This is a point convincingly made by Leon Surette in A Light for Eleusis. Pound's version of the "celestial tradition" was partly derived from Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918), the French Rosicrucian, who believed that Georgios Gemistus Plethon, Marsilio Ficino, Dante, and the troubadours were all Albigensians. Characteristically, Péladan says that "Gemisto Plethon and Marsilio Ficino are the official teachers of old Albigensianism, as Dante is the prodigious Homer" (qtd. in Surette, Eleusis 38). Although I am anticipating the discussion that follows in this chapter, it is worth pointing out here that Péladan is expressing a position that was shared by other occult thinkers of his day. According to many occult thinkers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the modern occult is essentially a continuation of a secret wisdom-tradition surviving underground and clearly traceable to Plethon and Ficino in Florence, and reputedly found in Provencal poetry, and Dante. This occult fantasy-history was gradually adapted by Pound himself (Surette, Eleusis 34-9). Pound's adaptation of the fantasy-history explains, among other things, his understanding of the troubadours of Provence and their rituals as belonging to a line of direct descent originating in the Greek mystery cults of antiquity.²²

During roughly the same period that the extinction of the Albigensians was taking place, the Cabala, a complex system of secret mystical ideas and magical methods, was emerging as a distinct group in Southern France and in Spain. The term "Cabala" or "Kabbalah" means "tradition" in the sense of "reception." According to Cabalist legend, when God gave the Law to Moses he also gave him a second revelation as to the secret meaning of the Law. This esoteric tradition was said to have been passed orally by initiates from Moses down to the present. In Frances A. Yates's words,

It [the Cabala] was a mysticism and a cult but rooted in the text of the scriptures, in the Hebrew language, the holy language in which God had spoken to man. Out of Cabalist studies of the Hebrew text there developed a theosophical mystique, nourished on elaborate manipulation of the Hebrew alphabet. (Occult Philosophy 2)²³

Like other occultists, Cabalists claim extreme antiquity for their doctrines and for their texts even though the most important of all Cabalist works, the Sefer ha-Zohar (Book of Splendour), is a medieval work written in Aramaic in Spain by Moses de Leon between 1280 and 1286. Nonetheless, it is true that the material out of which the Cabala was formed is indeed old. Harold Bloom, in Kabbalah and Criticism, writes that Cabalist speculations and beliefs

appear to have been influenced by Gnosticism and Neoplatonism, and it seems fair to characterize the history of subsequent Kabbalah as being a struggle between Gnostic and Neoplatonic tendencies, fought out on the quite alien ground of Judaism. (15)

The assimilation of man, the microcosmos, to the macrocosmos through the agency of the emanations or Sephiroth and the intense preoccupation with evil (a preoccupation also found in Gnosticism) form the kernel of Cabalistic mysticism which spread from France and Spain to Italy--and it is this form under whose spell the Italian humanists of the Renaissance were to fall later.

The emanationist doctrine of Cabala closely resembles its source in Neoplatonism. In the Cabala there are ten "Sephiroth" or divine emanations; these are

arranged diagrammatically in the Tree of Life which can be seen either as an ascent or a descent joining the divine with the material world. Gershom G. Scholem, in

Major trends in Jewish Mysticism, explains that

The consensus of Kabbalistic opinion regards the mystical way to God as a reversal of the procession by which we have emanated from God. To know the stages of the creative process is also to know the stages of one's return to the root of all existence. In this sense, the interpretation of Maaseh Bereshith, the esoteric doctrine of creation, has always formed one of the main preoccupations of Kabbalism. It is here that Kabbalism comes nearest Neoplatonic thought, of which it has been said with truth that "procession and reversion together constitute a single movement, the diastole-systole, which is the life of the universe." Precisely this is also the belief of the Kabbalist. (20)

Cabala does differ from Neoplatonism, nonetheless, since it revises the Neoplatonic idea of emanation as a process out of God into a process which takes place in God (Scholem 217-18).

Despite the historically close connection between Gnostic dualism and the Cabala regarding the relationship of the hidden and Unknown God and the Creator, Cabalist doctrine is not dualistic since these two Gods are not seen as opposing forces but as one and the same power. Nonetheless, like the Gnostics, Cabalists do accept and indeed show an obsessive concern with the reality of evil. Unlike the Neoplatonists for whom evil has no metaphysical reality, for the Cabalists evil is real and manifests itself as a separation of two of the Sephiroth: Din (judgement) and Hesed (love). "The totality of divine potencies forms a harmonious whole, and as long as each stays in relation to all other, it is sacred and good," writes Scholem (237). Evil results when Din, the quality of God's stern judgement (the equivalent of the Platonic Ananke or Necessity), ceases to be tempered by Hesed, God's Covenant love (the equivalent of Christian caritas or grace). When this happens, this quality breaks away from God completely and transforms itself into the radically evil, which nonetheless retains the spark of its divine origin and can be redeemed. Thus, even the demonic has its roots somewhere in the divine mystery.

Many elements of speculative Cabala were used by various occult movements which emerged during the Renaissance. Indeed, the Renaissance is one of the greatest periods of florescence of the occult. The term which immediately comes to mind in thinking about the occult during this period is Hermeticism. It was Paul Oskar Kristeller who in his study of Marsilio Ficino discovered the importance of the Hermetic treatises of the Corpus Hermeticum in the formulation of this philosopher's Neoplatonism. The Corpus Hermeticum is a varied collection of texts ascribed to the fictional Hermes Trismegistus. In a 1967 essay entitled "The Hermetic Tradition in Renaissance Science" (and later in Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition), Frances Yates affirmed that the core of Renaissance Neoplatonism is "Hermetic, involving a view of the cosmos as a network of magical forces with which man can operate" (225). According to Yates, the texts of Hermes Trismegistus, as understood by Ficino and later by Pico della Mirandola and Giordano Bruno, "create man as magus, "with powers of operating on the cosmos through magia and through the numerological conjurations of Cabala" (257). The so-called Hermetic tradition, allegedly reaching back to Hermes Trismegistus (Milton's "thrice great Hermes") who was, reputedly, at least as ancient as Moses, dates in fact (as A. J. Festugière showed in 1949) from the third period of Greek cultural history (second and third centuries of our era). The treatises belonging to this tradition originated in Hellenistic Egypt, are written in Greek (except for Asclepius which exists only in a Latin version), and represent a fusion of philosophical writings (dealing with the doctrine of man's metaphysical constitution and personal salvation through gnosis) with the more instrumental and popular arts of astrology, alchemy, palmistry, numerology, and other forms of divination. The texts are entirely derivative, belonging to the common syncretic tradition of Hellenistic thought.

The appearance of the Corpus Hermeticum in the west followed the visit to

Florence in 1438 of Plethon, a visit that inspired a revival of Neoplatonism in Italy. Plethon attended the Councils of Ferrara and Florence (1438-1439) and seems to have made an impression upon Sigismundo Malatesta.²⁴ In the wake of Plethon's visit, Marsilio Ficino translated Plato and Plotinus into Latin and wrote commentaries aimed at harmonizing the Platonic and Chaldean tradition with Christianity. A Greek manuscript containing the fifteen treatises that constituted what would later be called the Corpus Hermeticum was brought to Florence by Leonardo da Pistoria, a monk. Leonardo, who had found the document in Macedonia, presented it to Cosimo de' Medici, the ruler of Florence and a great patron of letters. At the end of 1462 or the beginning of 1463, Cosimo asked Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) to put aside his translation of Plato in order to translate the Corpus Hermeticum. By April 1463 the translation was complete. In fact, Ficino translated just four treatises of which the most important are the Poimander, a philosophical treatise on cosmology, and the Asclepius, a description of Egyptian magical rites through which the powers of the cosmos could be used by man. Ficino himself thought of the Corpus Hermeticum as the origin for the wisdom tradition which led to Plato. Pico, later, noticed that the Hermetic writings shared with the Cabala such features as the use of numerology and hierarchical categories and tried to combine the two.²⁵ Still later, Giordano Bruno, the Italian heretic and visionary, departed altogether from the Christian Hermetic direction set out by Ficino and Pico and maintained that "the magical Egyptian religion of the world was not only the most ancient but also the only true religion, which both Judaism and Christianity had obscured and corrupted" (Hermetic Tradition 11).

Despite its obvious importance, it must be made clear that Hermeticism does not comprise a distinct driving force in the Renaissance. Rather than becoming the fountain of a new world-view, the Hermetic writings are used as rhetorical

embellishment consciously couched in the Neoplatonic philosophical terms of the writers mentioned above and designed to give an aura of ancient wisdom and authority. Charles B. Schmitt argues that Hermeticism is one more ingredient in the syncretic amalgam of Renaissance philosophy:

it was Hermeticism which became assimilated into Neoplatonism and seldom, if ever, was Hermeticism itself thought of, even by its Renaissance proponents, as an independent system of ideas. It was Neoplatonism which served as a strong trunk onto which ideas derived from Hermetic, Orphic, Zoroastrian, Neopythagorean, Cabalistic and other sources could be grafted during the Renaissance, continuing a tendency already begun in antiquity. Neoplatonism was the receptive body of knowledge susceptible to being bent in a number of ways to adapt itself to a rather remarkable range of syncretic formulations. It was, however, the Neoplatonic system of metaphysics and epistemology which provided a life-giving sap to hold it all together. (206)

Schmitt's sensible analysis of Hermeticism must be taken into account in any discussion of this movement. This analysis should not, nonetheless, take attention away from the Corpus Hermeticum which is significant as a philosophical text in at least two ways: first, Hermetic literature provided excitement and impetus to the whole occult movement since it seemed to furnish a link with ancient sources of wisdom; second, in true occult manner, this literature provided a vast number of analogies which could be used to validate already formulated occult structures.

I have been discussing the tradition of secret gnosis or knowledge which allegedly has descended through the ancient mysteries and Orphism to Plato, to the Neoplatonists and the Gnostic schools, and to the Cabala and Hermeticism. This is a tradition which counts among its members, Renaissance magi such as Ficino and Pico, the medieval alchemists, sixteenth and seventeenth century occultists as well as Robert Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, Sir Thomas Browne, Blake and Thomas Taylor in England. There seems to be a continuous poetic tradition as well to which such writers as Henry Vaughan, Blake, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Yeats belong. The example of Thomas Taylor, in terms of his role in the transmission of this tradition,

is instructive. Taylor translated into English the works of Plato, the Neoplatonic commentators Plotinus and Proclus, and a variety of other texts of Greek religious philosophy. Though his translations have now been superseded, it has been argued that in his day they made accessible his own version of the "occult tradition" to such writers as Blake, Wordsworth, and Keats--Coleridge and Shelley could read Greek but were probably familiar with Taylor's translations as well. Taylor's influence also extended to America through Emerson and the New England Transcendentalists. Of course, Taylor's work influenced Yeats and George Russell and Theosophical scholars such as Mead. Pound also seems to have been familiar with Taylor's work.²⁶

Going underground during the seventeenth century, the speculative Hermetic-Cabalistic occult tradition emerges in such secret mystical groups as Rosicrucianism. The origin of the Rosicrucians dates from the publication between 1614 and 1616 of three anonymous treatises purporting to emanate from an occult brotherhood. Of most interest is the first of these publications, Fama Fraternitatis, which is presented as a message from certain "adepts" who propose a radical change aiming at effecting universal moral renewal and perfection. Fama tells the story of the founder of this secret Brotherhood, Christian Rosenkreutz, a German youth who journeys to Egypt, Fez, and Spain, is initiated into the mysteries of occult sciences and, upon returning to his native country, surrounds himself with assistants to form the nucleus of the Rosicrucian fraternity. The founder of Rosicrucianism is said to have been born in 1378 and to have lived for 106 years. Modern scholarship, however, regards the Rosicrucian Brotherhood as a hoax, and has shown that this Brother R.C. is a fictitious character and the real author of these treatises is probably Johann Valentin Andreae, a Lutheran pastor with socialist interests.

Frances A. Yates, in The Rosicrucian Enlightenment, argues that

Rosicrucianism was originated by a certain group of Lutherans whose hopes centred on the Protestant Elector Palatine "as the politico-religious leader destined to solve the problems of the age" along lines suggested by Hermetic and Cabalistic speculative ideas. In the treatises published by this group, a theosophy, or pansophia, was developed. It was hoped by the proponents of this theosophy that it would be used as a nonsectarian basis for universal harmony which would be acceptable to all people, regardless of personal religious views, and which would lead to a peaceful resolution of all religious and intellectual conflicts. As Yates writes,

The [Rosicrucian] manifestos would appear to be proclamations of enlightenment in the form of an utopist myth about a world in which enlightened beings, almost assimilated to spirits, go about doing good, shedding healing influences, disseminating knowledge in the natural sciences and the arts, and bringing mankind back to its Paradisal state before the Fall. (207)

The Rosicrucian movement, then, included a vision of universal and general reformation, an emphasis on philanthropy, a programme for the reconciliation of science and religion to be carried out by an elite group of adepts, as well as an esoteric approach to religion and a proclivity for initiation and legitimation through alleged ancestry from ancient mystery cults.

The hopes of the Rosicrucians were defeated in the horrors of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). The Rosicrucian Brotherhood itself seems not to have existed at all until the eighteenth century. There were, nonetheless, many people who became interested in it during the seventeenth century and some who claimed to be initiates themselves. Michael Maier (1566-1622), who wrote books on spiritual alchemy, wrote *Atlantia Fugiens* in 1618 in which he traced the Brotherhood's spiritual ancestry to Egyptian sages, Persian Magi and Indian Brahmins and hinted that at the back of all this was the figure of Apollonius of Tyana. On the continent many others, including the young Descartes and later Leibniz, were attracted to Rosicrucian ideas. In England the cause and ideas of Rosicrucianism were taken up by a number of people

including Robert Fludd (1545-1637), a Paracelsist physician, who wrote Utriusque Cosmi Historia (1617), a Cabalist-chemical account of the macrocosm and microcosm. Another Englishman who seems to have been attracted to Rosicrucian ideas is Edmund Spenser. In her The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, Frances Yates discusses the mystical politics of The Faerie Queene and asserts the influence of Bruno's and Francesco Giorgi's blend of Neoplatonism and Christian Cabalism on Spenser's work.²⁷ Francis Bacon (1561-1626) denied the theory of man as the microcosmos but was, nonetheless, interested in occult ideas. His posthumously published New Atlantis (1627) presents his dream of an ideal religious and scientific society which is clearly based on the myth of Christian Rosencreutz and his benevolent order. It was John Heydon, described by Yates as a strange character, "an astrologer, geomancer, alchemist, of the most extreme type," who in 1662 published The Holy Guide, which is largely an adaptation of Bacon's New Atlantis (Rosicrucian Enlightenment 189). New Atlantis is read by Heydon as if it were practically identical with Fama; this reinforces the opinion that Bacon's work is based on the Rosicrucian manifesto.

Pound's familiarity with John Heydon is, of course, well-known. Pound quotes from Heydon's Holy Guide several times in the "Ur-Cantos," refers to him in Gaudier-Brzeska (1916), includes him as one of the company of luminaries belonging to the "celestial tradition" (Guide, 225), and "rediscovers" him in the later cantos (especially in canto 91).²⁸

The Rosicrucian movement in turn probably exerted an influence on Freemasonry.²⁹ Speculative Freemasonry, which spread rapidly through the Continent after the formation in 1717 in London of the Grand Lodge of England, shares many characteristics with Rosicrucianism, since both are self-conscious reform movements and both combine such elements as claims to ancestry from an "ancient wisdom,"

esoteric and ethical doctrines; and an emphasis on good works. The two differ because, unlike Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry is not interested in reforms in art and science nor in the occult sciences of alchemy and magic (Yates Enlightenment 218).

The masonic movement probably has its roots in the periodic gatherings of operative stonemasons, engaged in the building of churches and cathedrals in England. During the eighteenth century Masonry placed great importance upon secrecy (the result, it seems, of the desire to guard the secrets of the craft) and its putative lineages from ancient mystery cults, preserved and transmitted through the Knights Templar and the Rosicrucians.

The legendary or fantasy-history of Freemasonry, which has been preserved in fourteenth and fifteenth century manuscripts found in England, identifies the art of building with geometry. In these medieval records, of which the most noted is the so-called Regius Manuscript (circa 1390), it is alleged that masonry was founded in Egypt and entered England at the time of Athelstan. Geometry is said to have been discovered by Hermes Trismegistus (who is identified with Euclid) in order to deal with the floods of the Nile river. Thus, like so many of these occult movements, Freemasonry traces its origin to an Egyptian past which, however, is preserved in Hellenistic writings. The ancient wisdom of Hermes is said to be enshrined in the Solomonic Temple. The medieval Knights Templar are seen in masonic mythology as the keepers of the oriental wisdom of this Temple. Jacques de Molay, the Templar Grand Master who was executed in France in 1314 belongs to this tradition.³⁰

Pound refers to de Molay three times in the Cantos, connecting him with the Albigensians who died at Montségur and with Scotus Erigena, the medieval philosopher, theologian, and early Greek scholar who was accused of Manicheism and, according to Pound, was exhumed three hundred years after his death.³¹ Pound also suggests that de Molay and the Knights Templar were persecuted because they

practiced an enlightened, non-usurious form of economics (canto 87). In fact, modern scholarship has shown that they amassed great wealth because they were usurious, and that they were destroyed so that their enormous wealth could be expropriated by King Philip IV.³² Of course, the King's excuse for destroying them was that they were heretics (Gnostics and Manicheans in particular) and were accused of practicing sodomy, idolatry, and of denying Christ.

The eighteenth century also saw the emergence of two other occult systems which were later to provide the foundations of nineteenth century Spiritualism: Mesmerism and Swedenborgianism. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) studied medicine in Vienna, joined the German Rosicrucian Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross, and was the founder of the Order of Universal Harmony. Influenced by Paracelsus, Mesmer was interested in magnetic therapy and developed the concept of "animal magnetism." He thought that there was a subtle, universal force pervading all bodies (the fluid of animal magnetism), and believed that nervous disorders were caused when the rhythm of the bodily fluid was not in harmony with the universal rhythm. This universal fluid was seen by Mesmer as being responsive to the human mind; thus, the human mind could use this force to affect the behaviour of others and cure illnesses. In addition, Mesmer's concept could be employed to awake the powers of perception which lay latent in all humans and which can transcend space and time. Thus Mesmer achieved two things: first, he discovered hypnotism and the related psychosomatic medicine; and, second, he formulated a system which could be used to explain "scientifically" such "arts" as telepathy, clairvoyance, and psychokinesis.

Mesmer's concepts had a strong influence on Spiritualism, as did the mystic visions of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), the Swedish philosopher, scientist and clairvoyant. As a scientist Swedenborg made considerable contributions to metallurgy and mining engineering. But between 1743 and 1745 he had a number of visions

during which he claims to have engaged in dialogue with angels and spirits. As a result, there is a transition in his work from plain scientific and philosophical concerns to concerns with spiritual perception. Swedenborg's voluminous theological writings are presented as inspired, since he attests to having converse with a man who identified himself as God, showed him the spirit worlds of heaven and hell, and instructed him to write about the spiritual sense of the Bible.

Swedenborg's attempt to explain spiritual concepts with the exactitude of scientific discourse led him to the formulation of the doctrine of correspondences which shares many points with the emanationist systems of Neoplatonism and the Cabala--not to mention Hermetic analogy and Macrocosm/ Microcosm. According to Swedenborg, every natural object is the effect of a spiritual cause and, thus, there exists a correspondence between the visible cosmos and the spiritual cosmos and, in addition, the first is a reflection of patterns existing in the second. The natural world, then, when properly understood, can reveal the spiritual world; this is a theory of an actual correspondence of every physical fact to some eternal truth.

Pound was introduced to Swedenborg while still in the United States (possibly by Katherine Ruth Heyman--as I argue in Chapter III), studied Swedenborg's writings during his stay with Yeats at Stone Cottage (1913-14), and again returned to this mystic in the 1950s. He also refers to Swedenborg in his prose writings and in the Cantos. In his letters to Olivia Rossetti Agresti, Pound spells out his interest in the "secret history" of speculative occultism and, in particular, observes Gabriele Rossetti's linking of speculative Masonry, Swedenborg, and Dante--something which Pound himself has been doing, he writes, for fifty years!³³

Pound's linking of speculative Masonry and Swedenborg and his strong interest in these matters raise a particular problem and justify, I think, the following brief digression. In a letter to William Bird, dated 18 March 1933, Pound denigrates the

masons and their secrets. He is quite sarcastic about them, saying that he finds it very hard to believe in "these GRRREAT minds."³⁴ Elsewhere Pound has explicitly denied sharing the occult interests of Yeats and Orage. It is useful to remember that the occult movement encompasses a wide variety of warring factions which vie for credibility by trying to discredit each other. It is not clear what prompted Pound's outburst against the masons in his letter to Bird; in the case of Yeats and Orage, it is obvious that Pound disapproves of their particular interests in theurgy and Ouspenskianism respectively. The factionalism of the occult should go some way towards explaining Pound's statements against particular factions of the occult, since, on the one hand, he often draws on a body of occult opinions, concepts, and beliefs which fit his preconceived point-of-view while, on the other hand, he dismisses those concepts (and their adherents) which do not fit his own particular version.

The accounts of journeys to the world of departed spirits and angels which are contained in Swedenborg's works, especially in Spiritual Diary and Heaven and Hell, make him the immediate predecessor of Spiritualism, a movement which originated in the United States and became very popular during the middle of the nineteenth century. The source of this movement's popularity must be sought in the promise to provide empirical proof for life after death and the possibility of communication with the spirits of the departed. Often perceived in terms of its popular and practical side which involves communication by way of a "passive" medium with the dead through such phenomena as rappings, automatic writing, telekinesis or materialization, spiritualism has another more reflective and philosophical side. The popular side is represented by the Fox sisters while the second side is represented by Andrew Jackson Davis' Harmonical philosophy.

Davis (1826-1910), a shoemaker turned clairvoyant, became the most important American Spiritualist writer. He experienced a series of mystical visions and wrote

an account of them which published in 1847 in The Principles of Nature, Her Divine Revelations and a Voice to Mankind. Fundamentally Swedenborgian, this work promotes a pantheistically tending idealism, looks upon nature as a "dispensation of types foreshadowing the natural world," and calls for a special sense of perception needed to unlock nature's system of symbols (Moore, In Search of White Cows 11-2). Modern practical spiritualism has received more attention than Davis' movement; it dates from 1848 when a series of spiritualistic phenomena (mysterious rappings) broke out at the home of the Fox family in Hydesville, in upstate New York. From there Spiritualism flourished and spread all over the world.

Spiritualism is, in the context of Pound's thought, important not so much in itself as the immediate forerunner of Theosophy. Speaking in particular about the impact of Theosophy in the London scene, Warren Sylvester Smith points out that although it would be unfair to equate Theosophy with Spiritualism, "Theosophy could not have made a serious bid for attention among Londoners--or elsewhere--if a revival of Spiritualism had not preceded it" (142). Before we turn to Theosophy we need to make absolutely clear the fact that Spiritualism does not really belong to this discussion because, unlike the other forms of the occult discussed here, it places no special emphasis on secret or esoteric wisdom and secret initiation rites. These features have no place in Spiritualism, since the participant in a seance needs no preparatory instructions nor is the goal of the experience palingenetic.

Generally speaking, the term Theosophy is used to denote those forms of religion and philosophic thought primarily concerned with the knowledge of, and claiming insight into, the hidden mysteries of the Divine nature.³⁵ This insight may be gained through supernatural revelations or private speculation. Theosophical thought focuses on the acquiring of knowledge through one's understanding of the inner mysteries of the divinity itself, or an understanding of these mysteries as they

are related to the created universe. The roots of Theosophy, at least in terms of Western thought, are to be found in Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, and the Cabala. In terms of individual writers and thinkers, the speculative mysticism of such men as Plotinus, Paracelsus, Böehme, Eckhart, the Cambridge Platonists and Swedenborg may be said to be Theosophical. Modern Theosophy is, significantly, the child of the dialogue between Spiritualism and those who dissented from the most fundamental of spiritualist beliefs, that is, the reality of communication with the still-living spirits of the dead. Theosophists warned about the dangers of desiring to commune with spirits around the seance table, since the utterances received through the medium "were not any more "divine" or "spiritual" than ordinary human utterances, and were even in large part impish and elfin, when not downright demonic" (qtd. in Kuhn 95). Against the false Spiritualism of the spiritualists the Theosophists purported to endorse a "True Spiritualism [which] should envisage the phenomena of the divine spirit of men in their highest manifestations, the cultivation of which the ancients and the East has given man his most sacred and vital knowledge" (qtd. in Kuhn 96). In a letter to her sister (circa 1875), Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the real force behind Theosophy and herself a former spiritualist medium, states that one of the purposes of her own movement is "to show certain fallacies of the Spiritualists. If we are anything we are Spiritualists, only not in the modern American fashion, but in that of the Ancient Alexandria with its Theodidactoi, Hypatias and Porphiries" (qtd. in Kuhn 99). The distinction Madame Blavatsky is making here is between the popular Spiritualism of rappings on furniture and slate writing and the higher Spiritualism of Theosophy. In addition, like so many of these groups, Theosophy too looks back to the Hellenistic Age and in particular to Alexandria for its roots.

Modern Theosophy began with the foundation of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Henry Olcott. The professed

objects of the Society were the following: 1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour. 2. To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Science. 3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man. Thus Theosophy aimed at combining an ethical goal with the quest for the fulfillment of the Seventeenth century Rosicrucian programme of bridging science and religion by studying and cultivating powers latent in man. Madame Blavatsky used the Theosophical Society to advance what she saw as her goal in life: the presentation of Ancient Wisdom to the World.

The founding text of Theosophy was Blavatsky's Isis Unveiled (1877) which, like her other major work, The Secret Doctrine (1888), was dictated to her, she claimed, by the Mahatmas, said to be hidden masters or adepts, living beyond the Himalayas. Blavatsky claimed that these Mahatmas were the guardians of a secret, ancient wisdom and that they had chosen her as their intermediary through whom they desired to instruct those in the West who were ready to receive this wisdom. The "invention" of the Mahatmas gave Blavatsky's synthesis the pretence of historical continuity which all occultists claim for their systems. I hardly need to stress that the historical continuity of Blavatsky's system is merely a fiction.

In spite of her very uncritical and often bogus scholarship, Blavatsky's works are remarkable surveys of religion and occultism through the ages. For her synthesis, she relied primarily on her reading in, and knowledge of, Pythagorean, Gnostic, Neoplatonic, Hermetic, Cabalistic, Rosicrucian, and Masonic texts as well as her knowledge of esoteric writers such as Fludd, Fabre d'Olivet and Eliphas Lévi, together with Hindu and Buddhist material. Blavatsky's eclectic mind, influenced by the new familiarity the West was gaining with Asian religions, reconstructed the Ancient Wisdom, formulating in a continual process of synthesis "A Master-Key to

the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology" (this is the subtitle of Isis Unveiled). Again, emphasis must be placed here on the fact that Theosophy is an orientalizing of the Western occult tradition, a syncretistic movement similar in many ways to the Hellenistic syncretism which also got much of its inspiration from the East.³⁶

Isis Unveiled and The Secret Doctrine are seemingly without a central thesis. But there is a position which emerges gradually and by its very nature has given a shape of multitudinousness and fragmentation to the works. Robert S. Ellwood, Jr. describes this position as follows:

Behind the religions of the world lies a "monomyth," in Joseph Campbell's later term. The monomyth concerns the making-up of the universe and the individual human by the conjoining of three principles: matter, an invisible energizing spirit, and immortal consciousness. It tells us that true seership and magic are possible if based on knowledge of those principles. It also recounts the spiritual evolution of the universe. (117)

The similarity between these Theosophical positions and all those manifestations of the occult which emerged periodically from the great river whose central spring can be located in Hellenistic Alexandria, is easily discernible. Thus Theosophy claims that the world consists of matter (ύλη, hyle) and spirit (νοῦς, nous), the energizing, subtle force which is closest to the ultimate source of everything, that is, God. Consciousness represents the link between hyle and nous. In addition to these we find in Theosophy all the other principles one would expect to find in such a speculative occult system: a secret tradition preserving the ancient wisdom is said to exist; God is presented as the unknowable, transcendent source of being from which man is far removed; the cosmos is seen as the product of emanations from God (doctrine of correspondence), and man's soul is the divine spark, a fragment of the divine substance; the cosmos is said to be permeated by a subtle bodily substance; and, finally, the object of man's life is said to be a return to his divine source, which can be accomplished through repeated incarnations.

The Theosophical belief in the close intermingling of matter and spirit led to the Theosophists' claims that the movement was scientific: the purpose of "occult science" was to explore the correspondences between the diverse parts of a universe thoroughly permeated by the nous. This approach led to a confusion of theological speculation and scientific concepts; thus, despite the reiterated emphasis on Theosophy's empirical foundation, when Theosophists speak of science they have in mind a "Higher Science" where theology completely eclipses science proper. The following statement by the theosophist William Kingsland captures perfectly what theosophists have in mind when they speak of science:

There exists... a Higher Science, which is also Religion in its truest sense, and which deals with the hidden forces in nature at which physical Science stops short, but which are more than suspected by the majority of mankind, because every form of Religion whatsoever is an acknowledgment of a something, which underlies, and is superior to, the phenomena of Nature. (qtd. in Oppenheim 193)

Theosophists maintain, then, that science is incomplete without religion, since the former is limited to the investigation of those phenomena which can be measured and observed by the physical senses or can be rationally inferred while the latter looks at the real force behind these phenomena. Thus science is seen by Theosophists as only capable of studying effects, while Theosophy is said to delve into the causes of things.³⁷

While on their way from New York to India in 1878, Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott stayed in London for two weeks. Blavatsky had already been to London as a young woman in 1844 and was to return and spend the last years of her life (1887-1891) there. The London branch of the Theosophical Society was formed shortly after the original one in New York. During their short visit in 1878, Blavatsky and Olcott were warmly received by the London Theosophists and, despite the briefness of the stay, Blavatsky found time to indulge in some of her Spiritualist tricks. The trip to India and the setting-up of the Theosophical World headquarters

in Adyar were the natural outcome of the movement's efforts to blend the philosophies of East and West.

In India Blavatsky attracted a lot of attention, especially as a result of the psychic phenomena which came to be associated with her and which she attributed to the invisible Mahatmas. It was to investigate these phenomena and the charges of fraud which had been brought against Blavatsky that the Society for Psychic Research sent Richard Hodgson, a Cambridge-educated lawyer, to India.³⁸ Hodgson, in a 200-page report, concluded that the charges of charlatanry against Blavatsky were true and that the messages from the unseen Mahatmas were in her own handwriting. Blavatsky has been shown to have been a mystery monger, a charlatan and a cheat. But even the SPR's conclusion that Blavatsky had "achieved a title to permanent remembrance as one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting impostors in history" was not enough to convince Theosophists worldwide. They refused to admit that the report was true (Oppenheim 178).

At the end of March 1885 Blavatsky had literally to be smuggled out of India and she eventually transferred her operations to London where she was able to regain her energy and re-establish her power and fame. She again attracted many important people around her, including Yeats who, as we have already noted, joined Blavatsky's Esoteric Section of the London Lodge in 1888.

Theosophy is at least partly responsible for "the rising psychic tide" which Pound would have encountered upon coming to London in 1908. In this discussion of the occult tradition the emphasis has been placed upon what we should call "metaphysical occultism" (which is very different from theurgy or the practice of occult arts). The manifestations of the occult with which we have dealt in this discussion share many characteristics and it is often hard to distinguish one from the others. In summary, at the summit of the occultist cosmology is an utterly

transcendent Principle or God who is the source out of which emanated the cosmos; including man; man's soul is of the same substance as the divine Absolute and its goal is to return to its origins; this union with the One can be achieved by those initiates who come into the possession of a hidden gnosis or knowledge handed on secretly by oral tradition and discoverable in fragments which belong to this tradition; the gnosis has as its source an ancient wisdom which was ultimately revealed to man by God. Finally, the whole occult "system" is based on the homological principle, or doctrine of correspondence. These are characteristics which are shared by all the metaphysical occult groups discussed here.

It is worth repeating here that while the occult is identifiable in a general way as a heterodox mixture of a relatively small set of doctrines there is no orthodoxy and no way of drawing sharp boundaries between the various schools. It is also important to remember that any given occultist may draw indiscriminately on any combination of the traditions identified in this chapter--and that many disputes amongst fellow occultists are sparked by the fact that their more or less freely invented a-priori systems often reflect individual tastes and rarely do they resemble each other.

In the Cantos and in his prose writings, Ezra Pound at least mentions virtually all of the occult movements outlined in this discussion (the only exceptions being Mesmerism and Spiritualism). But before we undertake the task of describing Pound's use of some of these movements and their ideas in the Cantos, we must first discuss, more fully than we have done at the beginning of this chapter, Pound's London friends and contacts who themselves were part of, and were influenced by, "the rising tide" of occultism before and during Pound's stay in London.

Notes to Chapter II

1. In an interview with Pier Paolo Pasolini, after talking about A Lume Spento as his visiting card for the London publishing house of Elkin Mathews (who printed his second book) Pound continues: "Then I gave a series of lectures at the Polytechnic Institute about troubadour poets. In the audience there was a friend of Yeats' who, year's later, became my mother-in-law. This lady introduced me to Yeats." (Anderson 334)

2. "Pound Collection," Beinecke Library, Yale University, Letter Number 195. References to all other letters from the Yale Collection will be included within the text as follows: (Y.C. 195). I have not been to Yale myself. My source is Professor Leon Surette's notes.

3. See books by the following critics: Ellmann, The Identity of Yeats; Moore, The Unicorn; Wilson, W.B. Yeats and Tradition and Yeats's Iconography; Harper, Yeats's Golden Dawn and Yeats and the Occult; Flannery, Yeats and Magic: The Earlier Works; Hough, The Mystery Religion of W.B. Yeats; Kuch, Yeats and A.E.: 'The antagonism that unites dear friends'; Bachchan, W.B. Yeats and Occultism; and Senior, The Way Down and Out: The Occult in Symbolist Literature. There are also a number of articles on the subject, too many to list here. It should also be noted that Yeats's fascination with the occult is well documented in his own writing. The clearest example of this fascination is probably his unfinished novel, The Speckled Bird--as William M. Murphy writes, "Readers of The Speckled Bird--that intense, astonishingly personal autobiographical novel--will understand and appreciate the depth, earnestness, and sincerity of the poet's devotion to the occult." (24-5)

4. Letters of W.B. Yeats (110).

5. Regarding the word's origin, in the Encyclopedia of Religion we read that "The French term occultisme was perhaps first used by Eliphas Lévi (1810-1875), whose work is sometimes somewhat misleadingly identified with the beginnings of occultism itself. The English equivalent, occultism, was apparently first used by A. D. Sinnett in 1881" (38).

6. The laudatory remark about Mead's article on "Occultism" belongs to Robert Galbreath (730).

7. Hynes elaborates on this statement by saying that
 Within a few years of 1880 the following organizations were established in England: the Democratic Federation, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the National Anti-Vaccination League, the National Anti-Vivisection Society, the Society for Psychic Research, and the Theosophical Society.

These movements, ranging from socialism to spiritualism, had one thing and only one thing in common--they were all opposed to conventional Victorian ideals. (135)

8. For a valuable and insightful approach to the idea that the occult filled the gap left by the failure of Christian churches to satisfy the need for "sacramental experiences," see Mircea Eliade, Occultism, Witchcraft, and Cultural Fashions (63-5).

9. For Joyce see Tindall, "James Joyce and the Hermetic Tradition" and The Literary Symbol, Goldfarb, Gilbert, Scott, and Herr; for Eliot see Senior, Goldfarb, and Gibbonis. It should also be noted that, besides Eliot and Joyce, many more major artists, including of course Yeats, as well as Stringberg, Hesse, and D.H. Lawrence, have at one time or another and in varying ways incorporated occult material into their art.

10. Graham Hough's discussion of the debatable nature of the occult tradition is illuminating. Borrowing Wittgenstein's idea of "family resemblances" [there is no single common factor in diverse or related phenomena but only a whole series of similarities and relationships], he says that this "is the sense in which we can speak of an occult tradition. The various doctrines, sects, philosophical schools that may be held to make up such a tradition do not constitute an orthodoxy, have not a single factor common to all, but they are related to each other in this sort of way [that is, they have family resemblances]. And if we understand that the relationships are of this kind, we shall be able to see that they are numerous and of long standing..." (9):

11. My sources for this discussion of the Eleusinian mysteries are the following: Eliade, ed. Encyclopedia of Religions; Funnell; Mylonas; and Surette, Eleusis.

12. Mead discusses the Eleusinian Mysteries in his Thrice-Greatest Hermes as well as in many of his other works. Of special interest is Mead's article on the subject which appeared in The Theosophical Review (see "Notes on the Eleusinian Mysteries," Vol. XXII (March, 1898-August, 1898); March 15: 145-57; May 15: 232-242; June 15: 312-323).

13. See, for example, Leon Surette's ground-breaking A Light from Eleusis, as well as articles by Miyake, Davis, Sicari, and Dennis.

14. For example, in the Republic (ii., 364E) Plato shows his contempt for those who take part in the trade of pardons or indulgences. On the other hand, in Phaedrus, 61D-62D) and Theocritus (176B-D) Plato discusses a doctrine according to which the end of man is to become like God. Therefore, as Graham Hough observes, "Above all, Plato, though contemptuous of the ritualist and superstitious side of Orphism is in the mystical and mythological part of his teaching deeply penetrated by Orphic and Pythagorean influence" (24).

15. Some sort of explanation is in order here. Gnosticism in its original, Hellenistic forms is dualistic. For example, Robert A. Segal's definition of gnosticism as it appears in the Nag Hammadi manuscripts is well taken:

Gnosticism here is the belief in a radical, or antithetical, dualism of immateriality and matter. More specifically, it is the belief in radical dualism in man, the cosmos, and god; the primordial unity of all immateriality; the yearning to restore that unity; the present entrapment of a portion of immateriality in man; the need for knowledge to reveal to man that entrapment; and the need for a savior to reveal to him that knowledge. (14)

However, it is important to remember that modern occult theory provides for a monistic and not a dualistic cosmos. Mead, Upward, Orage, Blavatsky and all the other modern occultists are monists. Today it is Christianity and its Aristotelian sources that are dualistic. At the extreme end of dualism is Manicheism where πνεῦμα = ἀγαθόν (Spirit=Good) and ἡμὴ = κακόν (Matter=Evil). The occult today sees spirit as the "subtle body"--that is, occultists believe that the universe consists of one sacred substance; in Indian philosophy, on the other hand, matter is seen as illusory. Both the western occult and the Indian occult are monist.

16. Around this basic mythos the gnostics built a complex speculative system marked by antinomian and anticosmic tendencies. Perceived as a Christian heresy, gnosticism was attacked by the Christian Fathers. This attack was instrumental in preventing Christianity from being sucked into the vortex of syncretism (from which it had already absorbed a variety of elements). In addition, the consciously defensive stance of Christianity against the "Gnostic Heresy" is reflected in the formation of the Christian canon (New Testament) and the rigid dogmatism of the Church.

17. For further details see Surette, Eleusis (60-4); and Christine Brooke-Rose, A ZBC of Ezra Pound (206; 214).

Other writers, especially many of the Romantics, have been identified as having been familiar with Gnostic texts and ideas. On Blake criticism and gnosticism, Paul A. Cantor reports the following:

Henry Crabb Robinson reports that when arguing theology with Blake, he heard "the doctrine of the Gnostics repeated with sufficient consistency to silence one so unlearned as myself." See G.E. Bentley, Jr., Ed., Blake Records (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 545. On Blake's knowledge of Gnosticism, see Morton D. Palley, Energy and the Imagination (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 66-67; Stuart Curran, "Blake and the Gnostic Hyle: A Double Negative," Blake Studies, 4 (1972), 130-33; and Leopold Damrosch, Jr., Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 256-57. As these studies point out, Blake did not necessarily share the doctrinal beliefs or moral attitudes of the original Gnostics; in fact, he was probably opposed to them. But while rejecting the specific content of Gnostic myth, Blake obviously learned something from its form, and found a way of adapting its typical pattern of inverting gods and devils to embody his distinctive vision in his own myths. (195 n.3).

For a detailed study of Shelley's knowledge and use of Gnosticism, see James Rieger, The Mutiny Within: The Heresies of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Gnosticism has been the inspiration for a few modern writers as well. Anatole

France (1844-1924), Aleksander Blok (1880-1921), Michail Bulgakov (1891-1940), Albert Verwey (1865-1937), and Hermann Hesse (1877-1962) are the most important of these. As well, C.G. Jung (1875-1961) was very impressed by gnostic imagery and even wrote a gnostic work, Septem Sermons ad Mortuos (written in 1915-16), inspired by Basilides' speculations. For Jung's Gnosticism see Hoeller.

18. The best and most complete study of Pound's Neoplatonism is Sharon Mayer Libera's dissertation. See also Thomas H. Jackson's The Early Poetry of Ezra Pound and Clark Emery's Ideas into Action. There are passing references to Pound's Neoplatonism in most of the other major books on Pound. Neoplatonism has been, of course, an accepted field of research--unlike occultism. In the present study, Neoplatonism is seen as part of the "occult tradition." This approach is justified not just by such scholars of the occult as Yates, but also by Pound's own approach. For example, it is absolutely clear that Pound sees Gemistus Plethon's bringing of Platonism to Italy as the major event in the transmission of the occult tradition from east to west (see chapter entitled "NEOPLATONICKS ETC" in Guide and my discussion of Plethon in chapter IV of the present study).

19. See Tuveson on Wordsworth, Bear on Coleridge, Raine and Harper on Blake and Yeats, Rogers and Welburn on Shelley, Blackstone on Keats, and Wilson on Yeats. See also Anya Taylor's bibliographical essay on "The Occult and Romanticism." For a hostile reaction against the "occult school of criticism," see Harold Bloom's review essay entitled "Myth, Vision, Allegory." Bloom denies that there is any occultism in Blake at all, asserts that Yeats was "a delighted charlatan who at least half-believed his own charlatantry," and finds no value in most of the studies mentioned above.

20. During the Middle Ages, Catharism was also strong in northern Italy. There were two forms of Catharism: a mitigated and a radical dualism. Because in Italy the Cathari were riven by conflicts between adherents of the two forms, they were not as strong as their fellow believers in France and it was easier for the Papacy to extirpate them by the beginning of the fourteenth century.

21. Once received, the consolamentum remitted the recipient's sins and the consequences of the soul's imprisonment in the body, reuniting his soul with his spirit in heaven and releasing him from Satan's rule. Thus, this rite conferred a gnostic-like certainty of salvation which challenged orthodox Christian revelation.

22. Carl Grundberg makes this point in "Ezra Pound and Trobar Clus" (122-23). After a brief discussion of Pound's assumption regarding the origin of the inner tradition surviving to the time of the troubadours, Grundberg goes on to say that

Pound's recipe for what went into the love code may be distorted or deficient in its details, but no one can deny that the Occitan culture of the 12th to 13th centuries was a soup of different hidden traditions. It was a tolerant landscape in which Catharist heretics, Jewish Kabbalists, heterodox troubadours, and an instinctively pagan peasantry could live side by side, for a brief moment of history. (122).

23. Yates adds that "Cabala was basically a method of religious contemplation which could, rather easily, pass into manipulation of religious magic" (2). Pound, in "The Art of Poetry," seems to share Yates's understanding of the term Cabala. While drawing an analogy between mathematical formulae and poetry, Pound writes:

Is the formula [of the circle] nothing, or is it cabala and the sign of unintelligible magic? The engineer, understanding and translating to the many, builds for the uninitiated bridges and devices. He speaks their language. For the initiated the signs are a door into eternity and into the boundless ether. (SP 362)

24. Sigismundo later brought Plethon's ashes from Peloponnesus and reinterred them in one of the sarcophagi of his Tempio at Rimini.

25. Pico della Mirandola is the founder of Christian Cabala. As Yates explains, Christian Cabala was founded by Pico Della Mirandola in Florence, shortly before the Expulsion of 1492. He learned the techniques from Spanish Jews but interpreted them in a Christian direction, for he believed that Cabala confirmed the truth of Christianity. Moreover, in associating Cabala with Hermeticism, he introduced Hermetic magic into the system. 'Christian Cabala' thus differs basically from Jewish Cabala in its Christian use of Cabalist techniques and in its amalgamation of Hermeticism and Hermetic magic into the system. Yet there were basic affinities between the Hebrew type of gnosis, supposedly descending from Moses, and the Hermetic gnosis supposedly descending from its Egyptian founder, Hermes Trismegistus. (*Occult Philosophy* 2-3)

Following its introduction into Christian scholarly circles by Pico, the Cabala was further developed along theurgical lines by Cornelius Agrippa (1478-1535), and later became part of Christian theosophical thought through Jacob Böhme (1575-1624). Through Böhme the Cabala reached German romantics like Novalis, Schelling, and Goethe. The great theosophical textbook of the Cabala was produced in the seventeenth century by Baron Knorr von Rosenroth (1635-1689), a German scholar and Pietist, who translated the most important parts of the *Zohar* into Latin and published his work under the title *Kabbala Denudata* (1684). Rosenroth's work, based largely on Christian interpolations and interpretations of an already degenerated Lurianic Cabala, reached men like Swedenborg "who entirely reconstructed an already reconstructed Cabbalistic system in conformity with his own very personal visions of heaven and hell. Blake, his natural successor, introduced a new literature of vision and prophecy, and the now totally unrecognizable Cabala was fully assimilated into the mainstream of romanticism" (Epstein 35). Rosenroth's work was translated and condensed into one volume by MacGregor Mathers. Published under the title *The Kabbala Unveiled* (1890), it was read by Yeats.

26. For discussions of Taylor's importance, see Kathleen Raine's books on Blake; Neville Rogers' on Shelley; Bernard Blackstone's on Keats; and F.A.C. Wilson's on Yeats. For Pound and Taylor see Libera's dissertation, Miyake, Terrell's "Mang-Tsze; Thomas Taylor, and Madam Y. J. J." as well as my discussion in Chapter IV of this study.

27. For a discussion of Spenser's use of the occult tradition also consult Douglas Brooks-Davies, The Mercurian Monarch: Magical Politics from Spenser to Pope (1-84) and Kenneth Gross, Spenserian Poetics: Idolatry, Iconoclasm, and Magic.

28. In Canto III (Ur-Cantos) Heydon is described as a "Worker of miracles, dealer in levitation, / In thoughts upon pure form, in alchemy, / Seer of pretty visions ('servant of God and secretary of nature.')" In Gaudier-Brzeska Pound writes about him: "And John Heydon, long before our present day theorists, had written of the joys of pure form... inorganic form, in his Holy Guide" (127). For further discussion see Baumann's article, Leon Surette's Eleusis (263-67), and Timothy Materer's "Ezra Pound and the Alchemy of the Word." Although I do not agree with his suggestion that Pound's request for a copy of Heydon's Holy Guide can be taken as a sign of his reawakened interest in the occult (as I have already indicated in Chapter I), Materer's glossing of Pound's comparison between Heydon and Apollonius of Tyana in canto 91 ("Heydon polluted. Apollonius unpolluted") is very sensible and, I think, correct:

When Pound compared Apollonius of Tyana to Heydon in Canto 91..., Baumann thinks that Pound refers to the scholarly edition of his work received by Apollonius but not Heydon. Actually, Pound is saying that Heydon himself is "polluted" or "desensitized" in comparison with Apollonius. This is clear at the conclusion of 92:

After Apollonius, desensitization
& a little light from the borders....(622)

John Heydon the alchemist is not a Poundian hero such as Apollonius but does represent "a little light from the borders." He thus finds his place in Pound's equivalent of Dante's paradisio. (118)

Materer quotes a letter from Pound to William French, dated 30 August 1954, where Pound's attitude to Heydon and Apollonius is made clear: "part way thru Heydon/Rosy Cross a.D 1662 already corrupted in part/tho gt/scholar/by contrast Apollonius of TYana, even in fragmentary account of Philostratus is UNcorrupted/" (118).

29. In her Hermetic Tradition, Yates claims that during the seventeenth century Freemasonry merged with Elizabethan courtly philosophy and continental Rosicrucianism.

30. De Molay was arrested on 13 October 1306 on orders from King Philip IV; after a much delayed trial, he was burned at the stake on 19 March 1314.

31. As Terrell explains, however, "It was not Scotus whom they dug for, but a disciple of his, Amaury de Bène" (Companion, I 143).

32. Terrell, quoting from G. Legman's The Guilt of the Templars (New York: Basic Books, 1966), says this about the Templars:

Their headquarters in Paris, called the Temple, was the money center of the Western world: "The Temple lent money to kings and merchants and collected its interest under the guise of rent...though the Church never ceased to denounce the Jew [sic] moneylenders" [Guilt, 28]. "Usury was the principal guilt of the Templars, and the secret of their enormous wealth" [ibid., 22]. The Italian banking system grew enormously through

the Renaissance because it filled the gap left by the destruction of the Templars. (Companion, II 494-95)

33. Again, I am working from notes taken by Leon Surette. The letter in which Pound makes his observation regarding the linking of Masonry, Swedenborg, and Dante is dated 7 December 1956, and belongs to the Pound Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

34. Lilly Library, William Bird Collection.

35. In The Key to Theosophy, H.P. Blavatsky has this to say about the term "theosophy":

...Theosophy is Divine Knowledge or Science.... "Divine Wisdom," θεοσοφία (Theosophia) or Wisdom of the gods, as θεογονία (theogonia), genealogy of the gods. The word θεός means a god in Greek, one of the divine beings, certainly not "God" in the sense attached in our day to the term. Therefore, it is not "Wisdom of God," as translated by some, but Divine Wisdom such as that possessed by the gods. The term is many thousand years old....

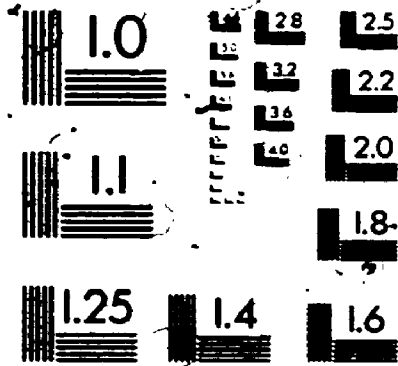
It comes to us from the Alexandrian philosophers, called lovers truth, Philaletheians, from φιλο- (phil) "loving," and ἀληθεια (aletheia) "truth." The name Theosophy dates from the third century of our era, and began with Ammonius Saccas [the teacher of Plotinus] and his disciples, who started the Eclectic Theosophical system. (†-2)

36. In the case of Theosophy, the inspiration came from the Far East and, especially, India; in the case of the syncretistic movements of Hellenism, the inspiration came from the Near East.

37. The attractiveness of the Theosophical synthesis is understandable when one reflects upon Peter Kuch's analysis of the solutions Blavatsky's books offered to the late nineteenth-century man:

[Blavatsky's] synthesis was then boldly offered as a means of solving the major problems thrown up by the Nineteenth century debates on Science, Religion, and Philosophy. Science and Religion were reconciled by declaring that evolution took place in both the physical and the spiritual worlds, and that Darwin and Huxley were in harmony with the Ancients and with the Buddhist scriptures. Contemporary discoveries in thermodynamics, electromagnetism, and physics were related to the occult and to research being conducted in Spiritualism. The faith-corroding problems raised for traditional Christianity throughout the century by Higher Criticism -- especially works like Feuerbach's Das Wesen des Christentums (1841) and Renan's La vie de Jésus (1863) -- were solved by advancing a theory of exoteric and esoteric interpretation, and by expounding the Bible in terms of the Kabbalah and the Vedas. The widespread belief that a knowledge of Eastern literature was necessary for true self-understanding, a belief evident in the popularity of translators such as Edward Fitzgerald and

2



MICRO

Edwin Arnold, in the monumental labours of Max Müller, and in the pervasive influence of Schlegel, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Schelling all of whom drew heavily on the Upanishads, was adopted as one of the fundamental tenets of Theosophy. In short, it offered itself, as the subtitle of Isis Unveiled declared, as 'A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology'. (9)

38. The Society for Psychic Research had been formed in London in 1872 in response to the growing interest of Englishmen in psychic phenomena.

CHAPTER III
POUND'S OCCULT EDUCATION

1. "CATECHUMEN"

As already noted in the Introduction, Pound was closely associated during his London Years (1908-21) with Yeats, Olivia and Dorothy Shakespear, Mead, Upward, and Orage—and all these people had strong connections with various occult groups. Yeats's occult interests are well known, and there is evidence that Pound observed some of Yeats's occult experiments.¹ Less well understood is Pound's association with G. R. S. Mead (editor of The Quest, a journal devoted to gnosticism and the pagan mystery religions), Allen Upward, and A. R. Orage (editor of The New Age, a journal of politics, arts, and letters in which Pound published more than one hundred pieces). The recently published correspondence between Pound and John Theobald and between Pound and his future wife, Dorothy Shakespear, reveal more clearly than heretofore Pound's interest in the occult during the years preceding the genesis of The Cantos.²

In this chapter I intend to present the evidence for that interest and to examine the nature of Pound's contacts with certain members of the rather diverse occult circles of London. One of the tasks to be performed here is the presentation of a portrait of those occult circles in London in which Pound moved. Since the London occult milieu of the time is characterized by diversity and disunity, it will be necessary to discriminate between the varieties of occultism Pound encountered and to identify those with which he became involved.

With very few exceptions, current scholarly comment about Pound's relation to the occult is virtually nonexistent. Given the emphasis placed by Yeats scholars on

the importance of the occult, and particularly on the renewed interest with which Yeats was pursuing his occult studies and experiments during the early period of his association with Pound (1909-1916), it is surprising to find that most Pound scholars have chosen to ignore this aspect of Pound's life.

As I have remarked in the "Introduction," there are some notable exceptions to the general scholarly neglect of Pound's involvement with the occult. In an early study, Ideas Into Action (1958), Clark Emery provided a valuable exploratory survey of Pound's eclectic religion as expressed in the Cantos. Later, in Sailing After Knowledge (1963), George Dekker noticed the presence of Mead in the background of Pound's mysticism (83). Herbert N. Schneidau, in "Pound and Yeats: The Question of Symbolism" and in Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real (1969), briefly discusses Pound's early poetics at the time when Pound "was entertaining esoteric ideas from people like Mead and Upward." Leon Surette's pioneering work has already received some attention in the "Introduction" of this study. A. Walton Litz, in his recent "Pound and Yeats" (a detailed narrative of the interactions between the two poets between 1909 and 1913), stops briefly to note that "Yeats's investigations into magic and the occult rekindled Pound's earlier interest in the esoteric, and he even wrote home for a copy of Demoniality: or, Incubi and Succubi that he had mentioned in 1908 in his headnote to 'La Fraisine'" (141). To these studies which pay attention to Pound's links with the occult, four others must be added: James Longenbach's "The Order of the Brothers Minor: Pound and Yeats At Stone Cottage 1913-16" and "The Secret Society of Modernism: Pound, Yeats, Olivia Shakespear, and Abbé de Montfaucon de Villars"; Kevin Oderman's Ezra Pound and the Erotic Medium (1986); and Colin McDowell's and Timothy Materer's "Gyre & Vortex."³

It is important to note that the earlier studies, including Leon Surette's, either do not identify the interests of Péladan, Mead and Upward as occult or seriously

underestimate the extent of Pound's involvement with these people. "Unusual interest in...religious backwaters," "mysticism" and "esotericism" are the phrases or terms used by the earlier scholars to describe the body of ideas Pound was drawing upon from the very beginning of his career as a writer. That none of the earlier commentators (with the notable exception of Schneidau⁴) uses the term "occult" is of much significance. To repeat a point already made, either this body of ideas is not recognized by these critics as being occult or Pound's involvement with the occultists is underestimated.

In most of the later studies, especially that by Longenbach, the emphasis is placed on the aesthetic side of Pound's occultism. Thus, the importance of Pound's debt to the occult milieu of London circa 1909-1921 has been minimized. Most Poundian criticism continues to 'protect' the poet from any taint of occult influence. The preoccupation with Pound's aesthetic concerns, which as I have suggested in the first chapter of this study cannot be separated from his esoteric interests, has left undisturbed a scholarly vacuum about occult circles in London during Pound's stay there.

2. AMERICAN BEGINNINGS: KATHERINE RUTH HEYMAN AND H.D.

Although Pound's London-years were very important to his familiarization with esoteric traditions, the process itself had its roots in his earlier years in Philadelphia, in his reading, and in his contact with at least one of his early friends, Katherine Ruth Heyman, who seems to have exerted considerable influence upon the young Ezra. What follows here is a biographical sketch of Pound and two of his contacts in Pennsylvania: Miss Heyman and Hilda Doolittle (H.D.). Pound's biographers have discussed this phase of his early life in nearly exhaustive detail. My discussion of Heyman and H.D. is designed to establish a feature of these two individuals which is either completely ignored or underemphasized by the biographers: their occult interests.

Miss Heyman (1874-1944), an American concert-pianist, is described by Charles Norman as "the older woman every young man meets" (7).⁵ Pound and Miss Heyman met in Philadelphia around 1904, possibly through a young painter named William Brooke Smith (1884-1908) for whom Pound had great respect.⁶ Pound seems to have fallen in love with Miss Heyman. The affair is usually seen as having been Platonic, but the evidence is not conclusive.⁷ How close the two were at the time is emphasized by the fact that Miss Heyman gave Pound a diamond ring, which belonged to her mother, "to keep until we're very old together."

It is of some interest to note that Miss Heyman's appearance in Pound's life is also noted by Hilda Doolittle in her autobiographical novel HERMIONE (completed in 1927). Miss Heyman is presented in rather unflattering terms in the novel. The scathing portrait of Miss Stamberg (as Miss Heyman is called in the novel) reveals a narrator (H.D.) full of envy and bitterness; feelings deriving from H.D.'s apparent jealousy. "Hermione" (H.D.) clearly feels the pangs of jealousy over the sudden

emergence of this older woman who holds "George Lowndes" (Pound) under her spell and fascinates him in a way H.D. herself could not (HERmione, especially 108-09).⁸

Katherine Ruth Heyman was already well established as a concert pianist when Pound first met her. The young Pound "fell completely under her spell, a not uncommon experience where she was concerned, for hers was a forceful, dynamic and imperious personality" (Norman 27).⁹ Music was one of Miss Heyman's enthusiasms and another one was the occult--and as we shall see, these two enthusiasms were closely interconnected in her mind.

The person who knew Miss Heyman best during her later years in the United States is Faubion Bowers; he "studied piano with Miss Heyman and became so good a friend that he inherited all her papers at her death in 1944" (Terrell, "KRH and the Young E.P." 50). Writing about the second one of her enthusiasms, namely the occult, Bowers says that Miss Heyman "swallowed everything magical" and that

Long before drugs made...correlations between the senses common place, and decades before Zen, I Ching, stick tossings, Table-tipping, ouija boards, Tarot cards, astrology and the like became so very fashionable among our young, Kitty was a passionate convert and a militant proselytizer to and for all things recondite. (61)

Besides Faubion Bowers's testimony and what can be gleaned from her unfinished "Memoirs," Miss Heyman's book, The Relation of Archaic to Ultramodern Music (1921), gives us the best insight into her mind and reveals her occultist bent.¹⁰ Miss Heyman came to be known as the "high priestess of the Scriabin cult," and her devotion to the Russian composer Alexander Scriabin "continued to the end of her life and past the general decline of the composer's reputation, [and] was about equally divided between his music and his theosophy" (Adams 9). In her book, Miss Heyman "interprets music in occultist terms (e.g. 'The tone E is mana-consciousness')," and it becomes absolutely clear that her attachment to Scriabin was based "nearly as much on his mystical beliefs as his music" (Adams 17).¹¹

Miss Heyman did not meet Scriabin until 1913, but her reaction to him was prepared and prompted, no doubt, by her dabblings in the occult. She certainly had ample opportunity to communicate her enthusiasms to Pound--and it is this point that biographers have underemphasized.

After their initial acquaintance in Philadelphia, Miss Heyman reappears in Pound's biography in 1908 in Venice to rescue him from poverty but also to offer him an alternative to the life of the poet. Pound actually considered throwing the proofs of A Lume Spento into the waters of the Grand Canal; and, in a diversion from a life devoted to the Muse of Poetry, he had a brief stint as Miss Heyman's "European concert tour manager."

Giving up his role as impresario, Pound arrived in London in September 1908 and, as he wrote to William Carlos Williams, had an introduction or two from Miss Heyman and, indeed, "entered London more or less under her wing" (Letters 146). It is of some consequence that Pound's introduction to London, a city teeming with occult groups at the time, was through an occultist. Miss Heyman herself arrived in London on 24 March 1909 and is mentioned by Patricia Hutchins among those whom Pound numbers as frequent visitors to his Kensington flat (69-70).¹² When Pound went to New York in 1910, Miss Heyman was there and he visited her in her studio. Her esoteric interests were still strong since, as Charles Norman writes, "Miss Heyman was now interested in Buddhism, and he [Pound] may have met in her company the founder of the first Buddhist church in New York" (Norman 63). Back in London in 1913, Miss Heyman composed a musical setting for Pound's "Apparuit." Although their intimacy tapered off after the 1910s, they did remain friends until her death in 1944. The last time they met was in New York during Pound's 1939 visit to the United States.

There are two early poems dedicated to Miss Heyman and she also appears in

the Pisan Cantos.¹³ The Heyman link, interesting in itself, is also important in connection with Pound's relationship with H.D. As we have seen, H.D. was disturbed by the appearance, in 1904, of Miss Heyman who, at least for a while, monopolized Pound's attentions. Barbara Guest adds to this the claim that "Heyman had been the "older woman" who had introduced Pound to Freud, Swedenborg, Balzac's Séraphita, Yoga, [and] all the "culture" Pound had brought back to Hilda" (11). Guest does not provide any documentation for her claim; her source, nonetheless, is clearly H.D.'s End to Torment.¹⁴

End to Torment is an intensely personal memoir of H.D.'s and Pound's years in Pennsylvania and London, and it provides us with some hard information regarding the kinds of books these two were reading during their stormy engagement (circa 1905-07). H.D. wrote End to Torment from March to July 1958 in anticipation of Pound's release from St. Elizabeth's. In the event, he was freed while the manuscript was still in progress. Significantly, in the months following the completion of the journal, "H.D. sent the manuscript to Brunnenburg, Italy, for Pound's comments, and he responded with a few suggestions and the note, 'there is a great deal of beauty'" ("Forward," End to Torment xi).

There are two separate references in End to Torment to the kind of books Pound encouraged H.D. to read during their Pennsylvania years. The first reference begins with an idyllic recollection of listening to Ezra reading William Morris in an orchard under blossoming apple trees:

It was Ezra who really introduced me to William Morris. He literally shouted "The Gilliflower of Gold" in the orchard...It was at this time that he brought me the Séraphita and a volume of Swedenborg--Heaven and Hell? Or is that Blake? He brought me volumes of Ibsen and of Bernard Shaw....He brought me the Portland, Maine, Thomas Mosher reprint of the Iseult and Tristan story...There was a series of Yogi books, too. (End to Torment 22-3)

The occasion for the second reference is her recollection of reading

• Marcel Schwob's The Children's Crusade:

The Children's Crusade by Marcel Schwob...I made the last entry yesterday. It flashed into my mind, a book that I have not thought of, for perhaps 50 years. It was one of little de luxe reprints of the Portland, Maine, Mosher series that Ezra brought me at the time of the avalanche of Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Shaw, Yogi books, Swedenborg, William Morris, Balzac's Séraphita, Rossetti and the rest of them. (End to Torment 45-6)

Each of these two entries, which are separated by approximately a seven week period, has its own stimulus. The first follows the associational process linking Homer Pound's government job in the Philadelphia Mint, to gold, to Ezra's obsession with usura, to the epithet "gold" as used in William Morris's "The Gilliflower of Gold," to H.D.'s introduction to Morris through Pound, and, finally, to other books to which Pound introduced H.D. at about the same period. The associational process of the second reference is both more easily followed and more difficult to explain, since, after an admission by H.D. about her "failure" to follow the course of the Cantos, there is a break and then, seemingly out of nowhere, a title of a book and the name of its author "flashed into my mind." In the next entry, written the next day, H.D. undertakes to place the time of her reading of Schwob's book and to recollect "the avalanche" of the books Pound brought her. The edition of the Marcel Schwob book which H.D. mentions was published in a translation by H.C. Green in Portland, Me. in 1905. This book, about which H.D. had not thought "for perhaps 50 years" (1905-1957), places the "avalanche" of books in, or shortly after, 1905 and supports the hypothesis presented here that much of what Pound brought to H.D., in the form of books and perhaps of ideas as well, was presented to him by Miss Heyman.

It was primarily Pound who influenced what H.D. read around 1905, and the books he encouraged her to read anticipate her later involvement with Spiritualism and the occult in general.¹⁵ The books H.D. mentions also establish Pound's early exposure to then fashionable occult literature. Among Pound scholars, J.J. Wilhelm is

the only one who has discussed the character of the literature; but he fails to note at least two important points. First, he ignores Balzac's Séraphita, a mystical novel including an explication of Swedenborg's theosophy. Swedenborg's theosophical writings seem to have been one of Pound's enduring interests, since he was to return to them frequently.

The second point Wilhelm overlooks, and one worth pursuing, is the "Yogi books." Wilhelm writes that "They also read books of Yoga, because, even though Pound preferred the rational ethics of Confucius to the mystical immersion of Buddhism, he nevertheless was aware of the powerful way that Hindu wise men could exert control over their bodies" (106-07). Besides the point about the "Hindu wise men" which makes no sense in this context, Wilhelm is probably quite wrong in reading H.D.'s "series of Yogi books" as "books of Yoga" (italics mine). Why is it that H.D. says "Yogi" and not "Yoga" books? I think that it is likely that what H.D. is referring to here is not Yoga books in general but rather books brought-out by a particular publisher. And this publisher is, quite probably, "The Yogi Publication Society," based in Chicago, Ill.. One example of a book published by this Society is Yogi Ramacharaka's (a pseudonym) Fourteen Lessons in Yogi Philosophy and Oriental Occultism (1903).¹⁶ Yogi Ramacharaka is also listed, at the back of the book, as the writer of many other books on similar subjects, including Science of Breath, Advanced Course in Yogi Philosophy and Philosophers and Religions of India. All these bits of evidence make clear that both Miss Heyman and H.D. shared with Pound an interest in the occult, and that Pound's contact with the occult began at least as early as his undergraduate years. Pound went to London, then, primed on the occult--not so very unusual for an aspiring poet in 1909.

3. POUND'S CATECHESIS IN LONDON (1): YEATS AND THE SHAKESPEARS

Pound's initial acquaintance during his undergraduate years in Pennsylvania with the esoteric tradition prepared him for the encounter with the "rising psychic tide" in which many of his most important London friends were participants. Among these friends we can number Yeats, Upward, Mead, Laurence Binyon, Ernest Rhys, Rabindranath Tagore, Florence Farr, A.R. Orage and, of course, Olivia and Dorothy Shakespear, his future mother-in-law and wife, respectively.

Pound owes his familiarity with London occult circles largely to Yeats. It was Yeats's presence that attracted Pound to London in the first place; and as their friendship developed, Pound naturally was given the opportunity to meet Yeats's numerous occult associates.

Yeats's own occult education can be divided into four phases. In rough chronological order these are: first, the period during which he was a member of the Theosophical Society (1885-1890); second, the period of his membership in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (1890-?1902); third, his delving, after a relatively long period of inactivity, into psychical research and spiritualism (1908-1917); and, fourth, the period of his gradual arrival at the synthesis set forth in A Vision (1917-25). It is very difficult to draw sharp lines of demarcation and, thus, these phases and the accompanying dates are tentative at best. In addition, these phases overlap, and traces of previous phases survive in subsequent ones.

In the 1880s Yeats was interested in Theosophy and, shortly after having been expelled from Blavatsky's esoteric group for his interest in experimental magic and esoteric rites, he joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. Yeats was attracted to the Golden Dawn's elaborate rituals because through them he was given the opportunity to devote himself to the study of magic and spiritism. The Theosophical

Society and the Golden Dawn were not very different in terms of religious, metaphysical and cosmological beliefs.¹⁷ The most significant difference, at least for our purposes, involved the practice of theurgy, that is, the systematic pursuit of magical powers. For a long time, Yeats seemed perfectly satisfied with the company of the occultists of the Golden Dawn; but the obsessive wrangles, quarrels, and dissensions which befell the Order in the late 1890s and early 1900s forced Yeats to sever his ties with the group and he was never to be a member of any other such group thereafter.

Although Yeats learned the bases for his lifelong interest in Eastern thought from Blavatsky,¹⁸ it was through Mead's works that he learned about the tradition of Western occultism represented by the Hermeticists and the Rosicrucians; and with Samuel Liddell Mathers (also known as Macgregor Mathers), one of the founders of the Golden Dawn and the one who composed the Order's rituals, he first conducted magical experiments as a member of a Cabalist Order.¹⁹

Yeats's occult education had reached an advanced stage by the time he and Pound first met. Their first meeting took place in May 1909, when Yeats invited Pound to one of his "Monday Evenings." At the time of their first acquaintance, Yeats was pursuing, with more vigour than ever before, his interest in theurgy or practical magic. Pound's disapproval of Yeats's psychic experiments, which critics usually take as a statement of his rejection of the occult, is nothing more than a rejection of that particular variety of occultism--thus it is in need of careful qualification.

I have chosen for examination one representative example of Pound's ambivalent attitude toward Yeats's occultism. It concerns the comments made by Pound in a letter to his mother, dated November 1913, just prior to the winter of 1913-14 passed in Sussex as Yeats's secretary:

My stay in Stone Cottage will not be in the least profitable. I detest the country. Yeats will amuse me part of the time and bore me to death with psychical research the rest. I regard the visit as a duty to posterity.
(Letters 63)

Notwithstanding his obvious dislike for psychical research and theurgy, Pound eventually found Yeats's company so pleasant, his conversation so absorbing and engaging that he later admitted that Yeats "improves on acquaintance" (Pound to Dorothy Shakespeare, Letter of 21 November 1913 (EP/DS 276)). Pound even modified his attitude towards Yeats's involvement in psychic research.

The evidence for Pound's more open-minded attitude towards Yeats's occult interests comes from his reminiscences of their activities during the winter of 1914-15, also passed in Sussex with Yeats. Writing on the "'Noh' Plays," Pound is willing to at least be more patient and somewhat more sympathetic to Yeats's experiments and unscientific "correlations." He is still careful, nonetheless, to voice his reservations so as not to appear like someone who is convinced about the validity of Yeats's practices and beliefs.

I dare say the play, Suma Genji, [which he has just given in translation] will seem undramatic to some people the first time they read it. The suspense is the suspense of waiting for a supernatural manifestation--which comes. Some will be annoyed at a form of psychology which is, in the West, relegated to spiritistic seances. There is, however, no doubt that such psychology exists. All through the winter of 1914-15 I watched Mr. Yeats correlating folk-lore (which Lady Gregory had collected in Irish cottages) and data of the occult writers, with the habits of charlatans of Bond Street. If the Japanese authors had not combined the psychology of such matters with what is to me a very fine sort of poetry, I would not bother about it.

The reader will miss the feel of suspense if he is unable to put himself in sympathy with the priest eager to see "even in a vision" the beauty lost in the years, "the shadow of the past in bright form". I do not say that this sympathy is easily acquired. It is too unusual a frame of mind for us to fall into it without conscious effort. BUT if one can once get over the feeling of hostility, if one can once let himself into the world of the Noh, there is undoubtedly a new beauty before him. I have found it well worth the trial, and can hope that others will also. (T 236-37)

During that time Yeats was reading Avicenna, Paracelsus, Agrippa and Swedenborg. As Pound notes, Yeats was attempting to discover some correlation

between these authors and folk-lore beliefs. F.A.C. Wilson makes the important observation that "All these sources of information seemed to corroborate his [Yeats's] own developing philosophy, as did also the detail of the Japanese Noh plays which he was then first reading: as the authorities accumulated, it is interesting to note, his findings won the grudging assent of Ezra Pound" (*Yeats and Tradition* 145). Pound is still distancing himself from the "habits of charlatans of Bond Street," which is his description of Yeats's spiritualism. But he is now willing to suspend his natural hostility toward such things and attend closely to the occult psychology. This he is willing to do because, first, the poetry of the Japanese plays is very fine, and, second, the telos of the exercise is the beatific vision, which Pound constantly pursues. Understandably, then, the strident tone of his letter to his mother, quoted above, has disappeared in his reminiscences of the winter of 1914-15 in favour of what appears to be "grudging assent."

The impression which emerges from this and other similar examples is of a student of the occult who is trying to find his bearings and who certainly has his share of likes and dislikes. In addition, this is a discerning and discriminating student who is not eager to advertize his interest in occultism.

Pound's usual stance is that of an interested and informed outsider who never became a member of any of the occult groups which proliferated in London during the turn of the century. Thus while he was present at many of the gatherings of people interested in esoteric matters, especially the ones held by Yeats and his occult friends, Pound did not see himself, nor was he seen by them, as "belonging." A case in point for this is the role played by Pound in Yeats's correspondence with one of his hard core occult friends, the painter W. B. Horton.

The Yeats-Horton correspondence of the middle-1910s is perhaps the strongest evidence we possess of Pound's participation in Yeats's occult friendships. This

correspondence reveals that occult subjects were discussed during Yeats's "Monday Evenings" at 18 Woburn Buildings and also that the correspondents included Pound in their conversations and cared enough about him to make prophecies about his future. Characteristically, Horton includes a note to Pound in his 3 March 1913 letter to Yeats: "You'll do, only climb higher, ever higher and thus forget the burden" (Harper, Yeats-Horton 119). On 23 November 1913 Yeats, having obviously misplaced Horton's letter, asks him to "repeat...the prophecy you made about Ezra Pound" to whom his letter was dictated (Yeats-Horton 121). Three years later, on 6 September 1916, after having attended Yeats's Monday Evening on the 4th, Horton writes a letter in which he is very critical of Yeats's actions and ambitions:

I was and am very sorry for Ezra because beneath all his many wrappings I see the Real Man who sorrows deeply over the antics and perverse lucubrations of his distracted charge. Watching and listening to Ezra I could see, as it were, a something slimy crawling over everything that is beautiful and noble and of good report and leaving behind him an unquestionably glittering but at the same time foul track of slime. I am sorry for him because of what he must go through, for Love-in-Death is approaching who will open his eyes and those of his Moon and other satellites.

What is astonishing is that you do not see what Ezra is to you. But this is all your and his business and I can assure you you are both on the verge of certain things measured out to you in your different capacities....

Ezra was your guest last Monday as were others so I did not think it right and proper to say anything but at same time I cannot allow my attitude to be mistaken. I gather from you that one cannot be a Poet and a Hero; in other words to be a Hero you must be a Zero. Well I prefer the Heroic Zero to the Olympian Poet on his sham Olympus....

What you or Ezra or anyone else believes or says matters not one tittle to me but I do know we are all in the hands of the Living God and sudden and quick and drastic will be the Event.

I have a word for Mrs Shakespeare. Sundry of her accounts are being made up, the balance is being struck--she will soon know on which side it is to be. (Yeats-Horton 128-29)

Though close reading of this passage yields little, it is clear here that Yeats and Horton had fundamental disagreements that can be understood if one takes in consideration that the occult is often divided into a multitude of warring factions, each of which denies credibility to the others.²⁰ I will restrict myself here to

pointing out that the references to Pound in this letter should establish his participation in Yeats's occult friendships. But this is not the principal lesson to be drawn from this episode. The letters make clear that Pound has nothing in common with Horton, or most of the rest of the pathetic fools and tricksters who made up much of the Occult London. The fact that he knew many of them personally and understood the nature of their practices and beliefs explains his frequent--but misleading--outbursts against their scandalous and outrageous ways.

Horton's letter includes a strange and at the same time typical "prophecy" about Mrs. Shakespear. The moment is thus opportune to turn our attention to Mrs. Shakespear and her daughter, Dorothy, both of whom were members of Yeats's esoteric circle. The friendship between Yeats and Pound was strengthened by their mutual interest in the Shakespear family, and much can be gleaned from an examination of the nature of Pound's occult involvements as seen through his association with Mrs. Shakespear and Dorothy.

Pound and his future mother-in-law were introduced in January 1909, likely by the Australian poet, Frederic Manning, Olivia's nephew (whose Scenes and Portraits Pound commends²¹); the young poet was invited to the Shakespear home at number twelve Brunswick Gardens in early February. Mrs. Shakespear and her daughter were among the students who enrolled in his "Short Introductory Course on the Development of the Literature of Southern Europe" given at the Polytechnic in Regent Street in January-February 1909 (Hutchins 75; EP/DS xi).

Olivia Shakespear was Lionel Johnson's first cousin and a novelist in her own right. She is the "Diana Vernon" of Yeats's autobiographical writings and had a love affair with the poet which lasted less than a year (1895-96), but after which they remained close friends. It is clear that Mrs. Shakespear participated in the period's occult movements. Her participation is probably best illustrated by the fact that she

co-authored two plays with Florence Farr, the accomplished actress and occultist, who for a time headed the Order of the Golden Dawn. The two plays were published together as The Beloved of Hathor and the Shrine of the Golden Hawk (1902), and are on occult subjects.²²

Olivia Shakespear, and Dorothy after about 1905, frequented the various gatherings held by and for those sharing theosophical and occult interests. Yeats's letters to Olivia Shakespear make it abundantly clear that he viewed her as a fellow occultist. Frequently he shares with her descriptions of his psychic experiences and details about the importance of the occult in the making of his art.²³

The Ezra Pound-Dorothy Shakespear correspondence provides several examples of Olivia Shakespear's as well as Dorothy's and Pound's occult interests. Olivia, for example, is seen in these letters as Yeats's ambassador to Pound in the business of getting information necessary for making Pound's horoscope, as an expert in drawing occult symbols, and as the translator of a seventeenth century occult text, Abbé de Montfaucon de Villars's Le Comte de Gabalis (Paris, 1670), a text which Yeats and Pound had been reading earlier at Stone Cottage.²⁴

Dorothy Shakespear is also portrayed in this correspondence as sharing her mother's interests. In her letters and notebook entries she discusses palmistry and astrology and mentions a number of books which she is reading, ranging from Evelyn Underhill's Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Consciousness (which was hot off the press when Dorothy read it) to Conybeare's translation of Philostratus's Apollonius of Tyana (a text from which Pound drew heavily while composing cantos 91 and 94) and Sinistrari's Demonology: or, Incubi and Succubi (EP/DS 31-2, 188-89, 305). The degree of Dorothy's, and Pound's, involvement can be measured in what is for this study the most important passage in their correspondence. This is a letter from Pound to Dorothy, dated 14 January

1914, in which he attempts to clarify, for Dorothy's edification, the difference between "real symbolism" and aesthetic or literary symbolism:

...What do you mean by symbolism? Do you mean real symbolism, Cabala, genesis of symbols, rise of picture language, etc. or the aesthetic <symbolology> symbolism of Villiers de l'Isle Adam, and that Arthur Symons wrote a book about--the literary movement? At any rate begin on the "Comte de Gabalis", anonymous and should be in catalogue under "Comte de Gabalis". Then you might try the Grimoire of Pope Honorius (Iird I think).

There's a dictionary of symbols, but I think it immoral. I mean that I think a superficial acquaintance with the sort of shallow, conventional, or attributed meaning of a lot of symbols ~~weakens~~ ~~damnably~~, the power of receiving an energized symbol. I mean a symbol appearing in a vision has a certain richness and power of energizing joy--whereas if the supposed meaning of a symbol is familiar it has no more force, or interest of power of suggestion than any other word, or than a synonym in some other language.

Then there are those Egyptian language books, but O.S. [Olivia Shakespear] has 'em so they're no use. De Gabalis (first part only) is amusing. Ennemoser's History Of Magic may have something in it--Then there are "Les Symbolistes"--french from Mallarme, de l'Isle Adam, etc. to [Remy] De Gourmont, which is another story. (EP/DS 302)

Pound's favourable attitude toward "occult" over "aesthetic" Symbolism is quite clear and should go a long way toward rebuking the typical arguments of those who contradict any suggestion that Pound was interested in esoterica or simply ignore this subject. For example, in his persuasive revisionist account of Modernism, A Genealogy of Modernism (1984), Michael H. Levenson argues that both Pound and Ford criticized Yeats's symbolism and opposed both its technique of "suggestion" and "invocation" as well as its strain after the ineffable. Having carefully traversed the terrain between the time of the acceptance for publication of the Imagist anthology (Summer of 1913) and the outbreak of the war the following summer, Levenson observes that,

...Ford criticized the poetry of Yeats because it forsook immediate perception in favour of imaginative wanderings through mystical arcana. Pound, too, liked to compare art to science (the "arts, literature, poesy, are a science just as chemistry is a science") and in one of his early manifestos he insisted that "the natural object is always the adequate symbol." ["A Retrospect," LE 5] The pursuit of transcendence is thus summarily abandoned. (110)

Levenson concludes his discussion of Imagism by insisting that "to symbolist 'evocation,' Imagism opposed precision, hardness, clarity of outline. To symbolist transcendence, Imagism opposed the natural world" (120). I agree with the first part of Levenson's conclusion but the second part is, I think, incorrect. Levenson's distortion of Pound's Imagist position is due to his failure to see, first, that Pound does not reject the "real symbolism of vision" nor the possibility of transcendence and, second, that the use of scientific terminology and scientific analogies, which one finds in Pound's prose (and with which I deal in some detail in a subsequent chapter), belongs to the tradition of "occult science."²⁵

The shortest way to rebut Levenson's argument about the abandonment of the pursuit of transcendence by Pound is to let it stand, as I have done here, beside Pound's letter to Dorothy. In the letter it is evident that Pound was clear about the difference between literary symbolism, as depicted in Arthur Symon's Symbolist Movement in Literature, and "real" symbolism. He understood literary or aesthetic symbolism as a mixture of occultism, spiritualist mysticism, and magic couched in a language of emotional reverberation and suggestiveness. And even though he had no trouble with the first component, his own modernist needs dictated that a precise language be used in his own poetry. Therefore, in his own work he rejected the Symbolist technique in favour of a "sort of hyper-scientific precision" without, however, rejecting the symbolist metaphysical mysticism (SR 87). Clearly, this is what Pound means in his "Vorticism" article where he rejects Symbolism for its "mushy technique" while indicating that his rejection is not total. In the same essay he approves wholeheartedly of a "belief in a sort of permanent metaphor, [which] is, as I understand it, 'symbolism' in its profounder sense. It is not necessarily a belief in a permanent world, but it is a belief in that direction" (G-B 84). In short, while attacking and rejecting aesthetic symbolism, he approves of "real" symbolism. As

Litz observes, "the symbolism of vision and the esoteric remained a powerful source of poetic inspiration" for Pound ("Pound and Yeats" 142).²⁶

The dialectic, during his early London years, between Yeatsian Symbolism and his discovery of his own need for a language which would be precise and free of Symbolism's "mushy technique" was responsible for Pound's modernism. But when Pound says that "I went to London because I thought Yeats knew more about poetry than anybody else....I went to study with Yeats and found that Ford disagreed with him," he is thinking entirely in terms of technique (Hall 36). His "study" with Yeats resulted in an education in the occult and an introduction to many of the occultists who surrounded Yeats at the time. The second result was probably the more important. His participation in Yeats's world gave Pound the opportunity to rub shoulders with many occultists: during the meetings of the Quest Society in Kensington Town Hall and later in a large studio in Clareville Grove, South Kensington, in Paris during the spring of 1911 when Yeats and Pound were often together, or during Yeats's "Mondays," or perhaps during visits to John M. Watkins' bookstore at Cecil Court where people came for "tea, talk, and theosophy" (Watkins 308).

4. POUND'S CATECHESIS IN LONDON (2): UPWARD AND ORAGE

The intellectual climate which nurtured Pound's interest in the occult was shaped by many a strange and now obscure or forgotten figure. Some of these receive not even a footnote in Pound's writings; but he does reserve special praise for one of them: Allen Upward (1863-1926), an English barrister, amateur sinologist, amateur religious historian, author of several detective stories, poet, playwright, publicist, civil servant and volunteer soldier.²⁷ Upward's participation in the various occult groups of the time brought him in close contact with many of Pound's own acquaintances. He was a friend of Mead, with whom he studied the Chaldean thaumaturges. He was even more intimate with Orage, whom he first met in 1900. He contributed regularly to The New Age. He knew all the members of the Pound circle in the early 1910s and his poetry was included in the first Des Imagistes anthology. Finally, he belonged to Yeats's circle of esoteric companions and even participated with Yeats in psychic experiments (Knox 71, 73).²⁸

Pound discovered Upward's work in Poetry and, as Upward wrote later, he "rose up and called me an Imagist. (I had no idea what he meant.)"²⁹ They first met at a gathering of Mead's Quest Society in 1911. Upward and Pound became lifelong friends and we have evidence that they spent some time together discussing the ideas we find in Upward's The Divine Mystery. Upward is named or alluded to in at least five of Pound's letters to Dorothy (EP/DS 257, 259, 264, 270, 323). The most important of these are Pound's references to a contemplated visit with Upward (Tuesday, 23 September 1913) and an account of that visit (Wednesday, 2 October 1913). The first letter appears to have been written after Pound spent the weekend with Upward and Orage:

[Allen] Upward of the chinese poemae is quite an addition. He is off for greece possibly in a months time [sic]. I may go down to the I. of

Wight with him for a visit before then. I pense that IS an addition. He seems to [know] things that ain't in Frazer, at least he talked sense about sun worship and the siege of Troy, and he has been "resident" in Nigeria and divers other joyous adventures so far as I can make out....

I week-ended with the N.Age [New Age] and caught a drenching gold-n-me-'ead. As to fungi, Upward also talked about fungi--(and Francis Bacon). (EP/DS 259)

This letter, like the one which follows, underlines Pound's admiration for Upward's powerful and original mind:

I would have writ before but I went to Ryde to visit [Allen] Upward. I pense. It is a rare phenomenon. He has just finished "The Divine Mystery", digested golden bough with a lot more of his own intelligence stuck into it. (EP/DS 264)

Besides the recognition that Pound found Upward's work more penetrating than Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough (he seems to have gotten from Upward what Eliot, for example, got from Frazer), we see here that Pound and Upward had some time to discuss some of the ideas that they shared. Many years after Upward's suicide in 1926, Pound was still fond of his work and took pride in declaring that, in fact, he was the "sole reader of all Upward's books, now surviving" (L 296). Nor did he ever stop praising Upward's originality or emphasizing the fact that Upward never got the recognition he deserved. "He ought to get credit as autodidact. and a lot more than he has had," writes Pound in a letter dated 10 April 1958.³⁰

There is no real need for an extensive recounting of Pound's possible debt to Upward, since this has already been done by a number of Pound scholars.³¹ But despite Herbert Schneidau's early, and very convincing, case regarding Upward's esoteric connections and his conception of a "fluid universe" ("Pound and Yeats: The Question of Symbolism," 1965), most Pound scholars, following the example of Donald Davie, focus on the fact that Upward held many views which were parallel to the London aesthetics of Pound. Even Bryant Knox, who in "Allen Upward and Ezra Pound" provides many important details, fails to emphasize Upward's occult interests. Though Knox mentions that Upward and Mead were good friends, the detail about

Upward's and Yeats's psychical experiment is buried in a note (73).³²

For our purposes, Upward's significance lies in his occult reading of religious history. Upward's two most important works from that perspective are The New Word (1910) and The Divine Mystery (1913). In his 1914 review of The New Word (1910), Pound is emphatically positive in his estimation of Upward's ideas: "what Mr. Upward says will be believed in another twenty or fifty or a hundred years, just as a lot of Voltaire's quiet thrusts are now a part of our gospel" (SP 405). The New Word is a sardonic analysis of contemporary thought. Upward's real purpose in this book, however, is to show that the true source of knowledge is primitive language. Employing etymological clues, Upward demonstrates how certain words still preserve once living beliefs.³³

While the aim of his etymological game is the undermining of those concepts which have been widely viewed as forming the backbone of modern thought, Upward does not stop there. Another central concern of his is to demonstrate the falsity of the standard textbook definition which assumes that "The Universe is made up of Matter" (The New Word). Rejecting both the materialistic as well as the idealistic viewpoint as inadequate, Upward proposes that we see matter as a knot of energy, a network of forces which cannot be broken down into components such as matter and energy.

This concept is captured in the book's central image of the waterspout (he called this image a "whirl-swirl") which Upward puts forth as a model for the real world.

Consider this idea [of the waterspout]. Consider this inner strength, coming and going, turning and returning, millions of beats in every tick of secular time, while, throbbing through the network woven by their meeting, the over-strength comes and goes faster than flash in a diamond.

It is no longer a mere word. It is a magic crystal, and by looking long into it, you will see wonderful meaning come and go. It will colour like an opal while you gaze, reflecting the thoughts in your own mind. It is most chameleon-like ball. It has this deeper magic that will show you, not

only the thoughts you did not know of, old drowned thoughts, heredity thoughts; it will awaken the slumbering ancestral ghosts that haunt the brain; you will remember things you used to know and feel long, long ago. What do you see in the magic crystal?... (The New Word)

The "whirl-swirl" is a point of conduct between man and the theos and thus not a mere word but the logos. This logos, or magic crystal ball, represents a form of gnosis, since man's relation to the universe, and god in particular, is seen here as a coming together of interpenetrating energies which are manifested through this union and could not exist independently. The Upwardian conception of matter as a knot of energy, and of man and the divine as two interpenetrating strengths, and his often skeptical drawing upon science for examples to illustrate the true picture of the world, all belong to the occult thought of his time. Evidently, these concepts held great appeal for Pound. In particular, it is possible that the "great crystal" image of the later cantos had its origins in Pound's familiarity with Upward's works. What is more, Upward's concept of the waterspout and his penchant for scientific analogies parallel Pound's concept of the vortex and his own use of scientific metaphors.

A receptacle and container of all knowledge or wisdom, the waterspout is a symbol of the vital universe, of a universe energized by "some power still working to mould our planetary fates" (Divine Mystery 308). This last quotation is from Upward's The Divine Mystery (1913), a book which Pound reviewed for The New Freewoman, paying it the highest possible compliment by calling it "the most fascinating book on folk-lore that I have ever opened. I can scarcely call it a book of 'folk-lore,' it is a consummation. It is a history of the development of human intelligence" (SP-403). In this book Upward concerns himself with the origins and development of religions and argues for their evolution from primitive fertility rites through stellar to solar worship and the parallel evolution of the Divine Man, who passes through the phases of the Wizard, the Magician, the Genius, the Seer, the Priest and the Prophet, all of whom are prototypes of the Xristos (Chrestos), the

anointed one. According to Upward, the universe is made up of vital forces and "the secret of genius is sensitiveness" to these forces. The "genius" acts as an antenna, or a barometer, which registers the changes in the cosmic atmosphere and is, as Upward says, "the archetype of all Heroes in all Mysteries." When this conception of man and the universe is put together with the depiction, in The Divine Comedy, of the history of man's religion as a journey from darkness to Helios ("primitive man turns from his worship of the dead, and of the earth and of various fears, to a worship of the life-giving Helios" (SP 404)), we can begin to see Upward's impact on Pound's ideas and art and appreciate the appeal that Upward's concepts held for Pound.³⁴

Upward's ideas were formed in the process of comparing the doctrines and beliefs--often cranky and ill-educated--of London Spiritualist groups, mediums, and ghost hunters with those found in primitive magic-lore. Behind this search for analogies is Upward's belief in the existence of "some power still working to mould our planetary fates," a power which is responsible for all religious manifestations, including Christianity. While Upward's trafficking, very similar to Yeats's, with the rogues and fools of London occult groups provided him with the evidence for the continued operation of this power during his time, the rest of his evidence certainly came from his study of synoptic Hellenistic tradition which has been discussed in Chapter II of the present study.

Upward committed suicide in late 1926. In an early 1927 article which appeared in The New Age, Philip Mairet praised Upward's genius in this way: "The man who wrote "The Divine Mystery" and the "New Word," and who contributed to THE NEW AGE such series of articles as "The Order of Seraphim" and "The Planetary Origin of Man," was one of the greatest spirits in modern letters" ("Allen Upward and His Order of Genius" 162). An occultist himself, Mairet is the author of the biography

of A.R. Orage (1873-1934). The latter is another of Pound's occultist friends of the period--a fact that has largely escaped the attention of Pound scholars.

The importance of Orage, who in literary circles is remembered as the editor of the weekly paper The New Age,³⁵ is almost never discussed under any topic other than Pound's economic theories. Although everyone seems to be aware of Orage's occult connections, little attention is ever paid by Pound critics to the possibility of the occult as a shared interest between Orage and Pound. Partly responsible for this is Pound's dismissive remark about Orage's mysticism: "I had no interest in Orage's mysticism and am unqualified to define it. I was thankful he had it simply because it kept him in action" (SP 440). This denial is typical of Pound's public stance on the occult and it is, most likely, an honest enough statement, since his dislike for Indian mysticism is at least as well known as Orage's predilection for it.³⁶ That Pound takes the time to reflect upon Orage's brand of mysticism, even if he dismisses it, is evidence enough of the fact that he was well acquainted with it. It is also certain that The New Age offices on Cursitor Street and the A.B.C. restaurant in Chancery Lane across the street where Orage and those interested in his paper, including Pound, often gathered, must have witnessed many a discussion on occult subjects.³⁷

James Webb has alluded briefly to the connection between Pound's economic and occult interests, and Leon Surette has gone much further in explaining the link between underconsumption economics and theosophy which would be part of the intellectual milieu Pound found in the New Age circle.³⁸ It is of considerable importance to realize that Pound's occult friends who formulated his interest in myth and those who formulated his interest in economics--the Quest and the New Age groups respectively--were in fact not two distinct sets but rather a single set. That is, they were all occultists. And there is no surprise in the fact that "the man who

most fully exemplifies the union of these two seemingly remote spheres of interest is the editor of The New Age, A.R. Orage" (Surette, "Economics and Eleusis" 59).

Orage's biographical details are interesting in themselves; but an examination of them also points to the ubiquity of the occult during the turn of the century. Orage was born in 1873 in the Yorkshire village of Dacre near Bradford, trained as a schoolmaster at Culham College near Oxford and, in 1893, began his twelve year long teaching career at Leeds. During this time he met his future wife, Jean Walker. She was a keen Theosophist who clearly encouraged Orage's natural bent for mystical and esoteric works. Orage became a member of the Leeds branch of the Theosophical Society around 1896. His two best friends of the period, Holbrook Jackson, a lace manufacturer and a Fabian, and A.J. Penty, an architect who was at the time studying the medieval guild system, introduced him to Nietzsche and to socialism, respectively. With these two friends, who were also Theosophists, Orage formed the highly successful Leeds Art Club, which organized exhibitions of paintings, drawings, arts and crafts, and lectures on religious, philosophical, social and economic subjects. The three associates also arranged open meetings in the Leeds Museum (attended by such important figures as Yeats, Shaw, Edward Carpenter and G.K. Chesterton). The Leeds Arts Club also housed the local Theosophical and Fabian Societies, and members of the first were likely to be members of one or both of the other Societies. His participation in these clubs reflects Orage's interests at the time. Jackson's comments about Orage's syncretist zeal are even more pointed: "He wanted a Nietzsche circle in which Plato and Blavatsky, Fabianism and Hinduism, Shaw and Wells and Edward Carpenter should be blended, with Nietzsche as the catalytic. An exciting brew" (qtd. in Webb, The Harmonious Circle 200).³⁹

At the end of 1905 Orage left Leeds for London where he mixed with the Theosophical and Fabian crowd while trying to survive as a journalist. By July 1905

he was a member of the committee of the British Section of the Theosophical Society and, at about the same time, he was Acting Secretary of the Society of Psychological Research. Between the end of 1905 and the end of 1907 he published a series of articles in the Theosophical Review, many of which attracted criticism because of Orage's skepticism and refusal to compromise his critical faculty by becoming the slave of Tibetan Mahatmas or their representatives.⁴⁰ During the same period Orage also published three small books on philosophical and religious subjects: Friedrich Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age (London: T.N. Foulis, 1906), Nietzsche in Outline and Aphorism (London: T.N. Foulis, 1907), and Consciousness, Animal, Human, and Superhuman (London and Benares: The Theosophical Press Society, 1907).⁴¹

In May 1907 Orage and Jackson purchased The New Age, a weekly magazine founded in 1893 by Frederic R. Atkins, which at the time was in grave financial difficulties. The money for this venture was donated by G.B. Shaw and a Theosophical friend, Lewis Wallace, who also became a frequent contributor under the pseudonym "M.B. Oxon." Although the magazine was opened to his occult friends (for example, Wallace and Florence Farr), Orage--who became the sole editor in January 1910 when Jackson left--never used it to advance his own theosophical ideas and was able to build for it a solid reputation as a paper of avant-garde political, economic, and cultural ideas.

Pound was introduced to Orage by F.S. Flint in 1911 and by the end of that year he had become a regular contributor to The New Age.⁴² Orage and Pound seem to have had a divergence of opinion on literary matters, so there must have been other things they agreed upon. For example, in the letter to his mother in which he discusses, among other things, his upcoming stay at Stone Cottage with Yeats and the recent publication of Upward's Divine Mystery, Pound writes: "I am fully aware of The New Age's limitations, still the editor is a good fellow--his literary taste--is

unfortunate."⁴³ Beatrice Hastings, in her vindictive memoir The Old "New Age": Orage and Other (1936), claims that Orage, too, did not think highly of Pound's literary taste, his individual style, nor the cultural ambience of his pieces: "Orage... said, so late as Oct. 1913, nearly two years after Pound's debut: Mr. Pound's style is a paste of colloquy, slang journalism and pedantry. Of culture in Nietzsche's sense of the word, it bears no sign" (qtd. in Surette, "Economics and Eleusis" 65-6). That Orage could have been critical of Pound's style is probable. But despite Pound's later denial that he was not interested in Orage's "mysticism," the evidence suggests that the two men did share a number of interests and that their relationship was not simply that of editor and contributor.

In a letter to Dorothy, already quoted in connection with the Pound-Upward friendship, we have seen that Pound and Orage spent at least one weekend together (September 20-21, 1913). This establishes that they did see each other away from the New Age office. Against the claim for the absence of "Nietzschean" culture in Pound's writing, one simply has to look at Patria Mia (first serialized in The New Age in eleven installments between September 5 and November 14, 1912) to realize that Pound is, indeed, echoing some of Orage's Nietzschean ideas.⁴⁴

Another common interest, dated from a little later (1917), is the Social Credit Economic theories of Major Douglas. There are other points of common interest, but here let it suffice to note that I endorse León Surette's observation that,

We will never understand the strange and potent mix of Orientalism, radical underconsumption economics, mythography, right-wing politics, and poetry that make up Pound's career without a fuller knowledge of the kind of education Pound received in The New Age offices at 38 Curator Street. (Surette, "Economics and Eleusis" 60).

In his "Obituary: A.R. Orage," which appeared in the New English Weekly (November 15, 1934), Pound points out that

the small dissident minority who profess to get some profit from my writings owe debt, above whatever they realise, to the man whose weekly

guinea fed me when no one else was ready to do so, and that for at least two years running. (SP 437)

Orage and his New Age circle fed and kept feeding Pound during his London years in more ways than the one he shows gratitude for here. Among all the other people Pound may have met in Orage's company was a foreigner who played a large part in the editor's own occult education between 1915 and 1921. This was Dmitri Mitrinovic (1884-1948?), an attaché at the Serbian embassy in London, introduced to Orage by Paul Selver in 1915. Mitrinovic was a friend of Vassily Kandinsky and was well-versed in the arts, ancient and modern, as well as the occult tradition. He proclaimed world salvation inspired by the old Slav Messianic vision of a united Christian Europe and dressed it with trappings borrowed from all sorts of occultism and religion. Orage was very receptive to these ideas, although the "prophet's ascendancy over his mind was never complete" (Mairet xi). Orage and Mitrinovic collaborated on a series of articles on "World Affairs" which appeared in The New Age from August 19, 1920 to October 13, 1921 under the pen name of "M.M. Cosmoi." The theme of these articles, as it was announced by Orage at their first appearance, was "the development of world consciousness under the guidance of the European mind."⁴⁵ Mitrinovic's occultism, like so many other brands of occultism flourishing at this time in London, was a very mixed bag of elements. Pound would certainly not have been impressed by Mitrinovic's Christianizing of paganism.⁴⁶

This phase of Orage's life coincides with his interest in psychoanalysis as well as his conversion to Major Douglas's economic theories, a conversion for which he had been prepared by his Leeds association with Penty. Beginning in 1912, The New Age devoted increasing attention to psychoanalysis and, at Orage's initiative, a "psychosynthesis" group was formed which included Havelock Ellis, David Eder, James Young, Maurice Nicoll, Dr. J.A.M. Alcock and Rowland Kenney.⁴⁷ This group's regular meetings, at least at the beginning, were sometimes attended by Mitrinovic.

This was a rather mixed group of men who were genuinely concerned with psychoanalysis and leaned, at the same time, toward the occult. A brief look at one of these individuals, Dr. Eder, whose interests are also representative of the rest of the group, reveals the strong ties between psychoanalysis and the occult.

Dr. Eder was a Freudian pioneer and close associate of Freud, a member of the Arts Group of the Fabian Society, and a member of the New Age circle. The cryptic but obviously favourable review of Aleister Crowley's Konx Om Pax which appeared in The New Age (Feb., 1908), his close ties with Mead's Quest group, and his attendance of Ouspensky's lectures in 1921 leave no room for doubt about the attraction which he felt for the occult (Webb, The Quest Anthology 473).

The psychoanalysts and the occultists shared a number of interests. Among these was the interest in the interpretation of symbolism and myth. As well, most of these people saw psychoanalysis as the harbinger of a golden age and although their approach was different from those of more traditional occult groups, their basic concern with ushering in a New Age is something which is at the heart of all occult movements.

Orage's own involvement with Mitrinovic in the mid and late 1910s prepared him for Gurdjieff and P.D. Ouspensky, Gurdjieff's missionary in London. Orage's Gurdjieff phase lasted for ten years and took him first to Gurdjieff's Institute in France (1922-23) and later to New York, where he remained until 1930 as the American head of Gurdjieff's movement.⁴⁸ He returned to London to establish his New English Weekly (first issue April 21, 1932) and in this periodical he again published Pound. He also continued to discover new literary talent (such as Dylan Thomas) until his death in 1934.

5. "ECHOES FROM THE GNOSIS": G. R. S. MEAD AND POUND

Although each of the people we have dealt with in this chapter contributed to Pound's occult education, G.R.S. Mead contributed the most. To repeat a point I made earlier, it is only by achieving a fuller knowledge of the kind of education Pound received in Orage's New Age offices and Mead's Quest circle that we might be able to bring nearer to completion our picture of the poet. The first element in Pound's mixture of underconsumption economics and speculative occultism is the contribution of the New Age circle; the second element is the contribution of the Quest group, even though the contributions of Yeats, Upward and others cannot be discounted.

Perhaps there would be no basis for looking at Mead were it not for the strong evidence pointing to Pound's early attraction to his theosophical ideas. Clear evidence of this interest is found in both the recently published Ezra Pound-Dorothy Shakespear correspondence as well as in some of Pound's still unpublished letters to his parents which are in the Pound Collection in the Beinecke Library at Yale University. To these letters we may add some letters written over forty years after Pound's initial acquaintance with Mead: Pound's published letters to John Theobald as well as Pound's unpublished letters to Patricia Hutchins. These letters establish beyond doubt Pound's admiration for Mead's knowledge and scholarship, his interest in the kind of subjects that were Mead's trademark, Pound's and Dorothy's attendance of Mead's lectures, as well as the fact that there was ample opportunity for personal contact between Pound and Mead.

Pound must have met Mead at one of Yeats's "Mondays," which Mead attended about twice a month. Pound's earliest reference to Mead is from a letter to Isabel Pound, dated 17 September 1911: "I have spent the P.M. with G.R.S. Mead, edtr. of

The Quest, who wants me to throw a lecture for his society which he can afterwards print. "Troubadour Psychology," whatever the dooce that is" (Y.C. 223). The tone of uncertainty in the last sentence indicates that perhaps it was Mead who suggested the title as well as the approach in this essay. The same uneasiness is also discernible in a letter from Dorothy to Pound dated two days after Pound's letter to his mother: "Don't you be "nebulous to the Nth" about yr. Troubadour psychology--or Mead won't be pleased. Say you're a reincarnation so you know. Are you? do-you?" (Letter of 19 September 1911, EP/DS 61). Dorothy's reference to reincarnation indicates a playful skepticism (and implies a gullibility on Mead's part) that Pound himself maintained throughout his occult studies.

There are many other letters from the same period in which Pound's preoccupation with and admiration for Mead are made clear. Mead appears frequently in letters to his parents. For example, on 21 October 1911 Pound writes: "I've met and enjoyed Mead, who's done so much research on primitive mysticism--that I've written you at least four times..." (Y.C. 226). "I find Mead very interesting," he writes in December, 1911; and on 21 February 1912 he is even more flattering: "G.R.S. Mead is about as interesting--along his own line--as anyone I meet" (Y.C. 232 and 238). A letter from Dorothy to Pound, also dated 21 February 1912, shows that she herself and at least one of her friends shared Pound's interest in Mead: "I was deeply interested in Mead--so, I think, was G. [Georgie Hyde-Lees]" (Letter of 21 February 1912, EP/DS 87).

Pound's unpublished letters to his parents strongly suggest that his attendance at Mead's Quest Society lectures was very regular. In March 1912, he writes to his mother saying that "Mead's lecture on "Heirotheos" was very good";⁴⁹ in a letter dated 5 November 1912, Pound announces to his parents that "Mead's lectures begin this P.M." (Y.C. 268), and in another dated four weeks later (3 December 1912) he

says: "I'm going out to Mead's lecture. And so on as usual. This being Tuesday" (Y.C. 271). Even when Pound was away from London, he could rely on Dorothy for information about Mead's lectures since there was apparently an understanding between them that Dorothy's Tuesday evenings were spent listening to Mead. Writing from Stone Cottage, Pound says: "I suppose I'll be up to Town on Wednesday, not Monday--Wednesday the 26th. I may come up Tuesday but that ain't certain and anyhow you go to Mead" (Letter of 21 November 1913, EP/DS 276). Finally, in a letter to Pound dated 13 December 1913, Dorothy writes about the last lecture of a series given by Mead: "I went to the last Mead yesterday. He had a bad cold--and told us about the 'Round People'" (Letter of 3 December 1913, EP/DS 284).⁵⁰

In addition to the letters recording Pound's and Dorothy's attendance and interest in Mead's lectures, there are at least four other letters indicating that Dorothy was at the time also reading Mead's published works. In her letters to Pound, she discusses those of Mead's works she is reading in a way which assumes Pound's familiarity with them. In a 22 May 1912 letter, for example, Dorothy writes about reading Mead's The World Mystery:

A very wet morning: so we [Dorothy and Georgie Hyde-Lees] have a fire and are doing a little book-work instead of painting. I have been intensely excited over another of Mead's--"The World-Mystery". It is full of interesting things, and I have "correlated" several to vaguenesses of my own! Also a footnote fit for Walter [Rummel], about a "dodecagonal pyramid" with a door of many colours the pyramid "in a sphere of the colour of night".....

I find Renan an excellent antidote to G.R.S. Mead and his numbers and Mysteries. (EP/DS 102)⁵¹

The key phrase here is "intensely excited over another of Mead's" which clearly indicates Dorothy's familiarity with several of Mead's studies and assumes Pound's parallel interest.

In the same correspondence, we find that about four weeks later Dorothy is still engaged in studying the same book. In a postscript to this letter in which she

writes to Pound about a visit to her house by the Meads, she mentions an exciting new finding:

The Meads here at tea yesterday: they both have so much, and such pleasant, personality. I expect you are seeing the Hamadryad [Hilda Doolittle]? Give her my best love--Tell her Mead says Centaurs can't have existed "in the flesh" because if so by now we should have "found skeletons"....

P.S...

I feel quite interested--having found an incantation in Mead beginning "iao, aoi, oia".... (Letter of 16 June 1912, EP/DS 114-15)

The incantation, "AOI," found by Dorothy in Mead and brought to Pound's attention in this letter, was later used in the Cantos (79/490).⁵²

Another instance of Dorothy's interest in Mead's work is found in a letter to Pound from Ilfracombe, on the coast of north Devon, where she talks about having to pack the huge volume of Mead's Fragments of a Faith Forgotten: "Packing wildly for Lynton. And such a vol. of Mead to go in still: F. of a F. Forgotten" (Letter of 21 September 1912, EP/DS 160). The use of the abbreviations surely suggest Dorothy's certainty about Pound's familiarity with this text and its rather impressive bulk.

Over forty years after his initial acquaintance with Mead, we find that the London milieu of the first two decades of this century in general, and Mead and his activities in particular, remain an enduring interest. This is the obvious conclusion made from looking at Pound's letters to John Theobald and Patricia Hutchins. His letters to Theobald contain many references to things occult and to the activities of such occultists as Jiddu Krishnamurti,⁵³ Madame Blavatsky, and Mead. There are a number of references to Mead, of which I quote only one here:

GRS Mead / BlavatskiTe (no suspicion of a k)[handwritten insertion]
"Echoes from the Gnosis," possibly 40 vols/

Quest Society and Quarterly, Q.S. lectures at least monthly for part of the year/ <London 19? to '14>....

I don't think Mead mucked with the psychical research gang/ that was another form of satire/... (Letter of 3 June 1957, EP/JT 32).

This information about Mead is in reply to Theobald's inquiry about whether "Mead [was] one of the Psychical Research investigators that made trouble for Blavatsky?" (EP/JT 29).

In his letters to Patricia Hutchins, most of which date from about the same period as those to Theobald, Pound stresses the special ambience of Kensington, and returns repeatedly to Mead and the Quest Society lectures at the Kensington Town Hall.⁵⁴ As can be gathered from her book, Ezra Pound's Kensington: An Exploration, 1885-1913 (1965), Hutchins did not pay much attention to Pound's emphasis on the special ambience of Kensington which we could call "occult." In his letters Pound appears to become increasingly upset with Hutchins's failure to include in her account such people as Upward and Mead, or to document the activities of the Quest Society at the Kensington Town Hall where not only Pound and Jessie L. Weston, but also T.E. Hulme and Wyndham Lewis came and even lectured.⁵⁵ Pound's irritation is clear in a letter from Italy, dated 15 June 1959, which effectively ends their direct correspondence: "I put a LOT of work telling you KENSINGTON, its inhabitants to which you paid not the least bloody damn bit of attention" (Patricia Hutchins Collection, British Museum, Add. 57725, # 159). This and other letters are indicative of the importance Pound attached to those people, including Mead, who made up his Kensington.

Some of the details of the Pound-Mead acquaintance have already been pointed out, notably by Schneidau who was also the first to relate Upward's universe of "fluid force" to Mead's Neoplatonic doctrine of the "subtle body" (Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real 125-27). Mead's theorizing of the "subtle body" doctrine (to which I will come back in my discussion of Mead's Subtle Body later on) has attracted some attention from Pound scholars--specifically from Ian Bell and Kevin Oderman. Oderman also pays considerable attention to Mead's comments on the

legend of Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre (a subject first dealt with by Surette in Eleusis), and Pound's understanding of this legend. Therefore, Mead's contribution to Pound's ideas has received some scholarly attention; but no critic has given this subject the prominence it deserves.⁵⁶ I propose, therefore, to deal with Mead's biography more fully than I have done with those of the rest of Pound's occult friends. Mead's theosophical ideas and the details of Pound's attention and high estimation of Mead warrant careful examination.

During his own time, Mead's work was quite influential and received the attention of scholars much better known to us today than he is.⁵⁷ Even today modern studies on gnosticism and the origins of Christianity still mention Mead.⁵⁸ But despite the fact that his most important books were reissued in the 1960s, little is known and little has been written about him. Our chief source for his biography is a memoir he wrote and published in The Quest some eight years before his death. This essay, which recounts the early history of the Quest Society and outlines a major shift in the periodical's future course, is aptly entitled "'The Quest"--Old and New: Retrospect and Prospect."⁵⁹

Born in 1863, the son of Robert and Mary Mead, G. R. S. Mead was educated at King's School, Rochester, England and at Cambridge (M.A., 1885). In 1884 he joined the Theosophical Society. After reading A.P. Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism (1884), meeting Mohini M. Chatterji and Bertram Keightley, and reading Hindu philosophy, he entered Oxford to study philosophy and, later, he even attended the French University of Clermont-Ferrand where he seems to have studied spiritualism.⁶⁰ Mead met Madame Blavatsky in 1887, became an ardent admirer of her, and in 1889 he gave up the teaching profession to become her private secretary in which capacity he remained until her death three years later (1891). He sub-edited Blavatsky's monthly magazine, Lucifer, which he renamed The Theosophical Review upon becoming editor,

and he is also the one to whom the impossible task of correcting and revising The Secret Doctrine was given (Kuhn 339). Living and working closely with Blavatsky, Mead formed the opinion that she was a powerful medium with a Bohemian, complex, and racy personality and not simply "the vulgar trickster and charlatan of hostile legend" ("Old and New" 290-91). History, of course, has shown Blavatsky to have been both a trickster and a charlatan.

In 1890 Mead was appointed General Secretary of the European Section of the Theosophical Society, a position from which he resigned in 1897 in order to devote himself more fully to his writing and to Laura Cooper, whom he married in 1899. When Colonel H.S. Olcott, the co-founder of the Theosophical Society, died in 1907, the Presidency was offered to Mead. He declined because he "much preferred continuing [his] studies, editing, writing books and lecturing to continual travelling and organization" ("Old and New" 295). But problems had already divided the core of the Society because of what Mead calls the "miserable, unpalatable episode" of C. W. Leadbeater's sexual scandals. Leadbeater was forced to resign in 1906 but, with Annie Besant's support, he was reinstated in 1908. His reinstatement precipitated the resignation of Mead and some seven hundred other members of the Society who, supposedly, were also upset by persistent incidents of charlatantry.⁶¹

As it turned out, the majority of those who resigned with Mead did so because of their personal dislike of Annie Besant and not for any other reason. These people expected Mead to set up a rival "Neo-theosophic tin tabernacle" to carry on the pretence and charlatantry of the original group. But Mead wanted no part in any of this because, as he categorically states,

I had never, even while a member [of the Theosophical Society], preached the Mahatma-gospel of H.P.B., or propagandised Neo-theosophy [Mead's term for Besant's movement] and its revelations. I had believed that "theosophy" proper meant the wisdom-element in the great religions and philosophies of the world. ("Old and New" 296-97)

The second sentence of this passage represents Mead's understanding of the term "Theosophy" and states a position which can be supported by his writing as a whole. Also, Mead's attempt to distance himself from Blavatsky's theories and practices and his skepticism regarding the validity of Neo-Theosophical psychic phenomena are similar to Pound's own attempts to distance himself from everything smacking of the practices and beliefs of the "Bond Street charlatans."

In 1909 Mead, with one hundred and fifty ex-Theosophists and another one hundred outside recruits, founded "The Quest Society." In October of the same year he began his long tenure as the editor of The Quest (1909-1930). The Society and the periodical were established in order "to promote investigation and comparative study of religion, philosophy and science, on the basis of experience" and "to encourage the expression of the ideal in beautiful forms."⁶² Mead was to distance himself and his publication "from all 'magical' and 'occult' pretensions which seek the 'will to power' and are essentially 'anti-social'." Instead, he insisted that The Quest was to deal with "the history and criticism of such 'occult' subjects, but never with their advocacy" ("Old and New" 307). The distinction Mead is making here is between theurgic practices and psychical phenomena on the one hand and speculative occult philosophy on the other. This is a distinction which Pound would also make while favouring, like Mead (and unlike Yeats), the latter.⁶³

Although the later volumes of The Quest include essays on such contemporary subjects as psychoanalysis, mythology, religious mysticism, and especially the study of Christian Origins remained the subjects closest to Mead's heart. Mead contributed a large number of essays himself (ranging from "The Sacred Dance of Jesus" (1910) to "Psychoanalysis and the Symbolism of Myths and Mysticism" (1918)), but the distinction of many contributors and the diverse approaches taken to investigate related topics are the periodical's chief characteristics. The following brief, selective-

list of contributors includes occultists, eminent scholars, and important literary artists: A.E. Waite, Fiona Macleod, Algernon Blackwood, Arthur Machen, Ernest Rhys, Denis Saurat, John Masefield, Rabindranath Tagore, W.B. Yeats, A.E. (George Russell), Laurence Binyon, Alfred Noyes, Edward Carpenter, F.C. Conybeare, Robert Eisler, Arthur Symons, Evelyn Underhill, Jessie L. Weston, Raymond A. Nicholson, G. Scholem, Martin Buber and Ezra Pound.

Besides important artists (Yeats, A.E., and Pound) and well-known occultists (Waite and Macleod), this list includes, indeed, many eminent scholars. Raymond A. Nicholson (1868-1945), for example, was a noted student of Islamic Literature and Mysticism. Martin Buber (1878-1965), the German Jewish scholar and philosopher, wrote a number of important books on Hasidism. Best known of all these is, perhaps, Gershom Scholem (1897-1982), the renowned author of Major Trends of Jewish Mysticism (1946), whose scholarly achievements in the field of the Cabala are well-known. Finally, the Austrian scholar Robert Eisler, whose favourite subject was Christian Origins, was an important influence on Mead himself and, together with Mead, on Miss Weston.⁶⁴ In the pages of The Quest, then, Mead published original work by writers of eminence.

One may safely assume that Pound would have read many of those issues of The Quest which were published during his years in London.⁶⁵ Of considerable interest are some of the contributors, subjects, and books reviewed in the fourth volume of the periodical, the one containing Pound's essay "Psychology and Troubadours." In this volume we find articles by Mead himself ("The Meaning of Gnosis in Higher Hellenistic Religion"), Weston, Tagore, Eisler, Underhill ("The Mystic as Creative Artist"), and a poem by Yeats ("The Mountain Tomb"). Another article of possible interest to Pound is Arthur E. Bailly's "Dante and Swedenborg: Two Other-World Explorers." Even more significant are some of the reviews. Besides reviews of two

of Pound's own volumes of poetry, The Sonnets of Guido Cavalcanti and Riposte.⁶⁶ there are reviews of F.C. Conybeare's Loeb Classical Library edition of Apollonius of Tyana, Edouard Schuré's The Great Initiates, Edmund G. Gardner's Dante and the Mystics, as well of three of Evelyn Underhill's books, including The Mystic Way.⁶⁷

Even though we need to jump a few years ahead for our evidence, I think that it is important to demonstrate that The Quest, Orage's New Age circle, and the Theosophical crowd were in regular communication with one another. About 1917, Mead became interested in Jungian psychoanalysis and wrote two articles on the subject: "A Word on Psychoanalysis" and "Psychoanalysis and the Symbolism of Myths." Mead's arguments are based on his reading of both Freud and Jung. He favours Jung and has no use for Freud. In fact, Mead and his Quest circle showed interest in psychoanalysis only after Jung's defection from the Freudian camp--Freudian sexual theory was simply unacceptable to Mead's sensibility.⁶⁸ In addition, Mead had read Dream Psychology (London: Oxford U.P., 1917), by Maurice Nicoll, the leading exponent of non-Freudian analysis in England, and M. D. Eder's War-Schock: The Psycho-neuroses in War Psychology and Treatment (London: Heinemann, 1917). Moreover, Mead notes in the first essay that many of the books he had used for writing these articles were not in the British Museum and were given to him by Dr. Eder. Mead's articles were intended as an introduction for the readers of The Quest to a new topic as well as the beginning of a dialogue between psychoanalysis and the usual Quest subjects of myth, mysticism, mystery religions and the Origins of Christianity. They were followed in the periodical's next volume with articles by F.I. Winters on a new synthesis involving Yoga and psychoanalysis: "The Yoga System and Psychoanalysis" and "Psychoanalysis and the Yoga Aphorisms."⁶⁹

For an even more pronounced and clear example of the community of interest between The Quest and The New Age groups, we must look to the events associated

with P.D. Ouspensky's arrival in London in 1921. Ouspensky's arrival was hinted in a July 1921 article on the fourth dimension by Mead in The Quest.⁷⁰ It was Claude Bragdon, the publisher of an American translation of Ouspensky's Tertium Organum, and Viscountess Rothermere, the wife of a powerful English baron, who made Ouspensky's arrival in London, in August 1921, possible. Ouspensky began holding meetings to expound the ideas of his guru, G.T. Gurdjieff, and it was to Orage's group and theosophical circles that he addressed himself at first. He also spoke to Mead's "Quest Society," to a group of Theosophists led by D.N. Dunlop, and to the "psycho-synthesis" group. Two months later Ouspensky began holding his own meetings. His choice of meeting-places again suggests that the Quest and New Age circles were in regular communication with one another. Beginning at a studio, owned by Lady Rothermere, he later oscillated between the rooms of the "Quest Society" in Kensington and a house shared by Maurice Nicoll and James Young at 146 Harley Street, until he finally settled at 38 Warwick Gardens in South Kensington.

Of course, Pound had no role to play in either of these instances of association between the two circles since by 1921 he had left London for Paris.⁷¹ But the Quest's interest in psychoanalysis and Gurdjieff's ideas establishes a community of interest between the New Age and Quest groups and helps us to form a more accurate portrait of the intellectual milieu of the period.

Pound's clearest statement of his debt to Mead is his footnote on Mead's lecture on Simon Magus and Helen of Troy (SR 91). In this note which is dated 1916 and appended to the discussion of the mystery cult in The Spirit of Romance, Pound acknowledges his debt to "a recent lecture by Mr. Mead on Simon Magus [which] has opened my mind to a number of new possibilities." Accordingly, Pound sees the legend of Simon and Helen of Tyre as a "clearer prototype of "chivalric love"" than anything he himself has come up with in his own essay. While the text

of the "recent lecture" remains unknown, its arguments must have been those Mead made at length in Simon Magus: an Essay (1902) and in more condensed form in Fragments of a Faith Forgotten (1900). We may safely assume that it was Mead who introduced Pound to the history of this gnostic allégory of the soul; but Pound would certainly not agree with Mead's interpretation of the legend's sexual symbolism. For example, Mead is explicit in his warning to the readers of Simon Magus not to interpret the legend literally:

This is the mystery of the Helen, the 'lost sheep'. Then follows the mystical marriage of the Lamb, the union of the Human and Spiritual Soul....

Naturally the language used is symbolical, and has naught to do with sex, in any sense. Woe unto him or her who takes these allegories of the Soul as literal histories, for nothing but sorrow will follow such materialization of divine mysteries. (75)

Pound's note makes clear that he absorbed both the sexual and the theological dimensions which the Simon legend shares with Gnosticism in general; it is clear, as well, that Pound did not share Mead's prudishness regarding the sexual symbolism inherent in the legend and parts ways with Mead at this point.⁷²

There are other opinions, ideas, images, and historical personages to which or to whom Pound attaches importance--and some scholars have pointed to Mead as the source for some of these.⁷³ But even more important than discovering the exact sources of some of Pound's ideas in Mead's writings is the realization that the general substance of Mead's occult thought is reflected in Pound: in particular, his conception of the "celestial tradition," his formulation of his fantasy history, and his theory of palingenesis--topics discussed in some detail in the first two chapters of this study.

The most consistent argument in Mead's writing is for existence of a living esoteric tradition whose origins are to be found in Orphism and the ancient mystery cults of Greece and Egypt. In his study of Orpheus (1896), for example, Mead

argues that Orphism lies behind all the mystery religions of antiquity--

Pythagoreanism, Eleusis, and Mithraism are mentioned among others. Here, as he does elsewhere, Mead writes as a man convinced of the persistence of the Mysteries through the ages, a belief Pound shared--and it is with this in mind that I quote from Mead's conclusion:

....In the construction of my skiff I have mainly combined the researches of Lobeck, who was a scholar and no mystic, with the writings of Taylor, who was half scholar, half mystic, and cemented all together with some information derived from H.P. Blavatsky, who was a mystic and no scholar. I write as a man convinced that the Mysteries have not gone from the earth, but still exist and have their genuine adherents and initiators; in the fervent hope that some, at least, who read, will not be unmindful of the past, and with the certain knowledge that a few actually possess a full memory of that past which the many have, for a time, forgotten. (195)

Pound, too, writes "as a man convinced that the Mysteries have not gone from the earth," that the "light from Eleusis" is the "inextinguishable source of beauty [which] persisted throughout the Middle Ages maintaining song in Provence, maintaining the grace of Kalenda Maya" (SP 53, 58).

The best formulation of the esoteric tradition, which both Mead and Pound believed to have persisted to their own times, is to be found in Mead's three volume work, Thrice-Greatest Hermes: Studies in Hellenistic Theosophy and Gnosis (1906).⁷⁴ This book is "intended to serve ultimately as a small contribution to the preparation of the way leading towards a solution of the vast problems involved in the scientific study of the Origins of the Christian Faith" (1: 13). Mead's study includes a discussion of the name Trismegistus, of the ancient tradition of wisdom contained in the Trismegistic (that is, Hermetic) literature, and of what has come down to his own day under the general title of Trismegistic literature. Following this, Mead goes on to discuss the history of the text and the history of Hermetic scholarly criticism to his day. The history of the text, fascinating in itself, includes the discovery of a unique manuscript by Michael Psellus in the eleventh century, the revival of Platonic

studies in Byzantium, Gemisthus Plethon's visit to Florence in 1438, the acquisition by Cosimo Medici of a Greek manuscript brought from Macedonia by a monk, Marsilio Ficino's translation of the text into Latin, and Ficino's absorption from Plethon of the idea of a tradition of Wisdom to which Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato allegedly belonged. I have dealt with the fascinating story of the passage of the inheritance of Greek thought into Italy and the revival of Hellenism in Chapter II and I intend to discuss it again, in more detail, in my analysis of Canto 23 in Chapter IV of the present study. For now, let it suffice to say that the story of Plethon's visit to Italy appears in the Cantos, that Pound attaches great importance to it, and that Pound probably found this story in Mead.

After examining nineteenth-century theories which established the literature's Egyptian origin, its date, and its final form as an enshrining of Egyptian wisdom in Greek tradition (especially Louis Menard and Richard Reitzenstein), Mead then goes further than the scholars to state that this literature, and especially the Poimandres, is the key to Egypt's wisdom, and, in studying it, one approaches "the threshold of what may well be believed to have been the true Adyton of the best in the mystery-tradition of antiquity" (1: 12, 13). The important point for this discussion is Mead's insistence that there is "an unbroken line of tradition in which Gnosis and Mystery-teaching have been handed down through pre-Christian, Pagan and Jewish, and through Christian hands" (3: 213). As we have seen, Pound also believed in an unbroken line of tradition which, however, he traced back to Eleusis, not Egypt.⁷⁵

Mead's major books, including Fragments of a Faith Forgotten (1900) and Thrice-Greatest Hermes (1906), were published before Pound's arrival in London. Interestingly, his arrival in late 1908 coincided with the serial publication (1907-09) by the Theosophical Society of an eleven-volume series written by Mead and targeted

for the general reader. These slight volumes were part of a proselytizing campaign designed to draw people to theosophical circles, and they are of considerable value to us because the topics under discussion are such that they give a very accurate picture of Mead's interests during the fifty-odd years of his career as an author.

There are two major points in Echoes from the Gnosis. First, Mead is interested in palingenesis, soul-making or soul-development--a concept which I have discussed in some detail in the first chapter of this study. He discusses the claim for the Gnosis of God which is the "Perfect Perfection" and which, unlike "the birth or genesis into matter,.... [is] the essential birth or palingenesis, the means or re-becoming a pure spiritual being" (2: 51). Second, behind this and all his other studies is Mead's profound interest in the origins of Christianity. This second interest guides his quest for understanding all those variables connected with the time of Christianity's birth, and he arrives at a belief according to which a full consideration of the elements forming the background of early Gnosticism modifies to a great extent the generally accepted view regarding the origins of Christianity. These two concerns are constantly present in Mead's writing, regardless of whether he is focusing on Gnosticism (as in Fragments of a Faith Forgotten, 1900) or the spiritual significance of sacred dances in pagan and Christian rituals (in The Sacred Dance of Christendom, 1926).

Echoes from the Gnosis itself deals with a variety of subjects, ranging from "The Gnosis of the Mind" to "The Mysteries of Mithra" and "The Chaldaean Oracles."⁷⁶ A total of eleven volumes were published under the general title of Echoes from the Gnosis. There were other volumes which were projected but never appeared. For example, under "Proposed Subjects for Forthcoming Volumes" in Volume VIII, Mead includes "The Hymn of the Soul" and "Some Orphic Fragments"; and in Volume X he proposes another volume on "The Words of Heraclitus." All this

justifies the following comment, made in a letter from Pound to John Theobald written nearly forty years after the series came out: "I think Mead must hv done 'nigh onter' 40 vols, of Echoes, and the Quest 1/4 ly must have run at least ten years??" (Letter dated 11 June 1957, EP/JT 36). We may safely assume Pound's familiarity with some of these volumes. And there are here, as there are in most of Mead's other works, many tantalizing bits which Pound may well be echoing in the Cantos and certain of his prose writings.

I have chosen a few examples from Echoes which illustrate that Mead and Pound shared occult interests, opinions, and images. Speaking about symbols in Vol. VI, "A Mithriac Ritual," Mead says that "The true interpretation of symbols depends upon the capacity of the learner [initiate, neophyte] to make them alive and to see them from as many points of view as possible. All true symbols should first of all be made solid, then made interpenetrable, then made alive, in-breathing and out-breathing" (51-2). This is not far from Pound's comparisons between Symbolism and Imagism, and his impatience with the rigidity of the first as compared to the mathematical clarity of his own technique: "Imagism is not symbolism. The symbolists dealt in "association"; that is, in a sort of allusion, almost of allegory....the imagist's images have a variable significance, like the signs a , b , and x in algebra" (Gaudier-Brzeska 84-85). The idea of the vortex, which Pound could have absorbed from a number of places--including Upward--is also present in Mead's Vol. VIII, "The Chaldaean Oracles, I," where he speaks of "Vortices, Voragines, Whirlswirls, Aeons, [and] Atoms" in discussing the ultimate mystery or the "Paternal Depth" which is the so-called "supercosmic or cosmos-transcending [principle], when cosmos is regarded as the sensible or manifested order; it is the Occult, or Hidden, Eternal type of universals, or wholes, simultaneously interpenetrating one another, undivided (sensibly) yet divided (intelligibly)" (54-58). In the same volume Mead

discusses the true sun of the mystery tradition--an idea echoed in Pound's own references in the Cantos to the "light not of the Sun." Regarding this, Mead writes the following (he does refer to one of Pound's light-philosophers as the source of his concept): "As to the Sun, the tradition handed on a mysterious doctrine that cannot now be completely recovered in the absence of the original text. Proclus, however, tells us that the real Sun, as distinguished from the visible disc, was trans-mundane or super-cosmic--that is, beyond the worlds visible to the senses. In other words, it belonged to the Light-world proper, the monadic cosmos, and poured forth thence its 'fountain of Light'" (76-77). In Vol. IX, "The Chaldaean Oracles, II," Mead discusses the form gods take in a way which again is echoed by Pound in "Religio, or the Child's Guide to knowledge" as well as in various place in the Cantos: "In themselves the Gods have no forms, they are incorporeal; they, however, assume forms for the sake of mortals, as Proclus writes: "For though we [the Gods] are incorporeal: 'Bodies are allowed to self-revealed manifestations for your sakes'..." (68-9).⁷⁷ The idea of hieros gamos is also found in these volumes, notably in Vol. XI (80-4). These are just a few of the examples of concepts which one can find in both Mead and the Cantos. I do not intend to suggest that Pound got all his ideas from Mead, since many of these concepts can be found in several other sources and are, in any case, the common stock of many occult texts.

While Mead's individual works focus on particular and well-defined topics, there is a consistent and unswerving programme or structure which guides his work as a whole and which in general parallels both the structure of occult history given in Chapter II of the present study and what I see as the structure latent in the Cantos. There is nothing surprising about this parallel or the affinities between the fundamental metaphysical ideas of Pound, the theosophical synthesis of Mead, and the occult history which represents "what has really survived in European minds after

several centuries of trituration of the ideas of the cabalists and hermetists of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance."⁷⁸

Mead's other works also illuminate aspects of the wisdom-tradition. His most important work next to Thrice-Greatest Hermes is probably his Fragments of a Faith Forgotten (1900), which, along with Echoes from the Gnosis and Pistis Sophia: A Gnostic Gospel (1898), is an important study of the origins and development of Gnosticism and the history of early Christian thought. As in all of Mead's works, we find a number of tantalizing bits which Pound might be echoing in The Cantos. Here, as elsewhere, Mead explores his favourite subject, the Origins of Christianity, while returning time and again to such theosophical themes as the One religion, the common source of all wisdom-traditions, and the Light of the initiation.⁷⁹

If Mead's works on gnosticism provided Pound with a composite model of initiatory ritual structures, it was probably his Doctrine of the Subtle Body which provided the poet with an account of the form and nature of palingenesis, the soul's ascension from the body's dense matter to a second birth in another realm, a region of light. Subtle Body, which was published in 1919, contains an Introduction and three essays. These essays had already appeared in the Quest in the early 1910s. In these Mead undertakes to summarize the ancient conceptions of sensorium, "the notion that the physical body of man is as it were the exteriorization of an invisible subtle embodiment of the life of the mind" (1). I will have more to say about this in the last chapter of this study. For now it is important to note that although Pound probably owes no debt to Mead for his palingenetic images, his conception of palingenesis in the Cantos as an ascension of the soul from the hylic cosmos to an aetheric, crystalline brightness conforms to Mead's discussion of the "radiant body."

I began my discussion of Mead's opinions and ideas as they are reflected in

Pound's writing with an example of an idea that Pound has said he got from Mead. I would now like to end this discussion with an example of an unacknowledged idea that Pound likely got from Mead. In 1895 Mead published a new edition of Thomas Taylor's Selected Works of Plotinus, adding his own "Foreword" to Taylor's "Introduction." Here Mead refers to his typical concerns regarding the "rising psychic tide" of his period and the theosophical concept of the need for a universal spiritual fellowship. Suggesting that the previously irreconcilable conflict between religion and science has produced a generation which longs and searches for reconciliation, he concludes that the study of man's psychic nature is necessary for this reconciliation and, thus, Plotinus, the most discerning philosopher of mysticism, deserves a new hearing. Mead's closing remarks are of particular interest for the student of Pound:

And that Plotinus was not a mere theorist, but did actually attain unto such a state of consciousness, is testified to by Porphyry. Plotinus also treats of this in the last book of the "Enneads", but, as he says, it can hardly be described (*δία καὶ διαφραστον τὸ θεῖον*). Thus we reach the borderland of philosophy as we understand it. Beyond this region lie the realms of pure mysticism and the great unknown. And if any one can lead us by a safe path to those supernal realms, avoiding the many dangers of the way, and in a manner suited to western needs, Plotinus is a guide that can be highly recommended. (xxxiv)

The role of Plotinus as psychopomp in Canto 15, as Sharon Mayer Libera explains it, is Pound's adaptation of Mead's suggestion in the above passage:

Pound bestows on Plotinus precisely the role of guide in Canto 15; there Plotinus leads Pound out from the Hell of London just as Vergil led Dante through the Inferno. Plotinus shows Pound a solid path through the hellish muck and brings him to a mystical vision of the sun at the threshold of the region of the saved. Thus, in a true sense, Pound followed Mead's recommendation of Plotinus as a guide. (30)

In the preceding paragraphs I have attempted to show the general substance and tenor of Mead's writing in so far as it is reflected in Pound's opinions. Many of the echoes of Mead's work which we find in the Cantos and in certain of Pound's prose pieces are just that: echoes for which it is difficult to find the exact source.

It is more important to realize that Mead's theosophical ideas are constantly in the background of Pound's thinking as sources for his own world-view. Thus, even when we cannot put our finger on the exact passage from Mead, Pound's understanding of the "celestial tradition," his belief in the persistence of the light from Eleusis through the middle ages and its re-surfacing in the songs of Provence and Italy, his attempt to restore the "ancient wisdom" by creating anew the pagan consciousness, the insistence on the need to return to solar mythology, his concept of palingenesis, the primacy of the visionary experience and the light of initiation--all these are concepts which form the centre of Mead's theosophism. True, all these ideas are central to many other theosophists and Pound could have found them in various places. But of all his occultist friends, it is to Mead that Pound owes the greatest debt.

Having said all this, one more point shouts for our attention: Pound's ambivalent attitude towards occultism. How can we reconcile the mild ridicule directed towards "Old Krone" [Mead] in Guide to Kulchur and the Cantos with Pound's serious interest in "things occult"?⁸⁰ I think that Pound's ambivalence finds its motivation in his deliberate attempt to put some distance between himself and the stupidity, the foolishness, and the charlatanny of those around him (including Yeats) who were participants in senseless psychic experiments and tricks so common in occult circles of the period. But in his own mind he could--or he believed he could--always distinguish between the merits and the absurdities of mysticism and occultism.

Pound's interest in the occult can be gleaned from a careful examination of the Cantos. What I have tried to demonstrate in this chapter is that many of his London friends, and even his wife, maintained a serious interest in the occult and could not but have communicated this interest to Pound. Therefore, when Pound speaks about myth in terms of "delightful psychic experience" and says that he

knows people to whom such experiences occur so that he is personally acquainted with "one man who understands Persephone and Demeter, and one who understands the Laurel, and another who has, I should say met Artemis," he is telling us that he is familiar with the occult community of London and that "These things are for [him, too,] real" (SR 92).

Notes to Chapter III

1. See George Mills Harper and John S. Kelly, "Preliminary Examinations of the Script of E[lizabeth] R[adcliffe]," in George Mills Harper, ed., Yeats and the Occult (165).

2. See Ezra Pound/John Theobald Letters and Ezra Pound and Dorothy Shakespear: Their Letters, 1909-1914; hereafter cited as EP/JT and EP/DS respectively and followed by page number(s) within the text.

3. There are a number of other, more specialized articles on Pound and the occult. But most often than not those critics who choose to address this issue do so in a rather limited way. That is, they use occult texts or motifs as an aid in explicating specific passages or allusions in Pound's poetry rather than addressing Pound's more general habit of drawing on a body of opinion, belief, and experience which might be termed "occult." For example, in "The Toys...at Auxerre": Canto 77," Colin McDowell traces Pound's reference to "the toys in the/service at Auxerre" to its probable occult source in three essays by Mead. There are many other examples of this sort of source tracing--and this approach is certainly of interest and value.

4. Schneidau calls Mead "a well-known figure in occult circles" (Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real 119). But this is the only time he uses this term, opting instead for the term "esoteric" in his descriptions of Yeats and Upward.

5. At the time of their meeting, around 1904, Miss Heyman was not, as Norman writes, thirty-four years old but rather thirty.

6. A Lume Spento was dedicated to Smith (A LUME SPENTO/ (With Tapers Quenched)/ in memoriam eius mihi caritate primus/ William Brooke Smith/ Painter, Dreamer of dreams.). A letter written from France in 1921 to William Carlos Williams reveals Pound's high opinion of Smith:

Any studio I was ever in was probably that of some friend or relative of Will Smith, who avoided a very unpleasant era of American life by dying of consumption to the intimate grief of his friends. How in Christ's name he came to be in Phila.--and to know what he did know at the age of 17-25--I don't know. At any rate, thirteen years are gone; I haven't replaced him and shan't and no longer hope to." (Letters 229)

7. J.J. Wilhelm, in The American Roots of Ezra Pound, has this to say about Pound's affair with Heyman:

At some time around 1904, as an inscription in a book [belonging to Pound] of verse of Thomas L. Beddoes shows, he met and fell in love with an older woman. She was a Jewish pianist named Katherine Ruth Heyman, whom he referred to by her initials or by the nicknames of "Kitty" or "the Kitty-mama." As the last name indicates, the affair was platonic. (133)

Personally I do not think that the nickname "kitty-mama" proves beyond any doubt the affair's Platonic nature.

8. The following is the most pertinent passage from the novel:

....Before Hermione, standing like some young Greek hierophant by the piano, a face emerged, emerged from the stir of notes and star-notes of notes...and a curious flat glass surface emerged, two flat glass surfaces that caught light, that dispersed light, that suddenly let light through her pince-nez and showed the smallish uninspired eyes of the musician. Her name is Stamberg, Jew German or German Jew with a figure like that and wearing eyeglasses that have a tiny chain, a little rolled gold chain that fastened now behind her ear under her rat-tail untidy lean hair and that when she stops playing will be pulled off with a jerk and will fasten to a ridiculous little hook-in thing that is hooked in to the flat part above the protruding part of her odd humped front of drab cerise shirtwaist.... George and this woman who is common, who is obviously Jew or German--have a secret, a power I haven't. Why haven't I ever done anything? (HERMIONE 108-09)

The repetition of the racial slur and the disapproving attention to details of appearance and dress (especially in light of the fact that Hermione regards herself as fashionable in the novel) suggest H.D.'s jealousy.

9. J.J. Wilhelm also writes that Miss Heyman

was extremely sophisticated--well on her way to establishing an international reputation as an interpreter of Scriabin, which she maintained until her death in 1944....Kitty was precisely the sort of steadying influence that the brash, often compulsive Mr. Pound needed. Although he could feel superior to his classmates and many of his teachers, he had to defer to her expertise and fame. (The American Roots of Ezra Pound 133)

10. Miss Heyman's book was published by Small, Maynard and Co.(1921), the same publishing company which ten years earlier had published Pound's Provenza.

11. Professor Adams also notes that Miss Heyman's book, The Relation of Archaic to Ultramodern Music (1921), was an expanded version of a 1916 lecture series and thus is closer to the period of her friendship with Pound. He adds that "Readers of Pound will find it full of echoes and references, direct and indirect, to Pound and Poundian currents of thought.... Her entire approach of finding precedents for modern techniques in the archaic and exotic (skipping over everything between) is Poundian, and more novel than now" (16).

12. Patricia Hutchins, using a letter from Pound dated 27 September 1957, writes that, When asked who used to come there [Kensington flat] Pound wrote, "Actually In the front room, Florence Farr reading Tagore, D.H. Lawrence missing train for Croydon," and spending the night in "sort of armchair convertible to cot". Then again, "Let's see, actually IN the room, Aldington, H.D., Brigit [Patmore], once or twice [Paul] Selver, Skip Cannell

and Kitty on the ground floor [as temporary tenants perhaps],... (69)
The important point for this part of the discussion is that Pound remembered Miss Heyman's presence in his London residence almost fifty years later.

13. In fact, Pound's A Quinzaine for This Yule is dedicated to Miss Heyman (the dedication runs: "To the Aube of the West Dawn"). "Nel Biancheggiar," a poem included in Quinzaine, was first published in the London Evening Standard and St. James's Gazette (8 December 1908), under the title "For Katherine Ruth Heyman. (After One of Her Venetian Concerts)". Also contained in this collection is "Aube of the West Dawn. Venetian June." Both of these poems can be found in The Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound, ed. Michael J. King (New Directions, 1976). Besides the dedication of these early poems to her, Pound also mentions Miss Heyman in the Pisan Cantos. Reminiscing about the "good old days" in the midst of his personal grief and desperation, Pound recalls the following incident (he is certainly not aware of Miss Heyman's recent death):

Unkle George in Brassitalo's abbazia
voi che passate per questa via:
Does D'Annunzio live here?
said the american lady, K.H.
"I do not know" said the aged Veneziana,
"this lamp is for the virgin."
"Non combaattere" said Giovanna,
meaning: don't work so hard, (76/461)

In Reading the Cantos, Noel Stock says that Miss Heyman is among those who visit Pound's tent in Canto 80 (86).

14. This claim is repeated, again without proper documentation, by John Tytell, Pound's most recent biographer (37).

15. Following this initial introduction to the occult, H.D.'s interest in esoterica became stronger. HERmione, which, like End to Torment, documents the early Philadelphia and London years, includes accounts of a number of intense experiences which often border on psychic trance. In the late 1920s, H.D. began a serious and systematic study of esoteric traditions as well as experimentation with Tarot, astrology, and numerology. During World War II, her interest in the occult was expanded to Cabala and Spiritualism and she joined the Society for Psychical Research in London. However, she never joined any occult groups, and throughout her life regarded psychic experiences and occult sects with skepticism and detachment. Having said that, we need to recognize that her writing transforms her psychic experiences and esoteric researches into art. Her life and art, therefore, cannot be scrutinized without taking into consideration "her various brews of Egyptology, Hellenic studies, tarot, astrology [and] numerology" (Guest 225).

Most of my information for this note comes from Susan Stanford Friedman's Psyche Reborn: The Emergence of H.D., especially Chapter 6: "Initiations: Biographical Roots of Occult Influence." Although she mentions the list of mystical books in End to Torment, Friedman does not stress Pound's importance in H.D.'s occult education. She thinks that certain psychic experiences which H.D. claimed to have had at Corfu (ca 1920) "probably provided H.D. with the greatest impetus to begin serious study of esoteric traditions in the twenties. W.B. Yeats, with his poetic blend of theosophy

and myth may have had some influence on H.D. But Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society, major influences on Yeats's occult interests, held little or no attraction for H.D. as she first delved into the occult. Probably more significant than Yeats's example was the general interest in occult phenomena among literary people in London during the twenties." (160) As shown by my discussion, I think that Pound is a much more probable source for H.D.'s "delving" into the occult.

16. In A History of White Magic, Gareth Knight identifies Yogi Ramacharaka as W.W. Atkinson, a successful writer of the New Thought movement (with his Secrets of Mental Magic), "who also wrote a series of books on popularised forms of yoga under the pseudonym of Yogi Ramacharaka" (168). William French and Timothy Materer, in "Far Flung Vortices & Ezra's 'Hindoo' Yogi," also comment on "Yogi Ramacharaka"; they point out that Pound refers to Ramacharaka's books in his footnote to the "Plotinus" sonnet (41).

17. The Hermetic Order to the Golden Dawn, founded in 1888, was intended to be a secret and highly-exclusive alternative to the Theosophical Society which was open to all who wished to join. As well, the Golden Dawn was based on the Western hermetic-Cabalistic tradition, and thus, unlike the Theosophical Society, had no Hindu or Buddhist elements.

18. Even before meeting Blavatsky, however, Yeats had become acquainted with Eastern philosophies through his contact with Mohini Chatterjee (circa 1885).

19. A lucid discussion of Yeats's education in the different occult traditions is given by Wilson in Yeats and Tradition.

20. About the disagreements between Yeats and Horton see Harper, Yeats-Horton 134.

21. See Pound's letter to James Brand Pinker, dated 30 January 1916, in Pound-Loyce (65).

22. For more information see Josephine Johnson's Florence Farr: Bernard Shaw's 'New Woman'.

23. In a 1895 letter to Olivia Yeats describes the Secret Rose' stories in terms of their occult significance and says that they were not "mere phantasies but the signa-
tures...of things invisible and ideas." Thirty-six years later, on 23 November 1931, Yeats writes from Coole about a profound religious experience he has had in which he thinks he has attained Brahma:

I was on a walk after dark and there among some great trees became absorbed in the most lofty philosophic conception I have found while writing A Vision. I suddenly seemed to understand at last and then I smelt roses. I had realized the nature of the timeless spirit. (Yeats,

Letters 255)

24. See EP/DS (108, 181, 293, 294, 302, 303, 334). It was Pound who persuaded Olivia Shakespear to translate parts of Le Comte de Gabalis, which he then published in the Egoist (from 16 March to 1 June 1914). For more information on the importance of this text for Pound, as well as for his reading of other occult texts during the period under discussion, see James Longenbach's article on "The Secret Society of Modernism: Pound, Yeats, Olivia Shakespear, and the Abbé de Montfaucon de Villars."

25. For a brief but lucid look at Pound's Imagist position, see "Gyre and Vortex: W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound," by Materer and McDowell.

26. In "The Secret Society of Modernism," James Longenbach examines many of the same issues presented in my discussion. Though we are in general agreement in so far as what Pound means by "symbolism," Longenbach concludes by saying that "It is finally not the subject matter but the elitist attitude of occult literature that was most important for Pound" (117). I, on the other hand, argue in this study that the subject matter (that is, the thematic correspondences) was also of considerable importance to him.

27. In a note to some free translations ("Scented Leaves--From a Chinese Jar) which appeared in Poetry (Chicago), 2 (September 1913) we have the following biographical sketch:

Mr. Allen Upward, born in Worcester in 1863, has had a varied life. A scholar, a barrister, a volunteer soldier who ran the blockade of Crete and invaded Turkey with the Greek army, he is also the author of plays, romances, poems, and of The New Word, that powerful plea for individualism which aroused England six years ago, and for which Mr Gerald Stanley Lee, in Crowds, demands the Nobel prize. The Scented Leaves are not direct translations, but paraphrases from the Chinese.

We may add to this that it is probably to Upward, whom Pound met at least two years before the Fenollosa papers came into his possession, that we owe Pound's interest in Chinese poetry and things Chinese in general. In 1904 Upward and Byng founded the Primrose Press (later the Orient) with the aim of publishing the series Wisdom of the East. The first Primrose publication was Sayings of Confucius, translated by Upward. Upward also published Chinese translations in both the New Age and The New Freewoman during the time of Pound's association with these periodicals.

28. In a footnote, Knox observes that "Yeats, then into theosophical and psychical research, planned to communicate telepathically with Upward across Dublin--the attempt was unsuccessful" (73). Schneidau also points to this in one of his footnotes: "For Upward's connection with Yeats, see his anonymous Some Personalities (London, 1921), 57-8) (Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real 119, note 19).

29. Allen Upward, "The Discarded Imagist," Egoist, II (June 1, 1915) 98.

30. This is from a letter to Patricia Hutchins. This unpublished letter belongs to the Patricia Hutchins Collection, British Museum, Add. 57725. I have not been to the British Museum myself and I am working from notes taken by Leon Surette.

31. With different emphasis, the following Pound critics have done this job: Schneidau (118-26); Davie (63-72); Bush (91-102); Surette, Eleusis (192-95); Bryant Knox (71-84); A.D. Moody (55-70); Bell (225-29); and Michael H. Levenson (68-74).

32. For notable exceptions to the general neglect of Upward's occult connections see the work of Surette (37, 192-95), Schneidau ("Pound and Yeats" and Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real, 118-21), Bush (91-100), and Bell (225-30).

33. For example, see Upward's remarks on "understanding," which are characteristic of both his method in The New Word and of his concept that words tell their own stories (66).

34. In his review of The Divine Mystery Pound points to the "sun" as one of Upward's central concerns: "The first half of the book is planned...on the slow recognition of the sun. That is to say, primitive man turns from his worship of the dead, and of the earth and of various fears, to a worship of the life-giving sun" (SP 404).

35. Orage was editor of The New Age between 1906 and 1922 and he published such people as John Middleton Murray, Herbert Read, Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington and Katherine Mansfield among many others.

36. In A.R. Orage: A Memoir, Philip Mairet speaks of Orage's attraction to theosophy in these terms:

Orage, like many others of his generation, was fascinated by the "Secret Doctrine"--that cosmic chaos of colossal symbols lit by auroral glimmerings of magic. But theosophy also gave him the Bhagavad Gita and introduced him to the Mahabharata--vital and permanent influences in his mental life.... (16)

In a letter to John Theobald, written over three decades after his London period, Pound mentions that at the time he had been reading an Indian classic at Orage's prodding. In this letter, dated 28 March 1957, Pound says that "Orage drug me thru 1 1/2 vols of Mahabharatt and then I stuck" (EP/JT 25). The Mahabharatt is an Indian epic composed between the second-century B.C. and the second-century A.D. Thus, regarding Pound's statement about Orage's mysticism, we can be certain that Pound was, indeed, more than qualified at the time (1935) to pass judgement.

37. Patricia Hutchins relates one instance of Pound's presence in Orage's New Age offices during 1912 when he was a newcomer to Orage's circle. See Ezra Pound's Kensington: An Exploration, 1885-1913 (108-09).

38. In The Occult Establishment, James Webb writes that:

The originator of guild socialism, A.J. Penty, moved even nearer the less specific plans of Chesterton and the Distributists. He advocated a return to the medieval concept of the just price and the abolition of usury: Christian society was for him the ideal. But in the influx of Eastern occult and mystical ideas he found an encouraging rejection of materialism. He compared Theosophists, Spiritualists, and Christian Scientists to the Gnostics, Neo-Platonists, and Manichees who flourished just before the triumph of Christianity as a religious and social system....The appeal for some set of absolute and communally accepted values was heard loudly in England in the period between the Wars, and it is important to know that there was organized political groupings which sought in good faith to realize such demands. Even in the limited field of literary criticism it is necessary to know of Penty, of the guilds, and of the general movement for a "spiritual" or an "organic" socialism to understand Ezra Pound's harping on the question of abolishing interest as more than a private eccentricity best explained by an odd taste for Italian Fascism. (116-17)

Webb's account is not entirely accurate. It was J.A. Hobson and not Penty who was the originator of guild socialism--a movement which had a brief life of eighteen months or so.

See also Surette, "Economics and Eleusis" (58-67).

39. As revealed in this passage, Orage was interested in Plato as well. His biographer, Philip Mairet, reports that Orage was the chief attraction of the "Plato Group" at Leeds which used to meet at the house of Thomas Wilson, then an architect in Leeds and later the Clerk of Works at the House of Commons. "This was a small informal society, which was in origin and effect a circle for the reception of Orage's expositions of Platonic philosophy. It met weekly for some years and was joined for longer or shorter periods by a number of persons, including professors of the University of Leeds" (15-16).

40. An example of this is his January, 1907 article entitled "Occult Arts and Occult Faculty."

41. The first and last of these had been delivered as lectures at the Leeds Theosophical Society earlier. Mairet says that the two books on Nietzsche "were, and remain, the best brief introductions to the German seer....especially the second,..." (31).

42. Regarding Pound's introduction to Orage, Robert Schultz writes that Pound met Orage upon his return from a trip to Italy and Germany and goes on to say that "it is probably Hulme who introduced him to A.R. Orage, editor of The New Age. The Introduction probably took place at one of Hulme's "Erith Street evenings," held in the home of Mrs. Ethel Kibblewhite in Soho" (461). For biographical details of Pound's London years see Robert Schultz, "A Detailed Chronology of Ezra Pound's London Years, 1908-1920, Part One: 1908-1914" and "Part Two: 1915-1920." Of course, either one of these men (Flint or Hulme) could have been the one who performed the introduction. Both of them belonged to the "Secession Club" (which also included

F.W. Tancred, Florence Farr, Edward Storer, Joseph Campbell and occasionally T.D. FitzGerald). In addition, both Flint and Hulme wrote for Orage's The New Age. Regardless of who made the introductions, Orage invited Pound to contribute to his periodical and thus "The Seafarer" (November 30, 1911) and a series of essays entitled "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" (November 30 to February 22, 1912) appeared in The New Age; these were followed by many others and this magazine helped Pound survive during some rather difficult years in London.

43. The difference in literary taste is even more unmistakably pronounced in Pound's "Obituary: A.R. Orage":

During 21 years, I think that Orage never admired a single author whom I admired, and that, in my own work, he liked only that part which differentiated me from the living writers whom I have respected or eulogised. The sole exception was, during the last year or so, Carlos Williams. I mean that our 23 years' friendship [1911-1934] was a friendship of literary differences and never one difference concealed. (SP 437-38)

44. See the lucid exposition of Pound's echoing of Orage's Nietzschean ideas in Leon Surette's "Economics and Eleusis."

45. In these articles which were written in a language verging on the extravagant, the apocalyptic and the symbolical, Mitrinovic presented his personal vision of history as a development of a giant man. Orage, at the beginning, corrected Mitrinovic's English but later left his rhapsodies unchanged and The New Age did experience a drop in circulation as a consequence. For more details on this point see Mairet (xv-xvi).

46. Someone else, whose name is closely connected with Pound's and Orage's, was attracted to Mitrinovic's brand of occultism. I am speaking of Major Douglas. When in the early 1930s Mitrinovic founded the New Britain movement ("pledged to a functional society, guilds, social credit, the welfare system, a European Federation, Rudolf Steiner's Threefold Commonwealth, and a restored Christianity"), Major Douglas was one of the people involved in it.

47. "With his remarkable flair for spotting new ideas of significance in almost any field of human endeavour," says Rowland Kenney [in Westerling (London, 1939), 323], Orage had grasped the importance of psycho-analysis, and given space to Dr M.D. Eder, one of the pioneers in this country, and to others interested in it....When The New Age began to deal with the subject openly in its columns psycho-synthesis was anathema." (Martin 140)

48. Orage influenced a number of groups during his stay in New York. In terms of literary criticism, his influence was important upon the Waldo Frank group of 1923 (the group included Hart Crane, Kenneth Burke, Gorham Munson, and Jean Toomer) and the editors of The Little Review, Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap. Most of

these people visited Fontainebleau. I have found no evidence of such visits by Crane and Burke.

49. This lecture was later published in Quests Old and New (1913) under the title "'The Book of the Hidden Mysteries' by Hierotheos". The "Book" of this title was a British Museum manuscript. In 1927 the full text of The Book of Hierotheos, with a translation, was published.

50. We know that Mead gave a number of series of lectures on various topics from his essay "Retrospect-Prospects" in The Quest. I will have more to say about this essay later on in this chapter.

51. As Professor Stephen J. Adams has informed me, Pound met Rummel in the United States before he reached London in 1908. Rummel, as Pound's recollection of him in this context shows, also had strong occult interests.

52. The editors of the Ezra Pound-Dorothy Shakespear correspondence point to Mead's The World Mystery as the source of the incantation:

Among prayers to the Supreme Principle are specially to be remarked the mystic invocations of the Coptic Gnostic MSS., brought back from Upper Egypt, and preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and in the British Museum. These are largely Christian overworkings superimposed on a basis of Egyptian Gnosticism. In the concluding section appended to the Pistis Sophia document headed "Extract from the Books of the Saviour," the Saviour, the First Mystery, thus addresses the Hidden Father in the mystic celebration of an initiatory rite of which a dim memory remains in the Eucharist of the Churches. The Prayer is in the mystery-language, untranslatable by the "profane," and runs as follows:

"Hear Me, My Father, Father of all Fatherhood, Boundless Light:

"Acciouo iao soi oia psinoth thernops nopsiter zagoure
pagoure nethmomaothe nepsiomaoth marachachatha thobarrabau
Ntharnachachan zorokothora iecu sabaoth." (qtd. in EP/DS 116)

The incantation, "AOI," found by Dorothy in Mead is used by Pound in The Cantos:

So Astafieva had conserved the tradition
From Byzance and before then

Manitou remember this fire

O lynx, keep the phylloxera from my grape vines

"Iaxxe, Iaxxe, Xaipe, AOI

"Eat of it not in the under world"

See that the sun or the moon bless thy eating

Kápn, Kápn, for the six seed of an error

or that the stars bless thy eating (79/489-90)

Terrell's Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound identifies as the source of this incantation the Chanson de Roland, where it occurs 172 times. Its meaning is said to be unknown, although it is suggested that "Perhaps it means 'Hail' as in 'Io'" (427). Although one cannot disprove Terrell's suggestion, I think that Mead's work is a more likely source of the incantation. In the Pistis Sophia it appears in the Coptic text in Greek vowels (αβαμωωωωω), and it is used by Pound as a name of magic

power, a name which he associated with the Eleusinian Dionysus and Kore, his bride. The probability that Pound associated the incantation AOI with the Eleusinian mysteries becomes stronger upon considering that "Ἰακχῆ" (this is the nominative of the vocative form of address used by Pound) is the mystic name of "Ἰακχῆς" which is used only in these mysteries (Harrison 567). The Eleusinian character of this passage is unmistakable. Pound is careful to place immediately before the ecstatic shouts of the Eleusinian worshipers Dionysus's exhortation to one of his lynxes, animals identified in Canto 2 as sacred to him, to watch over and protect the grape-vines, plants sacred to Dionysus, from the phylloxera, or vine-pests.

53. Jiddu Krishnamurti is the Indian theosophist who founded the World Order of Star in England with Annie Besant and who was pronounced, in 1925, the new messiah, a claim he repudiated in 1928.

54. The Ezra Pound-Patricia Hutchins correspondence began in 1953 and continued virtually until Pound's death. However, in 1960 Pound stopped replying to Hutchins and from 30 September 1960 Dorothy Pound took over the correspondence.

55. It is of interest to note that Levenson mentions Hulme's and Lewis's appearances in the Quest Society Lecture activities at the Kensington Town Hall without mentioning that this was one of the centers of theosophical activities at the time.

56. For glances into the Pound-Mead relationship, see the work of the following scholars: Surette, Schneidau, Bell, Libera, Elliott, and Colin McDowell.

57. For example, Jessie L. Weston relies heavily on Mead's work in From Ritual to Romance.

58. See studies by Rudolph, Jonas, Walker as well as the article on "Gnosticism" in Eliade's Encyclopedia.

59. Mead, "'The Quest'--Old and New: Retrospect and Prospect" (289-307). Most of my information about Mead's biography and his view of the problems of the Theosophical Society at the point when he left to form his own group is from this essay.

60. See Arthur H. Nethercot, The First Five Lives of Annie Besant (345-46). Both this book and its sequel, The Last Four Lives of Annie Besant, offer some useful information about Mead.

61. Charles Webster Leadbeater (1847-1923) was a British clergyman and occultist who played a major role in the history of the Theosophical Society. From time to time he was accused with engaging in homosexual activities involving young students.

62. Quoted from G.R.S. Mead, "On the Nature of the Quest" (29-30). In a footnote we find that this first article of The Quest is "the substance of an address delivered by the President [Mead] at the Inaugural Meeting of the Quest Society, at Kensington Town Hall, London, W., on Thursday, March 11, 1909" (29).

63. For further clarification, it is pertinent to quote in full the periodical's "Programme" in which the Society's aims are outlined in more detail:

THE QUEST welcomes contributions which exemplify the investigation and comparative study of religion, philosophy and science as complementary to one another in aiding the search for that reality which alone can give complete satisfaction. It desires to promote enquiring into the nature of religious and other supranormal experiences and the means of testing their value, to strengthen the love of wisdom which stimulates all efforts to formulate a practical philosophy of life, and to emphasize the need of a vital science to crown and complete the discoveries of physical research. It also invites contributions which treat of the purpose of art and the expression of the ideal in forms of beauty; and in literature interests itself in works of inspiration and of genial imagination.

The "programme's" aims, it will be recalled, are those of "occult science" as outlined in Mead's essay on the "Occult" in James Hastings's The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. (For a fuller discussion of Mead's understanding of "occult science," see beginning of Chapter II of this study.)

The "Programme" quoted above is from an advertizing notice announcing a New Series of The Quest to begin October, 1936. The "Advertisement" includes the quoted "Programme," a list of some of the past contributors, "A few Press Notices," and a Subscription form. Although Mead at the time was making changes in terms of the periodical's financial structure, the aims of the publication were to remain unchanged.

64. Jessie L. Weston speaks about her debt to Mead's knowledge and work in From Ritual to Romance (1920):

...a casual reference, in Anrich's work on the Mysteries, to the Naassene Document, caused me to apply to Mr G.R.S. Mead, of whose knowledge of the mysterious border-land between Christianity and Paganism, and willingness to place that knowledge at the disposal of others, I had, for some years past, had pleasant experience. Mr Mead referred me to his own translation and analysis of the text in question, and there, to my satisfaction, I found, not only the final link that completed the chain of evolution from Pagan Mystery to Christian Ceremony, but also proof of that wider significance I was beginning to apprehend. The problem involved was not one of Folk-lore, not even of Literature, but of comparative Religion in its widest sense. (viii)

Accordingly, Chapter XI of Miss Weston's book, "The Secret of the Grail (2) The Naassene Document," is almost entirely based on Mead's work.

Despite the importance of From Ritual to Romance for The Waste Land, Weston's debt to occult sources has hardly been discussed. John Senior's observations regarding Weston, Eliot, and occultism deserve more attention. See "The Detail in the Pattern: Eliot," in John Senior, The Way Down and Out: The Occult in Symbolist Literature (170-198).

65. Some firm evidence of Pound's knowledge of Quest articles is his later use in The Cantos of Mead's essays on Dance and Christendom. For a discussion of this see Colin McDowell, "THE TOYS...AT AUXERRE": CANTO 77" (21-30).

66. In the first, reviewer W.M.W. praises Pound's effort but complains that he is perhaps too much of a modern poet and makes no effort to explain Cavalcanti's period so as to place the translations within their proper historical context; the second reviewer, presumably Mead himself (the review is unsigned), praises the poem on Swinburne and "Altaforte" but thinks little of the rest.

67. Pound used Conybeare's Loeb edition of Philostratus in writing Canto XCIV, and he probably knew of this edition even before the appearance of the review in The Quest (July, 1913), since we find Dorothy writing to him in February, 1913, about reading it (EP/DS 188). We should also stop to note here that Conybeare wrote often in The Quest. Conybeare's Loeb edition is regarded as legitimate scholarship, while Mead's book on the same subject is not. While Pound scholars have kept these works distinct, The Quest suggests that they were almost a collaboration. Gardner's book, which would also have been of considerable interest to Pound, is praised by the reviewer for placing Dante's epic in the context of a mystical tradition and for coming to the conclusion that the end of Dante's mysticism is "to make spiritual experience a force for the reformation of mankind." This book, then, reflects Pound's faith in a spiritual reformation of mankind. Finally, Underhill's books must have attracted Pound's attention as well, since we know that both Dorothy and his friend T.S. Eliot admired her Mysticism (1911), which is reviewed in the second volume of The Quest. I present all this information as an example of the kind of material that Pound's association with Mead's circle gave him the opportunity to scrutinize and talk about. Additional opportunities were furnished by his attendance at regular lectures on subjects similar to those found in the pages of the periodical--this is a point to which I intend to return later in this discussion.

68. But, of course, Mead's prudery is not the most important reason for his choice of Jung over Freud. Mead's understanding of psychic experiences is similar to Jung's. After all, both Mead and Jung are "Gnostics." For more details on Jung's Gnosticism, see Stephan A. Hoeller, The Gnostic Jung and the Seven Sermons of the Dead.

69. James Webb suggests that the name F.I. Winters is one of Orage's pseudonyms (A Quest Anthology 6-7). Whoever he was, he definitively belonged to the New Age circle.

70. After Ouspensky's arrival, Mead wrote a long review of Claude Bragdon's edition of Ouspensky's Tertium Organum which appeared in the October number of The Quest (1921). The review was not entirely positive, and it incited a letter by Ouspensky, dated October 25, defending his position and clarifying some misconceptions about his person.

71. By Christmas 1920, Pound and his wife had moved to Paris.

72. In Ezra Pound and the Erotic Medium, Kevin Oderman discusses Mead's allegorical reading of the Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre legend and comes to the same conclusion as I do. I take exception, nonetheless, with the following statement by Oderman:

[Leon Surette] has also glossed Pound's footnote on Mead in the Spirit of Romance with Mead's booklet on Simon Magus; he assumes, however, that Pound accepted Mead's conclusion that to understand the sexual element in the Simon Magus legend as a literal history is error, while I have concluded that the burden of evidence suggests that Pound rejected it. (138)

Oderman has misconstrued Surette's position. In his "Helen of Tyre" (1973) article, to which Oderman is referring here, Surette has little to say about Pound's agreement or rejection of Mead's interpretation. In Eleusis (1979), however, Surette is quite clear about the fact that Pound did not share Mead's prudishness:

One can safely assume from [Pound's note] that Mead had conveyed both the sexual and theological dimensions of the legend in his lecture. However, it should be noted that Mead himself was quite prudish about the sexual symbolism inherent in the legend, and warns the readers of Simon Magus against the error of any lewd interpretation...Pound did not share [Mead's] prudishness. Indeed he is quite explicit about the role of sexuality in his highly syncretic version of Eleusis. (62-3)

73. For example, Hugh Kenner has discussed the importance of Mead's Apollonius of Tyana (1901), a critical commentary upon Philostratus' Life of Apollonius of Tyana, to Pound's treatment of the first-century A.D. sage in cantos 91 and 94 (Gnomon 295-96). Although Pound's direct source is Conybeare's Loeb edition of the Philostratus text, Pound's knowledge of Mead's work may have precipitated his decision to devote canto 94 to Apollonius. Hugh Kenner has written about two of the details in Pound's treatment of the Apollonius theme which suggest Pound's familiarity with Mead's commentary: the accentuation of Tyana and the romantic point that Empress Julia Domna was the "daughter of a sun priest in Babylon." To these factual points we may add two more: first, emphasis in Mead's commentary is placed on Apollonius as a great wanderer whose search for wisdom provides a link between Occidental and Oriental thought (see especially Mead's Chapter II: "India and Greece") which is very much a part of Pound's treatment of Apollonius; and, second, Mead makes a number of perceptive comments about Philostratus' treatment of his subject which would have appealed to Pound and which are certainly part of his own strategy of mythologizing and altering his material in order to fit the subject at hand in the Cantos.

A second example is Pound's use of the concept of augeides in the Cantos, which he borrows from Mead's The Subtle Body (1919). Pound uses the word "augeides [sic]" in a draft of canto 25 (holograph notes for canto 25, Beinecke Library). Although the word itself does not find its way into the published version of the poem, the concept of the augeides body is certainly present in the Cantos-- for more details see Oderman (72-5) and my discussion of this concept in Chapter V. A third example of Pound's direct debt to Mead can be found in Colin McDowell's discussion of The Sacred Dance of Christendom (1926).

74. The full title of Mead's work is Thrice-Greatest Hermes: Studies in Hellenistic Theosophy and Gnosis. Being a Translation of the Extant Sermons and Fragments of the Trismegistic Literature, with Prolegomena, Commentaries, and Notes.

75. For Pound's position, see "Terra Italica" (SP)--especially pages 58-9.

76. The titles of the individual volumes are the following: I. "The Gnosis of the Mind." II "The Hymns of Hermes." III. "The Vision of Aridaeus." IV. "The Hymn of Jesus." V. "The Mysteries of Mithra." VI. "A Mithriac Ritual." VII. "The Gnostic Crucifixion." VIII. "The Chaldean Oracles, I." IX. "The Chaldean Oracles, II." X. "The Hymn of the Robe of Glory." XI. "The Wedding-Song of Wisdom."

77. The same point is also made in Vol. II, "The Hymns of Hermes" (39-40).

78. This quotation is part of Saurat's discussion in Literature and Occult Tradition of Madame Blavatsky's writings, especially Isis Unveiled and The Secret Doctrine, as a representative compendium of modern occultism. Saurat continues thus: "Therefore we have in Madame Blavatsky a precious witness: she gives us in a genuinely rough state the only material in the great occultist quarry which was capable of being worked by the poets. What she rejected was, no doubt, almost totally impossible for modern mind to assimilate" (69). Saurat has also qualified this view by saying that what Madame Blavatsky presented as Theosophy was nothing more than "a kind of modern summary of Occultism which made use of the data found in all works of this sort since the Renaissance" (67). Of course, the subtitle of Isis Unveiled is the pompous "A Master-key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology." No doubt, Blavatsky's purpose was to achieve a synthesis of all the heterogeneous material at her disposal so as to arrive at some basic principle that might harmonize into a single whole all knowledge.

79. Among Mead's other works are the following: Simon Magus: An Essay (1892); Orpheus (1896); Apollonius of Tyana, a critical commentary upon Philostratus' Life of Apollonius of Tyana (1901); World Mystery (1907); Quests Old and New (1913), a collection of thirteen papers, most of which had already been published in The Quest, dealing with the philosophy of the Far East, Gnosticism, and typical movements of contemporary thought; The Gospels and the Gospel (1902); Did Jesus Live 100B.C. (1903); The Theosophy of the Vedas (1905); The Gnostic John the Baptizer (1924); and The Sacred Dance of Christendom (1926). The titles of these volumes give us a picture of the depth and breath of Mead's theosophical concerns and scholarship.

80. Pound's mild ridicule of Mead always appears within the context of his ridiculing of Madame Blavatsky. See Guide to Kulchur (225-26) and Cantos (74/446). In one of his letters to John Theobald, Pound relates an anecdote involving Blavatsky, and again directs some mild ridicule toward Mead:

...Blavatsky, OBjective, as per sitting at table digging into juice beefsteak / disciples on carrot diet: "Ah, childRen, my CHILdren, how many of you have succceeded...in...BEgetting vegeTARian children?"

Also her pulling Mead's leg to see whether M/ thinking or swallowing. (Letter dated 11 June 1957, EP/JT 36)

The editors of the Ezra Pound-John Theobald correspondence observe that "Pound's anecdotes (e.g. Madame Blavatsky as a Gertrude Stein figure), rich in themselves, mask one of the enduring interests of his life, so evident in the visionary traditions

invoked in the Cantos" (30).

CHAPTER IV
KATABASIS/PALINGENESIS/EPOPTeia

1. KATABASIS/PALINGENESIS/EPOPTeia

In the foregoing chapters, I have endeavoured to accomplish the following tasks: (1) to describe some of Pound's ideas which may be termed occult; (2) to trace the general outline and describe the most important moments of efflorescence of the wisdom tradition of which the modern occult is essentially a development; and (3) to place Pound within the London occult milieu of the first two decades of the twentieth-century. In the balance of this study, the foregoing discussions are brought to bear on a small number of selected cantos (17, 23, 47-51, and 90-91) with a view of showing how Pound's "occultism" is reflected in the Cantos. I propose to support the claim that the Cantos are structured on the model of an initiation rather than a journey as most readers have assumed. This initiation can be outlined as three stages, which I have labelled KATABASIS/PALINGENESIS/EPOPTeia (katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia).

The katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia pattern is applied here to cantos which best illustrate Pound's use of initiation rituals and support my contention that the poem itself constitutes an initiation. Though in this study I concentrate on individual cantos or groups of cantos, I believe that the model works for the Cantos as a whole. Obviously, this model will not work with some sections of the poem, most obviously the Chinese and Adams Cantos. Since these sections are largely Pound's adaptations of certain texts, the poet's own vision is not registered faithfully and the morphe is determined largely by the texts themselves.

As I have stressed in Chapter I, the poem does not describe or report on an

initiation rite, but instead enacts an initiation for the reader. The reader of the Cantos is intended to undergo the confusion and disorientation of the initiate and, in doing so, it is hoped he will arrive at a revelation. The act of reading the poem is meant, then, to constitute the initiation. The "lyric" or "paradisaical" moments in the poem embody the revelation that accompanies the initiation. It is true that the poem draws on the language, dramatis personae, symbols, and images of the mystery cults in its re-enactment, but it is not to be expected that any particular rite--such as that celebrated at Eleusis--will be faithfully followed.

With few exceptions, scholars have failed to take notice of the poem's initiatory nature and the cantos selected for examination here have not received adequate attention: Canto 17 has received little if any attention--except for Libera's identification of the Porphyry source and Surette's discussion of it in terms of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Canto 23 has been largely ignored, even though I think that it is one of the focal cantos, bringing together, as it does, many of the strands of the first thirty cantos. Dekker and Pearlman among others have done painstaking analyses of canto 47, but no scholar has emphasized the importance of ritual copulation, which is at the very centre of this canto, as the particular exoteric form that the initiation rite takes in the Cantos. Cantos 90 and 91 have been described by Libera as "the most mystical of the Cantos" (117), and such scholars as D. J. Neault, Boris de Rachewiltz, Wendy Flory, Christine Brooke-Rose, Massimo Bacigalupo, and James Wilhelm (The Later Cantos of Ezra Pound) have done much to elucidate the difficulties these cantos present for the reader. But Terrell's lead concerning the mystical symbolism of these cantos has yet to be taken-up (Companion, II 546-50)--and this is an aspect which my discussion of these cantos seeks to correct.¹

I would like to turn now to a brief discussion of what I call the

katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia structure of the Cantos. Katabasis means descent and constitutes an exoteric stage of the initiation; it is often represented as an actual descent in spatial terms but also takes the morphé of a sexual descent or hieros gamos. Palingenesis or re-birth is the process of soul-making and is, clearly, an esoteric process. Epopteia has both an esoteric as well as an exoteric dimension; that is, epopteia is a general term for the stage of revelation and includes metamorphosis (as well as theophany--which is a special kind of metamorphosis). Metamorphosis means, in this context, the moment of sudden change, or the moment during which the process of palingenesis is completed. Metamorphosis is thus the outward expression of the completed palingenesis while epopteia is a more general term which includes both the metamorphosis and the soteria, that is, the esoteric state of salvation which is reached by the mystes once he has achieved the gnosis or revelation.²

This tripartite structure of katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia fits well with one of Pound's most explicit statements about the structure of his poem, that is, Pound's outline of the "main scheme" of the Cantos which he sent to his father in 1927:

Live man goes down into world of Dead...

The "repeat in history"...

The "magic moment" or moment of metamorphosis, dust thru from quotidian [sic] into "divine or permanent world." Gods, etc. (Letters 285)

This "main scheme" has been especially useful in explaining Pound's choice of Book XI of the Odyssey, the NEKULA (Nekuia) or calling forth of the dead, as the starting point of his "tale of the tribe"--even though, as I will explain shortly, the tag "Live man goes down into the world of dead" is not an accurate description of what happens in the Odyssey. But Pound's "main scheme" is also useful because it clearly suggests what I call the Cantos' palingenetic nature--that is, a katabasis or encounter with death within a transcendent or palingenetic framework with the ultimate purpose of achieving the epopteia, the all encompassing term for the

esoteric state of gnosis, a state whose outward sign is the "moment of metamorphosis."

Kay Davis, correctly I think, sees the Eleusinian rites implied in Pound's outline (17-28). Beginning with the Homeric Hymn to Demeter and by way of Leon Surette's discussion, in A Light from Eleusis, of Plutarch's disclosures about the Eleusinian rites, Davis outlines the major features of the Eleusinian myth, the story of Demeter and her daughter Koré or Persephone. I have already discussed the Eleusinian mysteries in some detail in Chapter II of this study. To summarize: the mystes or initiate takes part in a pompe or procession which brings him from Athens to a dark, underground chamber in Eleusis. There he experiences the dromena or wanderings and confusion, before achieving the epopteia, the illumination or sudden awareness of brilliant light.³

That Pound conceived the Cantos, from the very beginning, as a poem modelled after the Eleusinian initiation rites is perhaps indicated in the term "Phanopoeia [ΦΑΝΟΠΟΙΕΙΑ]," which Forrest Read says was Pound's "original, provisional title for" his epic.⁴ In a letter to James Joyce, dated 17 March 1917, Pound mentions that he has "begun an endless poem, of no known category. Phanopoeia or something or other. All about everything [italics mine]" (102).⁵ Recalling that at Eleusis, and elsewhere, the title of the leading priest who alone could reveal to the initiates the ultimate mysteries that entailed the showing of the sacred object (τὰ ἱερά, ta hiera) was ἱεροφάντης (hierophant),⁶ literally he who reveals the sacred objects, there is justification for thinking that Phanopoeia is probably Pound's term for the poetry of the epopteia or poetry of revelation--and that the Cantos is meant to be this type of poetry.

The tripartite structure of katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia is repeated, with variations in both subject and execution, many times throughout the Cantos. Often

the steps exist in isolation, as fragments of the larger structure, or as images alluding to one another.

Pound's understanding of initiation rites was shaped on the models in Homer's Odyssey, the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, Plutarch's Lives, the Egyptian Book of the Dead, Ovid's Metamorphoses, Dante's Divine Commedia, and various Gnostic, Hermetic and Neoplatonic writings. We should add the commentaries Pound read--from Porphyry to Péladan and Mead--which probably shaped the way he read and understood the original works. Pound read the epics in the Neoplatonic and occult manner as mystical allegories or stories of divine revelation clothed in a mythical framework.

I think that this type of occult allegorization is what Pound has in mind when he says that "The Nekuia shouts aloud that it is older than the rest" (L 363). One example of an influential occult allegorization of Odysseus' descent that Pound probably knew is found in the long footnote Thomas Taylor adds at the end of his translation of Porphyry's "Cave of the Nymphs":

...the allegory, respecting the descent of Ulysses into the infernal regions, which, exclusive of its connection with Ulysses, contains...some of the greatest arcana of the Grecian theology. As it respects Ulysses, it appears to me to insinuate his flying to the assistance of necromancy, in order to know the result of the ills with which he is surrounded, through the anger of his natal daemon. Hence Tiresias is nothing more than a departed spirit evocated [sic] by magical art, for the purpose of disclosing the secrets of futurity, and informing Ulysses how he may return to the true empire of his mind. The success, however, was not answerable to the certainty of the information: and perhaps Homer meant to intimate by his allegory, that the end of such illicit practices is never correspondent to the desires by which they are undertaken. Hence he plainly indicates the madness of such a conduct, by the consequences which may possibly attend its execution, and by the horror which forced Ulysses to hasten its conclusion...

Mead also speaks eloquently of the need to decipher the myths of the ancient world, for he believed that it was the custom of the ancients to conceal the most profound truths under the guise of simple stories. As Mead has it,

The perfection of the highest virtue and the opening of the real spiritual senses constituted the highest degree of the Mysteries; another and most important part of the discipline was the training in the interpretation of myth, symbol, and allegory, the letters of the mystical language in which the secrets of nature and the soul were written, so plainly for the initiated, so obscurely for the general. Without this instruction the mythical recitals and legends were unintelligible. They were and are still unintelligible....

The symbols of the Mysteries and the mythical narrations summed up and explained the workings of occult nature and the powers, faculties and nature of the human soul. (Orpheus 155-56)

That Pound shared Mead's opinion about the exoteric/esoteric nature of the myths is made clear in one of his statements regarding Ovid's Metamorphoses:

I assert that a great treasure of verity exists for mankind in Ovid and in the subject matter of Ovid's long poem, and that only in this form could it be registered. (Guide 299)

I want to suggest that motivated by his familiarity with Hellenistic ritual Pound read the ancient works as representations of initiation rituals having a common origin. While one can discover, as Leon Surette and Key Davis have done, the Eleusinian rites of initiation in both Pound's "main scheme" and many of the Cantos, it is important to recognize that "Eleusis" is a metonymic for the mystery and that Pound's understanding of this mystery is syncretic.

It is the failure to acknowledge the principles of theosophic syncretism that I find missing from Davis's "Eleusis/Repeat/Metamorphosis," principles which inform at every step Pound's understanding of initiation rites. When Davis writes that

The ancient worship of fertility at Eleusis forms the religious premise for The Cantos, and the dark/light motion of the rites of Eleusis is analogous with the most elementary pattern in Pound's poem.... (17)

she is formulating a model which answers the needs of her own study perfectly. At the same time, however, she is limiting substantially Pound's understanding of initiation rites.

Canto 1 begins with the katabasis or descent of ritual initiation: "And then went down... (1/3). Pound is careful to note that the man descending into the world

of the dead is "alive" and thus fully conscious. Odysseus, at the outset of the poem, is like the mystes of ritual initiations, an experience about which Mead writes the following:

the passing into the realms of the dead [in both the Eleusinian and Mithraic versions], while living, refers to the initiation of the soul of the candidate into the states of after-death consciousness, while his body was left in trance. The successful passing through these states of consciousness removed the fear of death, by giving the candidate an all sufficing proof of the immortality of the soul and of its consanguinity with the gods. (319)

Mead's emphatic "while living" is echoed in the first step of Pound's scheme. The aim or goal of ritual initiation is the expansion of the successful candidate's consciousness into a state where he awakes to his relationship with the gods, and participates in their world.

Davis says that the second element in Pound's scheme "suggests the rebirth basis" of the vegetation myth of the Eleusinian rites (19). This step I call palingenesis, since it is the soul-making or death and rebirth, the process through which the epopteia is achieved. In the Cantos, as already mentioned, this palingenetic process takes two forms: the katabasis and the hieros gamos or "divine marriage," an expression of "union with God."

The Cantos begins with a katabasis. In the opening canto Odysseus descends to "the Kimmérian lands" and there performs a νεκυομαντεία (nekyomanteia) or ritual sacrifice for the conjuring up of the dead who, by drinking blood ("and he strong with blood"), can answer his questions about the future.⁸ What Odysseus participates in is, in fact, a sort of spiritualistic séance or necromancy.⁹ Viewing Odysseus' descent with the first step of Pound's scheme in mind ("Live man goes down into the world of Dead") distorts the Odyssean Nekyia, since this reading assumes that Odysseus actually descends to the Underworld as, for example, Aeneas does in the most famous imitation of the Odyssey. But, in fact, Odysseus sails to the entrance

of the underworld, the dark city of the Kimmerians, and there he performs a ritual by which he summons up the shadows of the dead ("Souls out of Erebus"). The Nekuia is nothing more than an evocation of the departed spirits by magical art, and Odysseus is in full control of which spirits speak to him and in what order, since he alone may choose which shadows are allowed to partake of the sacrificial blood.¹⁰

When Davis writes that,

Canto 1 opens with a translation of Book Eleven of Homer's Odyssey, the journey of Odysseus to the underworld to speak to Tiresias. This is the first part of Pound's scheme,... Canto 1 tells the story of the descent into the underworld as if it were physical truth,... (19-20)

strictly speaking, her statement is not accurate. Again, Odysseus does not descend into the underworld, but as in a spiritualistic séance the "souls" of the dead are called forth and appear before him. The Nekuia of the Odyssey differs, then, in at least this important respect from the Aeneid (as well as, for example, from the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, and Ovid's story of Orpheus and Eurydice in Metamorphoses).

Besides the ritual katabasis, another form that palingenesis might take in the Cantos is that of the hieros gamos or sacred marriage, another rite which is thought to have been part of many ancient rituals. Hieros gamos or ritual copulation is the particular exoteric form that the initiation rite takes in the Cantos. Pound "repeats" the motif of hieros gamos often in the poem, most memorably in canto 47. The cryptic Latin chant "Sacrum, sacrum inluminatio coitu" (36/180) is not deciphered until canto 47 where, as we shall see, the sacred sexual union leading to illumination is explained more fully.

The third and final step of Pound's scheme involves the "'magic moment' or moment of metamorphosis," expressed as a sudden "break through" during which man is "transported" from the ephemeral to the permanent world of the gods. In The Sacred and Profane, Mircea Eliade characterizes initiation as a "Rupture of Planes."

Pound's cruder phrase, "bust thru," shows that his understanding of initiation is similar to Eliade's.

The third step is one of radical transformation and constitutes the completion of the process of palingenesis. Man's entry into "the divine or permanent world" of the gods is the epopteia of initiation rites which Pound in the Cantos calls the "full Εἶδωs" ("Nor was place for the full Εἶδωs," 81/520). The Greek word εἶδωs, which can probably be paraphrased best in English as "seeing knowledge," illustrates Pound's understanding of the epopteia as sacred, eternal knowing which is, nonetheless, unmistakably connected with visible forms.¹¹ Metamorphosis is conceived by Pound, then, as the "act" of being "born again" to a higher plane of existence--a belief shared by all the occult systems examined in the earlier chapters as well as by charismatic Christians who speak of "seeing" or "meeting" Jesus, and of being "transformed," "saved" and the like. Myths of metamorphosis are exoteric manifestations of such transformations, outward and visible signs of an inward and invisible transformation.

2. THE CAVE OF NEREA: CANTO 17

Canto 17 begins where Canto 1 ends. It would appear that the psychopomp guiding the narrator from the world of the dead is Aphrodite, "Bearing the golden bough of Argicida" (1/5). Replacing Hermes, the traditional psychopomp, with his sister Aphrodite and altering *Χρυσόραβης Ἀργιολέπτης* ("the golden wand of the Argus Slayer") to "Golden bough of Argicida" are Poundian techniques of using, transforming and conflating traditional myths into his own syncretic and personal *mythos*. Having participated in a sort of spiritualistic séance, the protagonist is ready to traverse a terrestrial hell. His guide here is Aphrodite and she is holding the "golden bough," which, in the *Aeneid*, guarantees the hero's safe passage to and from the world of the dead. That Aphrodite, the goddess of eros, acts as guide here is appropriate for two reasons: first, Odysseus has come to "the Kimmerian lands" straight from Circe's bed (an account of this incident is related by Pound in cantos, 39 and 47) and his sailing after knowledge has been his reward, in a sense, for having slept with the goddess; and, second, throughout the *Cantos*, Pound is searching for an *epopteia* which only Aphrodite may reveal.

Having begun the *Cantos* with the Odyssean *katabasis* motif, Pound maintains the Odyssean parallel faithfully until, in Canto 15, he adopts the Dantesque *ἀνάβασις* (*anabasis*) for his own ascent from the Hell of contemporary society to purgatory. The shift from one model to another is not at all inappropriate in light of Pound's understanding of the *Commedia*, an understanding that explains his choice of models for the *Cantos*. Commenting on Dante's poem Pound writes that,

the *Commedia* is, in the literal sense, a description of Dante's vision of a journey through the realms inhabited by the spirits of men after death; in a further sense it is the journey of Dante's intelligence through the states of mind wherein dwell all sorts and conditions of men before death; beyond this, Dante or Dante's intelligence may come to mean "Everyman" or "Mankind," whereat his journey becomes a symbol of mankind's struggle

upward out of ignorance into the clear light of philosophy. In the second sense I give here, the journey is Dante's own mental and spiritual development. In the fourth sense, the Commedia is an expression of the laws of eternal justice. (SR 127)

Since an actual descent into the underworld does not take place in the Cantos, the literal sense of the Commedia is not imitated by Pound in his epic. The second sense in which Pound read Dante's poem corresponds to the historical perspective and content offered in the Cantos. As for the third sense, Odysseus, along with such personages as Malatesta, Mussolini, and Jefferson, assumes the role of the prototypical hero whose palingenetic experience represents everyman's "struggle upward out of ignorance into the clear light of philosophy." The fourth sense represents the desired telos of Pound's epic, regardless of whether or not the poem succeeds in expressing "the laws of eternal justice."¹²

Having made the descent twice in the first sixteen Cantos, Pound opens canto 17 with a scene of metamorphosis. According to Plotinus, "the meaning of going down to Hell is to lose sight of (the soul's divine) form" (Liber 65). Accordingly, the Cantos begins in the dark, formless Kimmerian lands, "Covered with close-webbed mist, unpierced ever/ With glitter of sun-rays" (1/3). Darkness and formlessness are associated, then, with the katabasis; the taking on of καρπη, which is a kind of metamorphosis, is a sign of the proximity of the world of the Gods. The Dionysian metamorphosis of canto 17's opening line ("So that the vines burst from my fingers" (17/76)) is the outward sign of palingenesis and captures the exact moment of the "bust into the permanent world" of the gods. At least, this was Pound's intention in composing this canto; he called canto 17 "a sort of paradiso terrestre" (Y.C., 745) following "hell in Canti XIV, XV" and "purgatorio in XVI" (L 285).

Canto 17 presents some sort of ritual initiation and, as so many of the first thirty Cantos do, it, too, includes elements from all three stages of the initiation. That some sort of initiation is taking place here is indicated by such unmistakable

signposts as the katabasis ("And thence down to the creek's mouth"), the stillness and absolute lack of sound of the stone place ("in the stillness," "without sound"), the otherworldliness of the light ("The light now, not of the sun"), the presence of deities, and the mention of the mystical number three ("for three days"). However, the impulse to link this initiation with the Eleusinian rites must be resisted because, as Leon Surette writes,

It is not possible to identify either the ceremony or the scene in canto 17 with what is known of the Eleusinian rites, despite the presence of divinities associated with Eleusis (who are only mentioned and not given any specific roles). (Eleusis 46)

The character of the initiation taking place in canto 17 can only be grasped by looking at the source of Pound's inspiration here. Following some of the cryptic allusions present in the text, Libera has shown this source to be Porphyry's commentary on a passage from Book XIII of the Odyssey. Book XIII focuses on Odysseus' return to Ithaca. Here we read how the Phaeacians, who were magnificent seamen, brought Odysseus back to Ithaca in a deep sleep and, without awaking him, left him on the shore together with the rich gifts bestowed upon him by Alcinous and Arete. In his commentary, Porphyry focuses on lines 102-112 of Book XIII which describe the place of the landing:

High at the head a branching olive grows,
And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.
A cavern pleasant, though involv'd in night,
Beneath it lies, the Naiades delight.
Where bowls and urns, of workmanship divine,
And massy beams in native marble shine;
On which the Nymphs amazing webs display,
of purple hue, and exquisite array.
The busy bees, within the urns secure
Honey delicious, and like nectar pure.
Perpetual waters thro' the grotto glide,
A lofty gate unfolds on either side;
That to the north is pervious by mankind:
The sacred south t' immortals is consign'd. (Taylor 297)

In the lines immediately preceding the ones just quoted, the place of Odysseus'

landing is described as Φορκυῶς δὲ τις ἐστὶ γῆνη, ἀγχοῖο γέννητος (XIII, l. 96), that is, "a cove named after Phorcys, the old man of the Sea." This "ἀγχοῖο γέννητος" is elsewhere called Nereus and is the father of the sea-nymphs Nereides, hence Pound's "Cave of Nerea," that is, the cave of one of Nereus' daughters.

Porphyry is mentioned by name in only two Cantos, 91 and 101. That Pound knew of "Porphyry on 'The Cave of the Nymphs' in The Odyssey" is certain, as evidenced by the following line from Canto 91: "Souls be the water-nymphs of Porphyrius" (91/616). The meaning of this line will become apparent in my discussion of Porphyry's commentary which follows shortly.

But first I want to address the subject of who might have called Pound's attention to Porphyry's work. Libera argues that it was probably Yeats who did so, since the Irish poet certainly knew of Porphyry's commentary in Thomas Taylor's translation (Libera 86).¹³ Surely Pound, too, knew of this translation and, most likely, was familiar with either the 1895 reprint of it in Theosophical Siftings entitled Porphyry, On the Cave of the Nymphs in the Thirteenth Book of Odyssey or in J.M. Watkins' 1917 reprint of the Theosophical Siftings reprint.¹⁴ I suggest, however, that Pound's attention to Taylor's translation was more likely drawn by Volume V of Mead's Echoes from the Gnosis.

Volume V of Echoes (1908) is entitled "The Mysteries of Mithra." Writing about Mithraism, Mead discusses Porphyry's commentary and stresses the importance of his service in preserving some important scraps of information relating to the Mysteries of Mithra. Mead begins by noting that the "Cave of the Nymphs" is "an allegorical, philosophical and mystical interpretation of a famous passage in Homer" in which Porphyry "tells us that the Ancients very properly symbolized the world by a cave" (59-60). In his discussion of Porphyry's commentary, which is made up largely of Mead's own translations of the original text, Mead emphasizes Porphyry's allegorical

reading of this mythical account of the return of the soul as well as the "honey rites" of Mithraism, "gate" symbolism, and the importance of "generation." His conclusion would surely appeal to Pound both because of the theosophical emphasis on the similarity and common origins of ancient rites and also because of Mead's emphasis on "generation" which can also be found in canto 17:

One side of the Magian Mysteries, therefore, dealt with the descent of souls into generation, and the other with the ascent of souls and their freedom from the necessity of rebirth--that is, with their becoming gods. And this agrees with the nature of the Lesser and Greater Rites of all great Mystery-institutions. ("The Mysteries of Mithra" 64)

Taylor is in general agreement with Mead and includes a translation of Porphyry's "admirable work" in his Selected Works of Porphyry (1817) because, as he explains, "it contains some deep arcana of the natural and symbolical theology of the ancients, together with some beautiful observations respecting the allegory of Ulysses" (297). Surely enough, Homer's portrayal in Porphyry's commentary is that of an authoritative witness to a revelation, which belongs to a wisdom tradition supposedly shared by Pythagoras and Plato, and containing the key to the mysteries of spiritual hierarchies and the fate of souls. Robert Lamberton, in his introduction to a recent translation of Porphyry's commentary, explains that, for the Neoplatonist author,

The text serves initially as a pretext for the elaboration of a vast amount of lore about the symbolism of stone, of caves, of bees, and so forth. But the important point is that Porphyry has a context of interpretation into which this use of the text fits, a context which is developed only in the closing pages of his essay. At that point he makes it clear that he and the tradition he taps read the Odyssey as an allegory in the broadest sense, that not only the details of the text but the poem as a whole constitutes a screen of poetic fiction masking a general truth about human experience. It is only at this point that we learn that all the episodes of Odysseus' wanderings, the stories told by narrator and protagonist as events in the world, are in fact events contained within the spiritual life of Odysseus, who is himself "the symbol of man passing through the successive stages of GENESIS." (6-7)

The Odyssey, then, is read by Porphyry as an account of palingenesis. According to this reading, Homer is assigned the role of a visionary sage, and his work is seen as

a primary source of the wisdom tradition,

What encourages the search for a secondary, concealed meaning in Homer's passage, according to Porphyry, is the text's surface with its apparent contradictions and its lack of coherence. How, for example, is one to read the oxymoronic "*ἀγλαὴ δ' αὐτῆς ἄντρον ἐνὶ σκότειν ἡροσίδες*" (l. 103: "A cavern pleasant, though involv'd in night")? In his search for a meaning forced upon him by the text's ambiguities, Porphyry subjects Homer's symbols to an analysis by analogy. Drawing upon an imagination well equipped with the minutiae of cultic and religious tradition, Porphyry differentiates among several layers of symbolism and builds up the history of cave-shrines, surveys the ritual uses of honey, examines the significance of rock and water symbolism, and so forth.

Porphyry himself belongs to the tradition which was transmitted to the Latin West and according to which Homer was a visionary sage and his poem a mystical rendition of his wisdom. This tradition was current even when Homer's poems themselves were not read. Robert Lambertson notes that what survives the epics themselves during the Middle Ages is,

not so much a specific reading, a specific interpretation, as an idea of the scope of their meaning, one which must be understood if we are to perceive how Dante could feel he was working within an integral and continuous tradition of epic which connected him, by way of Virgil, to Homer. Although the tangible proofs are lacking, it seems inescapable that the Neoplatonic tradition of reading the epics as mystical allegories is the missing link: Dante belongs in the tradition of Virgil and Homer because they all wrote about the same thing, or so the surviving ancient traditions regarding Homer, and current at the beginning of the 14th century, would lead Dante and his contemporaries to believe. (14)

This tradition survives to the time of Thomas Taylor and later--at least, from his introductory remarks it is clear that Taylor sees himself as belonging to this tradition.

Taylor begins his translation of Porphyry's commentary by interpolating his own summary of the Homeric passage's "occult signification" (Taylor 297-98). This

"sacred cave," Porphyry says, "is filled with ancient wisdom" and he sees his task to be the revelation of "its symbolical consecration and obscure mysteries" (Taylor 300). The ancients, Porphyry argues, thought of caves as symbols of the cosmos generated out of matter. Because matter, symbolized by rocks and stones, is inert and resists imposition of form, they thought matter to be infinite in the sense of formless--and thus flowing waters, darkness and obscurity were also apt symbols for matter. On the other hand, matter is always in a state of flux and it is on account of its taking form and achieving order that the world is beautiful and pleasant (*διεκόσμητος*, cosmos). The ancients thus took the cave to be a symbol of invisible powers as well as of the generated and perceptible cosmos.

Caves were used, Porphyry tells us, by Persian mystagogues who "mystically signifying the descent of the soul into an inferior nature and its ascent into the intelligible world, initiate the priest or mystic in a place which they denominate a cave" (Taylor 301). Though temples became more important later, the earliest men consecrated caves to their gods. For example, the Couretes in Crete dedicated a cave to Zeus, as did the people of Arcadia to Lycaean Pan. Presiding over the caves, and in particular over the everflowing waters found in caves, are the Naiads, aquatic nymphs who represent "all souls passing into the humid and flowing condition of a generative nature" (Taylor 303)--hence Pound's cave of Nerea should probably be seen as a place sacred to souls.

On the connection between souls and water, Porphyry notes that souls were thought to settle upon the water which was nourished by the divine spirit and adds, interestingly enough, that the Egyptians depicted all their gods as standing not on dry land but rather in a boat--the sun along with the rest of them--and that they are to be thought, in this particular manifestation, as souls descending into genesis and hovering over the water.¹⁵ Homer's cave itself is decorated with stony

amphorae and mixing-bowls, ~~which~~ are symbols of the aquatic nymphs. The Naiads are busy "weaving on stony beams purple garments wonderful to behold" (Taylor 305). This weaving signifies the making of bodies for the souls coming down into genesis, the stone representing the human bones and the purple cloth the flesh woven of blood, since "the body is a garment with which the soul is invested" (Taylor 305).

Besides his emphasis on the union of body and soul, Porphyry also emphasizes the soul's attraction to the flesh, understood here as sexual desire. The cave's urns are filled with "Honey delicious," which theologians have used to symbolize, among other things, the "desire of coition." This explains the attraction felt by the divine essences and their descent into the fluctuating realm of generation. The nymphs themselves are called by the ancients "bees," since souls "are, indeed, the authors of all the pleasure peculiar to our nature" (Taylor 307).¹⁶

Porphyry also pays particular attention to the symbolism of "gates." The cave of the nymphs in Ithaca is said by Homer to have had two gates, one looking toward the north and "said to be pervious to the descent of men" into generation, and the other facing southward and said to be "not the avenue of gods, but of souls ascending to the gods. On this account the poet does not say it is the passage of the gods, but of immortals" (Taylor 310-11). The sacredness of gates, recognized by Homer, is emphasized by Porphyry who also adds that, since the gate is a holy thing, in ancient times it was not permissible to speak at any gate, and also for this reason, the "Pythagoreans and the wise men among the Egyptians, forbade any person to speak while passing through gates or portals; for at that time the divinity who is the principle of the universe is to be worshipped in silence" (Taylor 314).

At the head of the harbour, in Homer's passage, an olive tree has been planted which, according to Porphyry, is a symbol of Athena, goddess of wisdom. The olive tree signifies that the universe was not spontaneously generated but is the result of

the union of intelligible nature and wisdom. It is necessary for Odysseus to sit with Athena beneath the olive tree, take counsel with her, and "effectually [learn to] amputate and destroy that hostile rout of passions, which lurk [sic] in the secret recesses of the soul" (Taylor 321). Thus, according to Porphyry's reading, Homer uses Odysseus as a symbol of everyman passing through the successive stages of generation until, at length, he confronts and conquers his passions and "being stripped of the torn garments by which his true person was concealed, he may recover the ruined empire of his soul" (Taylor 323). The Leucothea episode in the Odyssey, to which Pound refers a number of times in the later cantos, represents the "cleansing" of Odysseus of human passion, a fact which the Nausicaa episode illustrates.

Porphyry ends his commentary on the Homeric passage, then, with pointed emphasis on the spiritual nature of Odysseus' journey concealed within the text of the Odyssey. Though the passage selected for analysis by Porphyry is closely connected to Odysseus' homecoming, Porphyry does not, at any point, concern himself with Odysseus' return to Ithaca and his reunion with Penelope. Instead, he is interested in Homer's representation of "the images of ~~divine things under the~~ concealment of fable" and thinks that it is not at all "proper to believe that interpretations of this kind are forced" (Taylor 322). Taylor, taking this line of argument further, attaches to his translation a long footnote in which Odysseus' adventures are examined in terms of palingenesis--that is, in terms of what they reveal as parts of a spiritual rather than a physical adventure (Taylor 322-42).

• The palingenetic interpretation of Odysseus' adventure is also apparent in Pound's use of the Odyssey in the Cantos. Like Porphyry, and unlike Joyce, Pound does not seem at all interested in Odysseus' return to Ithaca and his reunion with Penelope. Odysseus, as presented by Pound, does not share the interests of the

other Greeks; for example, he is not interested in Helen of Troy. Instead, he focuses on palingenesis: "Getting the feel of it, of his soul./ While they were making a fuss about Helen" (98/684). Whether or not Pound adapted this occult reading of the Odyssey as a result of reading Taylor's translation of Porphyry's essay I cannot say with any degree of certainty; but his reading of the Odyssey in the Cantos certainly belongs to this allegorical and occult tradition.

Leon Surette first identified the spiritual nature of Odysseus' adventure in the Cantos:

...the Cantos require of the reader a reinterpretation of the Odyssey if the parallel between the two works is to be properly understood. For in the Cantos Odysseus is a spiritual voyager whose principal acts are the conquest of Circe and the visit to the Underworld. These acts parallel the central ritual acts of the hierophant at Eleusis, but are by no means Odysseus' most important actions in Homer's Odyssey. (Eleusis 55)

The analogy drawn by Surette between Odysseus' role in the Cantos and that of the hierophant of the Mysteries goes even further in stressing Pound's understanding of the poem as initiation.¹⁷

Many of the symbols which Porphyry's allegorical reading emphasizes find their way into canto 17. While "Cave of Nerea," "gate-cliffs of amber," along with the whimsical "porphyry smooth," are the only obvious allusions, Pound's emphasis on stillness and silence, his use of water and stone imagery, and the presence of certain gods and goddesses point to Porphyry's work as a probable source.

The action of canto 17 consists of a katabasis which, however, is difficult to map-out because Pound interweaves at least three different stories or incidents, all of which can be related to Porphyry's allegorical commentary: 1) Odysseus' arrival in Ithaca and his initial confusion upon waking from a deep sleep provide the framework for 2) a ritual initiation taking place within the "Cave of Nerea" and later in an Egyptian landscape and 3) this initiation is interrupted by Pound's own Venetian recollections. The typically sudden shifts from one story to another and

from one landscape to a different one make it difficult to follow the course of the katabasis. Adding to the difficulty is the problem of identifying the participants, since it is not always clear whether we are following the actions of Odysseus, of a mystes, or of Pound himself. Yet this confusion or infolding should be attributed to Pound's conception of himself as both Odyssean hero and participant in a ritual syncretic initiation--a conception natural enough since all mystai are the same and every initiation is the same.

The first segment of canto 17 (lines 1-6) begins with an allusion to Dionysus in his role as Δενδρίτης (Dendrites, tree spirit) and ends with a ritual shout or cry to Dionysus as Zagreus:

So that the vines burst from my fingers
And the bees weighted with pollen
Move heavily in the vine-shoots:
 chirr -- chirr -- chir-rikk -- a purring sound,
And the birds sleepily in the branches.
ZAGREUS! IO ZAGREUS!

Although Dionysus ended his Hellenic career as a specialized or functional god of wine, intoxication, and ecstasy, he began as a divinity of vegetation in general.¹⁸ Like Hermes, Dionysus appears in Hellenic iconographic art as a herm. The symbol of both gods of fertility is naturally the phallus. Pound's opening allusion is, I think, to Dionysus as god of fertility, possibly to the god as depicted in a beautiful hylix, reproduced by Jane Harrison in her Prolegomena to the study of Greek Religion (427). This hylix, in which Dionysus is shown holding a branch from a vine-tree in his left hand, might give the illusion that the vine is growing through the god's fingers. The opening image of growth is accompanied by contending images of industry and lethargy or physical fatigue organized around sounds of feline contentment. The reference to the industrious bees is possibly an allusion to Porphyry's sexual interpretation of the "busy bees" in the Homeric passage. Being also symbolic of the souls coming into generation, the bees are appropriate to this

passage which represents the metamorphosis of a god.

Interrupting the canto's narrative is a ritual shout, "ZAGREUS! IO ZAGREUS!" This interruption is important because it signals the presence of the god of the mysteries. It also justifies the following digression about the occult significance of this epithet of Dionysus. "Zagreus" is an Orphic name, the particular title given by Orpheus to Dionysus or Bacchus the Son. The Orphic interpretation of the paligenetic Dionysian myth is of considerable interest. The name Zagreus does not appear in Homer. He is essentially a ritual figure, the god of the mysteries. Pound's source for the name is possibly Mead's Orpheus where the anthropogonic Dionysus myth is recounted, but treated as an "ἱερωτικὴ (from ἱερός and τέλειν, to discuss sacred things)," that is, as a sacred story or arcane narration.¹⁹ Zeus is said in the Orphic myth to have raped Rhea-Demeter, his mother, and to have sired Persephone. He is also said to have raped Persephone in the form of a snake and to have sired Dionysus. To this child, whom he calls Zagreus, Zeus hands over the rule of the world, places him on a throne, and has him guarded by the Korybantes. Mead, providing his own occult commentary within square brackets, quotes from Taylor's Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries the following pertinent elements of the Orphic story:

"Dionysus, or Bacchus [Zagreus, the human Soul], while he was yet a boy, was engaged by the Titans, through the stratagems of Juno, in a variety of sports, with which that period of life is so vehemently allured; and among the rest, he was particularly captivated with beholding his image in a mirror [the Astral Light which allures the young soul]; during his admiration of which he was miserably torn in pieces by the Titans [cosmic and elemental powers, which absorb the energy of the soul through its desires for things of sense]; who, not content with this cruelty, first boiled his members [powers] in water [the psychic sphere], and after roasted them by the fire [the spiritual sphere]. But while they were tasting his flesh, thus dressed, Jupiter [the parent-soul], roused by the odour, and perceiving the cruelty of the deed, hurled his thunder at the Titans - [the human soul as it grows in stature turns to its father-soul, and the divine fire (thunder) "converts the Titans to its own essence"] - but committed the members of Bacchus to Apollo, his brother [the solar part of the soul, or "Higher Ego"; Bacchus being the lunar part, or "Lower

Ego"] that they might be properly interred [converted by the alchemy of spiritual nature]. And this being performed, Dionysus (whose "heart" during his laceration was snatched away by Pallas [Athena, Minerva]), by a new regeneration again emerged, and being restored to his pristine life and integrity, he afterwards filled up the number of the Gods....But in the meantime, from the exhalation arising from the ashes of the burning bodies of the Titans, mankind was produced. (Orpheus 118-19)

The story of the Orphic Zagreus is a myth of regeneration²⁰ which, at the same time, explains the creation of mankind out of the ashes of the Titans. In Mead's reading the Titans represent the desires of the soul for things of the senses, and the travails of Zagreus are representative of palingenesis or soul-making.

The ritual shout is followed by a katabasis beginning at a landscape inhabited by Artemis as πέντια θήρων (pontia theron) that is, Artemis as mistress of the whole of wild nature.

With the first pale-clear of the heaven
 And the cities set in their hills,
 And the goddess of the fair knees
 Moving there, with the oak-woods behind her,
 The green slope, with white hounds
 leaping about her,
 And thence down to the creek's mouth, until evening,
 Flat water before me,
 and the trees growing in water,
 Marble trunks out of stillness,
 On past the palazzi,
 in the stillness,
 The light now, not of the sun.
 Chrysophrase,
 And the water green clear, and the blue clear,
 On, to the great cliffs of amber. (ll. 7-22)

In her first appearance in the Cantos in canto 4, Artemis is situated among her attendant nymphs and is seen as ἀγνή (agne) in the very special sense of inviolate and inviolable virgin (with Actaeon paying with his life for his glimpse of her divine nakedness (4/14)). Here, however, Pound uses the goddess's presence simply to punctuate the direction of the katabasis from a pastoral setting to the city's artifice. The whole canto itself is arranged in terms of shifts from country to city to cave to city.

The pastoral morning vision with its resident goddess left behind, the protagonist begins his descent. This descent takes him through a dreamscape of other-worldly calmness, a dreamscape unmistakably Venetian. The description of Venice as a stone forest emerging from the flat stillness of the waters recalls Porphyry's use of the water-stone motif. The petrification of the Phaeacian ship, together with its crew, upon entering the harbour of Scheria on its return from Ithaca (*Odyssey*, 13, 146-164) might be another possible source of inspiration for the water-stone motif used here.²¹

The shift from the northern Adriatic city to the harbour of Phorkys in Ithaca is announced by the hieratic phrase "The light now, not of the sun" (l. 19). Transported through the "great cliffs of amber" into the "Cave of Nerea," the narrator is also making his *katabasis*, completing a movement from the Arcadian outdoors to the enclosed space of a cave. The "Cave of Nerea" passage is this canto's most significant and perhaps most memorable (references to the passage's rhetoric and "sensory modality" are included within square brackets to facilitate the discussion that follows):

	Cave of Nerea,
[sight]	she like a great shell curved, [anastrophe]
[hearing]	And the boat drawn without sound,
[smell]	Without odour of ship-work,
[hearing]	Nor bird-cry, nor any noise of wave moving,
[hearing]	Nor splash of porpoise, nor any noise of wave moving, [epanaphora]
	Within her cave, Nerea, [and antistrophe]
[sight]	she like a great shell curved [epanalepsis]
[touch]	In the suavity of the rock,
	cliff green-gray in the far,
[sight]	In the near, the gate-cliffs of amber,
	And the wave
[sight]	green clear, and blue clear, [isocolon and
[sight]	And the cave salt-white, and glare-purple, polysyndeton]
[touch]	cool, porphyry smooth,
	the rock sea-worn.
[hearing]	No gull-cry, no sound of porpoise,
[touch]	Sand as of malachite, and no cold there,
[sight]	the light not of the sun. [ellipsis and anastrophe] (ll. 24-42)

Writing about this passage, Libera says that here, "As we have found so often [in the *Cantos*], Pound imitates the mood of his source--Homer's emphasis on the stillness of the cave--while miraculously inventing and mingling images to make poetry all his own" (83). Through his handling of sound patterns, meter, and syntax Pound conveys a sense of the mysterion. All of the reader's physical senses, except taste, are here engaged as he is drawn into contemplating a dreamscape where a mysterious silence reigns. While, on the one hand, the words themselves insist on the absence of sound, on the other, the poet's use of alliteration and assonance, shifting meters, and such rhetorical devices as anaphora, antistrophe, ellipsis, anastrophe, isocolon, and polysyndeton provide a powerful incantation which informs the silence with the dynamics of divine mystery.

The exact nature of the initiatory experience taking place within the cave is not represented. Pound is not interested in describing the rites of initiation but concentrates on creating an atmosphere of suggestiveness. The poem does not describe or report on an initiation rite but, instead, enacts an initiation for the reader. This point is worth repeating: whatever revelation there is; it is generated directly by the poem. Therefore, there is no rite described, but a revelation is evoked.

- Although no attempt is made at describing the events within the cave, the narrator, as the directions linked with visual perspective which are included in the text show ("Between them," "Within her cave," "in the far," "in the near"), is familiar with the initiation ritual. What is described is the soundless katabasis of the mystes, a movement from the outside world into the cave of generation. Here the initiate, and the reader, experience the epopteia or the "full Erdis." Presiding over the ritual is Nerea, a sea-nymph, who, considering the similarity between these two verses, "Nerea/ She like a great shell curved" (17/76) and "with the great shell born

on the seawaves" (74/443), can be seen as an analogue of Aphrodite. The experience is visual and dominated by a proliferation of alchemical colours and semi-precious stones ("Chrysoprase," "green clear and blue clear," "amber," "green-gray," "salt-white, and glare purple," "cool, malachite"), which are viewed under the otherworldly "light now, not of the sun" (17/76, 77). Expressed strictly in visual terms (remember that Pound saw the mysteries in terms of "immediate sight"), the mystes' experience is so intense that all his other senses are suspended and he experiences his initiation exclusively in terms of sight. Though senses other than sight are alluded to in this description--for example, sound in "splash of porpoise" and "noise of waves moving" and touch in "no cold there"--they are brought to our attention so that they can be rejected in favour of the dominance of the sense of sight.

Since the mystery cannot be shown but is generated directly by the poem, and since the mystery may be understood but cannot be explained, Pound does not attempt to discuss any of the details of the initiatory experience ("The mysteries are not revealed and no guide book to them has been or will be written" (Letters 327)). There are, nevertheless, a number of details Pound provides which go a certain distance toward suggesting the kinds of things he associates with the initiation. Remembering that the Egyptians depicted their gods as being transported on boats and Pound's use of this motif in the later Cantos (e.g. "the golden sun boat" (94/127) and "The boat of Ra-Set moves with the sun" (98/684 and 100/717)), it could be conjectured that the vision involves the appearance of some god or goddess upon a boat. In addition, Pound probably intends us to visualize a scene where souls float upon the water of the cave, some of them coming into genesis and others ascending to the permanent world of the gods. The silence of the place, on the other hand, could be attributed to Porphyry's elaboration upon the sacredness of gates and the belief of Pythagoreans and Egyptians that speech was forbidden while passing

through gates. Pound is certainly aware of the occult belief in the sacredness of gates and refers to it in the later Cantos (e.g. "and that all gates are holy" (94/643); (100/716)).

Considering the emphasis upon generation in Porphyry's commentary, it is also possible that Pound envisions the ritual of initiation taking place within the "Cave of Nereus" as an hieros gamos. I have already remarked that the particular exoteric form that the initiation rite takes in the Cantos is sexual copulation itself--and I intend to discuss this motif further in my analysis of canto 47 later on. As already suggested above, the simile used to describe Nereus, "she like a great shell curved," could be taken as an allusion to Aphrodite. Pound always thought that sex was sacred and remarked that "For certain people the pecten cteis [ΠΕΚΤΗΛΙΩΝ ΚΤΕΙΣ or female genitals] is the gate of wisdom" (SP 56). On account of their resemblance to the vulva, sea-shells were used in ancient times in many religious rites in agrarian and initiatory ceremonies in which they usually symbolized regeneration.

In an essay entitled "Observations on the Symbolism of Shells," Mircea Eliade finds evidence for the universal use of sea-shells to symbolize regeneration and notes the use of sea-shells in ritual acts. While speaking about the relation of Aphrodite and shell-symbolism, Eliade writes that

since pre-Hellenic times shell-fish had been closely connected with the Great Goddesses. Shell-fish were sacred to Aphrodite in Cyprus, whither that goddess had been taken after being born from the sea foam (Pliny, Hist. Nat., XI, 30, XXXII, 5). The myth of Aphrodite's birth from a marine conch was probably widespread in the Mediterranean world. Plautus, in translating a line of Diphilus, knew it by tradition: Te ex concha natam esse autumant... The Aphrodite-shellfish complex is confirmed, furthermore, by numerous engravings upon shells. The resemblance of the marine shell to the female genital organ was doubtless known to the Greeks also. The birth of Aphrodite in a conch was an illustration of the mystical relation between the goddess and what she symbolised; and it was this symbolism of birth and of regeneration that inspired the ritual function of shells. (Images and Symbols 131)

Eliade goes on to stress the spiritual significance of the sexual symbolism of sea-

shells and observes that shells symbolize the assurance in the "second birth" or spiritual rebirth of the neophyte in the course of initiation ceremonies (135).

Pound's use of the symbolism of the sea-shell here is probably meant to make us understand that the sacred object of the initiation he has in mind at this point is a sea-shell which symbolizes the pecten creis of the goddess of eros.

The exact nature of the initiatory experience which unravels within the cave is not revealed. To repeat a point already made a number of times here, Pound appears not to be interested in giving his reader a description of the rites of initiation but prefers to create an atmosphere of suggestiveness, requiring the reader to experience the revelation which is generated directly by the poem. Pound's practice of veiling the mystery in the Cantos is congruent with ancient occult practices. We know only that ancient initiatory ceremonies were founded on divine myths and that the rites re-enacted the primordial event narrated in the myth. The mystes did not learn anything new, since he already knew the myth, nor was he taught any really secret doctrine. He simply performed the rituals and had sacred objects revealed to him. The purpose of the initiation was palingenesis or spiritual regeneration. By virtue of his initiation, the mystes attained to another mode of being, he became one with the gods.

In canto 17, the initiation itself is not completed until lines 85-115. But immediately after describing the cave of initiation, the mystes is rewarded with a glimpse into the permanent world of the gods. This is a vision of a pastoral landscape populated by a chorus of nymphs, fauns, gods and hieratic animals:

Zagreus, feeding his panthers,
 the turf clear as on hills under light.
 And under the almond-trees, gods,
 with them, choros nympharum. Gods,
 Hermes and Athene,
 As shaft of compass,
 Between them, trembled--
 To the left is the place of fauns,

sylva nympharum:

The low wood, moor-scrub,
 the doe, the young spotted deer,
 leap up through the broom-plants,
 as dry leaf amid yellow.
 And by one cut of the hills,
 the great alley of Memnons.
 Beyond, sea, crests seen over dune
 Night sea churning shingle,
 To the left, the alley of cypress. (ll. 43-60)

It would seem that we are thus returned to the world of Artemis as described in the canto's opening lines (ll. 1-12). The ambiguity of such lines as "the turf clear as on hills under light" [italics mine] (l. 44), however, make it difficult to decide whether the mystes has left the cave and is "under [natural] light" or whether this is a vision presented to him while he is still inside the cave.

The ritual shout of line 6 ("IO") is answered with the appearance of Zagreus feeding his panthers. With Zagreus are Hermes and Athene. Guy Davenport explains the presence of these two gods within the pastoral boundaries of Arcadia in this way:

Between Zagreus Dionysus and the chorus of nymphs Hermes and Athene tremble "as shaft of compass." By framing Hermes, god of commerce, and Athene, goddess of the intellect, within such pastoral boundaries, the canto suggests that Arcadia is their home...Hermes and Athene both guided Odysseus and were in that sense his "compass," but the trembling compass needle in this ideogram suggests that the counsels of the two gods, acumen and wisdom, are man's advantage over and supplement to the world of Dionysus, panthers, and spotted deer. (196)

This reading seems to me to be wide of the mark. I would suggest, instead, that Hermes is found here by virtue of his similarity to Dionysus, because he, too, is a phallic god or god of fertility. Athene, born from Zeus' head is, of course, the goddess of Sophia or wisdom. The compass, taken by Davenport to represent balance, is probably a phallic symbol. The use of the dash at the end of line 49 brings about a sudden pause. Here we have a grammatical mark of ellipsis, a sign of ellipsis, which renders incomplete the simile "As shaft of compass ...trembled--."

Keeping in mind Pound's emphasis upon generation in the canto, it is possible that it is the "phallus," the traditional symbol of fertility, that is missing here. To take this one step further, it is probably not too far-fetched to see Hermes and Athene, in light of Gnostic doctrine, as the male and female principles of the universe: Hermes as Power and Potentiality and Athene as Sophia or Thought or Incarnation. Thus, within the pastoral world of Arcadia, we are presented with another

θεογαμία (theogamia or *hieros gamos*).

The pastoral landscape of lines 52 to 55 suddenly fades into a funereal seascape of tombs and cypresses (ll. 56-60). Terrell's gloss on "Memnons" seems not at all useful in the present context: "Memnon, son of Tithonus and Eos. A large statue near Thebes, Egypt (supposed to be Memnos), was reputed to produce a musical sound when struck by the light of dawn [Dawn=Eos] (*Companion*, I 74).²² Correct though it is, the mythological gloss misleads the reader, since here by Memnon we are to understand not a specific location but rather any graveyard lined up with monumental statues and alleys of cypress trees. The composite landscape (Egyptian alley of Memnons and Mediterranean alley of cypress trees), with graves beneath it, is probably meant by Pound to describe another threshold through which souls descend into generation and ascend to the world of gods just described above.

The cypress trees, remembered nostalgically in the "Pisan Cantos" (83/532), provide the transition from the funereal seascape of lines 56 to 60 to a seemingly autobiographical reminiscence of a Venice metamorphosed into a petrified landscape:

A boat came,
 One man holding her sail,
 Guiding her with oar caught over gunwale, saying:
 " There, in the forest of marble,
 " the stone trees -- out of water --
 " the arbours of stone --
 " marble leaf, over leaf,
 " silver, steel over steel,
 " silver beaks rising and crossing,
 " prow set against prow,

" stone, ply over ply,
 " the gilt beams flare of an evening"
 Borso, Carmagnola, the men of craft, *i vitrei*,
 Thither, at one time, time after time,
 And the waters richer than glass,
 Bronze gold, the blaze over the silver,
 Dye-pots in the torch-light,
 The flash of wave under prows,
 And the silver beaks rising and crossing.
 Stone trees, white and rose-white in the darkness,
 Cypress there by the towers,
 Drift under hulls in the night. (ll. 61-82)

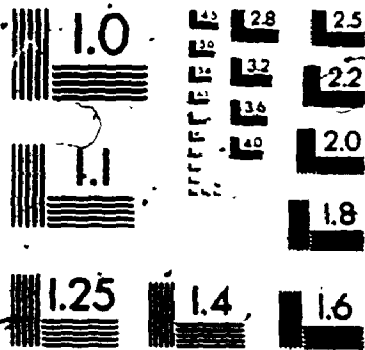
Here we are presented with a glimpse of Pound sailing down the Grand Canal; the poet's biography enters his poem's mythology, and he is seen participating in a scene like the one already depicted in his description of the Cave of Nerea. Pound, then, places himself within the Venetian landscape and has himself deliver lines 61 to 72 of the Canto (quotation marks included). The hypnotic effect of these lines, achieved primarily through simple repetition of words, the use of the isocolon, and the use of anapests, signals the poet's participation in some kind of psychic experience.

The motif of "boat sailing" is important in joining some of this canto's strands. The *katabasis* motif begins with someone sailing "down to the creek's mouth," entering the Cave of Nerea on a boat, and, in the canto's penultimate passage (ll. 85-109), being "shipped thence/ to the stone place," which can be variously taken as the Cave of Nerea--that is, the place of the transmigration of the souls, rather like Yeats's Byzantium--or Venice.

Libera argues for Pound's experience of Venice as a place of exquisite artifice and glory and as a place of alchemical transformation that occasions a radical change in the poet himself (which he records in this canto). The actual experience must have been undergone not at the time of this Canto's composition but, probably, much earlier. As Libera writes,

Venice opened him to a world of art that was both sensuous and well-

3



MIPED

The pleached labour of stone,
 Thither Borso, when the shot the barbed arrow at him,
 And Carmagnola, between the two columns,
 Sigismundo, after that wreck in Dalmatia.
 Sunset like the grasshopper flying. (ll. 85-113)

An initiation is definitely taking place here as the return to the "stone place," that is, Venice or the Cave of Nerea, is preceded by a return to a "place" that reminds the reader of the closing lines of canto 15 where the protagonist describes the exhaustion felt at the end of his journey through hell and his vision of the sun:

Plotinus gone,
 And the shield tied under me, woke;
 The gate swung on its hinges;
 Panting like a sick dog, staggered,
 Bathed in alkali, and in acid.
blind with the sunlight,
 Swollen-eyed, rested,
 lids sinking, darkness unconscious. (15/66-7)

Davenport claims that lines 85 to 108 of canto 17 are an allusion to Odysseus' beaching on Scheria, the land of the Phaeacians (*Odyssey*, V, ll. 470-93). I think that it is more likely, and also more consistent with the "Cave of Nerea" passage of this canto, that Pound is here thinking of Odysseus' beaching on Ithaca (*Odyssey*, XIII, ll. 117-19).

Here the protagonist, exhausted from his *katabasis*, looks toward the sea while he is being attended by Athena. Visions, inhabited by goddesses whose names in at least two cases are Pound's inventions, appear before him. First Zothar, possibly an Egyptian deity, appears naked, except for the gold-loin cloth covering her *pecten cteis*, in the midst of her hieratic elephants and the sounds of the sistrum to which her attendants dance. This vision is succeeded by another in which Aletha (an invented goddess of the sea) appears, standing on the Ithacan or Venetian shore "with her eyes seaward."²³ Then Persephone approaches, in her role as Koré, and she places her arm on the protagonist's shoulders, reminding him of his experiences

in Circe's palace (to be related in canto 36, 39, and 49). Most commentators take the address "For this hour, brother of Circe" as an allusion to Jason's ill-starred quest for the Golden fleece (*Odyssey*, X, 137ff), since Circe's brother was Aeetes, the king of Colchis. But here it is clearly Koré speaking, addressing the protagonist or *mystes* in familiar terms, and standing beside him as he is going through his initiation. As Akiko Miyake explains, the title of "brother of Circe" must be given to those initiated in the mysteries. This is made clear in canto 106 where the goddess of the initiation steps out of the stone house and reveals herself to the reader:

between the two pine trees, not Circe
 but Circe was like that
 coming from the house of smoothe stone
 "not know which god" (106/754)

Miyake notes that this goddess is both Circe, the formidable goddess of the senses, as well as the Eleusinian goddess of the initiation. How one sees her depends on whether he has or has not been initiated into the mysteries. To the uninstructed ones, the goddess appears "exactly like Circe," while "the title 'Brother of Circe'...must be given to the heroes properly initiated, who have already mastered all the tricks of this goddess, Circe, and who are now equal to her." (90) Furthermore, the traditional mystical significance of "three days" and the vision of the sun indicate that an initiation is, indeed, taking place.

Though the penultimate passage of Canto 17 begins with an image of a Mediterranean pastoral landscape and ends with a return to the urban "stone place" of Venice or the Ithacan cave, most of the images associated with the initiation at this point carry associations with Egypt. "Zothar" and her elephants, the orgiastic or frenetic sounds of the "sistrum," and the description of the equatorial sun at dawn ("the sun fulvid") rising "as a lion lift[s] over sand-plain" all suggest Egypt. As the *mystes* is slowly re-emerging from the "darkness unconscious" (15/67), he

perceives Helios "as the splendour of Hermes." The Egyptian associations should lead us to see this Hermes not as the Hellenic Hermes of the rest of the Cantos but rather as Hermes Trismegistus, the Λόγος (Logos, word) of the Corpus Hermetica, who appears in Trismegistic literature in the form of light. For example, Poimandres' vision involves the transformation of the world into light and out of this light the Logos appears:

...and straightway, in the twinkling of an eye, all things were opened to me, and I see a Vision limitless, all things turned into Light--sweet, joyous [Light]. And I became transported as I gazed...

[Thereon] out of the Light...a Holy Word (Logos) descended on that Nature. And upwards to the height from the Moist Nature leaped forth pure Fire; light was it, swift and active too. (Mead, Thrice-Greatest Hermes 2: 4-5)

The palingenetic character of the Cantos involves both a katabasis to the world of the dead as well as an ascension to the world of light. Porphyry's description of the cave's gates representing the thresholds through which the souls ascend or descend is probably conflated by Pound in the Cantos into one gate ("You who dare Persephone's threshold" (93/631); emphasis mine) which leads to either the hylic world of the uninitiated or to the etherial world of the gods. The mystes is the only one who can pass freely from one world to the other--and this is the basic function of the palingenetic initiation. Again, central to this rite of initiation, as Pound probably understood it, was an encounter with the dead. This is the reason for Pound's inclusion, in his description of what may be seen as a description of Venice or the "Cave of Nerea" or of the Underworld in lines 108 to 113, of the three dead men, Borso, Carmagnola, and Malatesta.²⁴ The presence of these men emphasizes the landscape's chthonic character and, more importantly, points to the preoccupation of initiation rites with the life after death.

The mystes' katabasis into the "Cave of Nerea" represents, then, the mystical descent of the soul into the underworld. The katabasis thus takes the form of

palingenesis, since the mystes undergoes a radical process of self-transformation.

Finally, the mystes is rewarded with a radiance, a palingenetic "full Edw.," which is probably seen by Pound in terms of the Trismegistic Logos.

3. "NEVER WITH THIS RELIGION/WILL YOU MAKE MEN OF THE GREEKS":

CANTO 23

Canto 23 constitutes one of the many expressions in the Cantos of Pound's stand in favour of the "ecstatic-beneficent-and-benevolent" state and his opposition to the dogmatist (Guide 223; see Chapter I). Most of canto 23 is taken up with motifs associated with the ecstatic state; however, the state of religious "fanatics," "scarcity economists," and "repressors" is also well represented here. The canto opens with a reference to the potential of the individual human mind and ends with a theophany representing that potential. Weaving together many of the elements of initiation rituals, Pound gathers earlier references to Odysseus's katabasis, to an hieros gamos, to Neoplatonism, and to the world of the troubadours and creates an initiatory experience. This experience includes at least two important focal points of occult history: the Albigenses and Gemistos Georgios Plethon.

Plethon (1360?-1452?), who "brought a brand of Platonism into Italy and is supposed to have set off a renaissance" (Guide 45), is one of Pound's heroes. As a member of the Greek delegation which came to Italy in 1438, Plethon took part in the Councils of Ferrara and Florence and, on that occasion, played a major role in the transmission of Greek philosophy to the awaiting minds in Italy. Pound considers Plethon to be a participant in and a expositor of the nous. Within his celebration of the nous in canto 23, Pound also introduces a troubadour story of epous (eros) and thanatos. The anecdotal aside with which this story ends, "And they called us the Manicheans/ Whatever the hell/sarse that is" (ll. 79-80), should be seen in terms of Pound's persistent interest in the plight of the Albigenses, and sheds light, as I will show below, upon Pound's invective against all repressors.

Typographically canto 23 is divided into eight sections of varying lengths. The

principal subject matters found in this canto are the following: 1) the Neoplatonic philosophers of light and their belief in human reason, which they regard as the active manifestation of divinity in the world; 2) Plethon's attempts to bring about a reform of the declining Byzantine state; 3) modern science and the rise of the new polymetis and polytropos hero: the example of Pierre Curie; 4) a poem by Stesichorus in the original which "rhymes" with Odysseus' katabasis; 5) the decline and destruction of Provençal culture; and 6) a reference to the first Hymn of Aphrodite. In terms of the katabasis/ palingenesis/ epopteia pattern, the fourth section belongs to the first phase, the first, second, and third to the second phase, and the sixth to the third phase.

These elements, ranging from ancient myth to modern science, seem unrelated and incoherent. However, though rigorous application and careful consideration of each fragment go a long way toward helping the reader grasp the meaning of individual fragments, the sense or significance of the canto as a whole can be discovered in its structure, a structure which reflects Pound's understanding of initiation rites.

Since the movement of canto 23 is cyclical, I will start my analysis with its third verse paragraph, instead of its first:

With the sun in a golden cup
 and going toward the low fords of ocean
"Αἴλιος δὲ γαλακτοῦναι δέρας ἐκκρεῖσθαι κρητὸν
"Ῥοπα δὲ κλεινοῦ ἀσπίδος
 ima vada noctis obscurae
 Seeking doubtless the sex in bread-moulds
ἴμιος, ἄμιος, ἄμιος = ἡτάλιος
 ("Derivation uncertain." The idiot
 Odysseus furrowed the sand.)
 alixantos, aliotrephēs, eiskatebaine, down into,
 descended, to the end that, beyond ocean,
 pass through, traverse
πρὸς αὐτὴν
κρητὸν ἐκκρεῖσθαι
πρὸς ἡτάλιον, κρητὸν δὲ ἄμιον
πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐκκρεῖσθαι... ἴμιος ἐκκρεῖσθαι κρητὸν

Precisely, the selv' oscura
 And in the morning, in the Phrygian head-sack
 Barefooted, dumping sand from their boat
 'Yperionides! (ll. 19-38)

This passage introduces another katabasis. The Greek lines are adapted from Iohannes Schweighauser's bilingual (Greek and Latin) edition of Athenaeus' Deipnosophistae ("Learned Dining-Club"). This work belongs to the tradition of literary banquets that derives from Plato's Symposium. It is of interest because it preserves much out-of-the-way information and substantial fragments of otherwise lost works. The particular passage which Pound uses here is from a fragment of a lost poem by the seventh century B.C. Greek Choral-lyric-poet Stesichorus; its subject is the sun's daily journey. According to Stesichorus, Helios traverses the sky by day and, at the Western bounds of the Ocean, exchanges his chariot for a golden cup, floats back to the East through darkness, and rests in a laurel grove. It was in Helios's cup that Heracles passed over the ocean on his way to get the cattle of Geryon, his tenth labour, which is said to be a conquest of death.²⁵

The third verse-paragraph of canto 23 is perhaps one of the best illustrations of the fact that much of the Cantos are translations or transcriptions of the words of others, often rearranged or fragmented, so as to create patterns of sense out of an uncommonly wide range of data. Here Pound is actively addressing his material or, as Clark Emery puts it, "Pound is presenting himself in the act of translating a fragment of the Greek poet Stesichorus" (184).

Pound begins by rendering in English the first two lines of the Greek fragment which describes the Sun's night sea-journey (see Appendix 1). Then, with Schweighauser's text still open in front of him, he transcribes the first two lines from the Greek which he has just translated. Pound presents himself in the act of translation and inscribes his difficulties with the original text in the verse of the canto. Using the Latin translation as an aid, he is reading the Greek and its Latin

translation simultaneously. That he is using the Latin translation to aid himself with the Greek original is indicated by the fact that he jumps to the bottom of the page and transcribes half of the Latin version of the next Stesichorus verse: "ima vada noctis obscurae" (l. 23). Next, Pound adds a phrase which is utterly out of context here: "Seeking doubtless the sex in bread-moulds" (l. 24)--a phrase to which I will return later on in this discussion. In the next line (l. 25) he produces an equation: ἦγιος, ἄγιος, ἄγιος = φάραγιος. Many critics condemn this kind of "word-play"; but it seems to me that their disapproval springs from their failure to comprehend and appreciate Pound's ingenious methods of transcription, translation, and association.²⁶ Pound's equation is not a spontaneous play of words but rather the result of a carefully and ingeniously constructed sequence of associations. The stimulus for it is provided by a textual emendation found in the Athenaeus text. In emendation number three it is pointed out that Ἄγιος is a variant of ἄγιος (See Appendix 1). The translator's curiosity is thus naturally aroused and Pound opens his Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon to look up the meaning of ἄγιος.²⁷ There he finds that ἄγιος is the Doric equivalent for the Attic poetic form ἦγιος (see Appendix 2). Here he also finds two more entries for the same word: ἄγιος, "from, or belonging to the sea" and ἄγιος = φάραγιος, "fruitless, unprofitable, idle..." Pound transcribes the lexicon's entries (l. 25) and he also records the lexicographer's note on the third ἄγιος which reads "Deriv.[ation] uncertain."

The lexicographical game does not end here since the lexical commentary on the third ἄγιος initiates a process of association in Pound's mind through which φάραγιος, meaning idle, reminds him of Odysseus' unwillingness to join the Greek princes in their expedition to Troy; hence: "The Idiot/Odysseus furrowed the sand" (ll. 26-7). The epithet "idle" reminds Pound, then, of Odysseus feigning madness when Agamemnon's envoys came to enlist him for the Trojan war. He yoked an ox

and an ass and plowed a field, sowing salt in the furrows.

Guy Davenport reports that Stesichorus is sensitive to "the tension between the opposing meanings of αἴλιος....and symbolized in his poem the double nature of the word, growing and ungrowing, light and dark, order and chaos" (qtd. in Peck 5-6). Pound seems to have recognized this tension and chancing upon the happy accident by which the triply repeated αἴλιος is framed, in the Greek lexicon, by αἴλιος, "worn by the sea," and αἴλιος, "sea-nurtured," he transliterates these two words. He also transliterates the word ἐγκαταβαίνε from the first line of Stesichorus and translates it immediately into English:

alixantos, aliotrephes, eiskatebaine, down into,
descended, to the end that, beyond ocean,
pass through, traverse (ll. 28-30).

Following this Pound transcribes the Stesichorus lines, describing Heracles' return to the grove overshadowed with baytrees. Not being one to hesitate in pursuing relationships between what he encounters in his reading and the thesaurus of phrases and tags which he retains in his mind, Pound makes another connection: "Precisely the selv' oscura." (l. 35) Here he equates the Greek phrase which means "laurel-shade grove" with the Italian phrase selv' oscura ("dark forest"). The phrase selv' oscura is used by Pound as a familiar point of reference to Dante--that is, "dark forest" is the "Dark World" before palingenesis which is found in canto I of Dante's Commedia. Therefore, we find ourselves back in "dark world" of cantos 13-16.

This rather long discussion of Pound's rehearsal of the Stesichorus passage illustrates quite nicely Pound's habits of transcription, translation, and imaginative association. We can also see his insistence on impressing upon his reader the way he allows his imagination to interact with the materials he is encountering. The lexicographical game charts his discovery of various ideas connected with the meaning of αἴλιος, including the sea's double nature. But even when he seems to be

drifting aimlessly in his insistence on following the arbitrariness of the Greek Lexicon's word-order, Pound's attention never deviates from his original subject, Heracles' katabasis.

The fragment which Pound adapts from Stesichorus maps out a katabasis from sunlight to dark to sunlight again, from Helios in his golden cup to "δάφνησος κατασκίον" or the "selv' oscura," to a morning scene depicting sailors dumping sand from their boats under the eye of "Yperionides!". When we remember that the labours of Heracles were undertaken for a prize and that this prize was immortality, this katabasis takes on new meaning. The subject of the Stesichorus passage, as Pound probably reads it, is the soul-freeing doctrine of palingenesis. In The Doctrine of the Subtle Body, Mead isolates the concept of the human soul and discusses at length Neoplatonic beliefs of the "radiant body" which envelops it.²⁸ Since the most detailed statement on this subject known to him is that by Synesius (A.D. 365-430?), Mead gives a full translation of it. In his discussion of the trials of the soul, Synesius explains that the soul is either striving upward to the "light-wrapped land" of bliss or is weighted down and sinks into the "black-rayed gloom-wrapped land" of misery" (105-07).²⁹ Synesius uses Heracles' ἀθλοι (athloi, contests or trials) as an example. Speaking about what is a gnostic concept, Synesius discusses the palingenetic nature of

the so-called trials, which the sacred stories (hieroi logoi) say Hercules underwent and any other hero who valiantly strives for freedom, until they succeed in raising up their spirit to a height where the hands of nature cannot reach it. (104)

It can be conjectured from this, then, that Pound's insistence in the Stesichorus passage on what we could call, borrowing the term from Mead, the "gloom-wrapped land" ("vada noctis obscurae," "poti venthea/ nuctos eremnas," "daphnesi kataskion," Precisely, the selv' oscura"), points toward his occult understanding of Heracles' athloi as an allegory of palingenesis.³⁰

In my discussion of Pound's handling of the Stesichorus lines (ll. 19-38), I mentioned that the phrase "Seeking doubtless the sex in bread-moulds" (l. 24) seems utterly out of context. When we consider, however, that the Stesichorus passage follows directly the little pastiche on contemporary scientific inquiry, it becomes obvious that the phrase is intended to enforce the parallel between Heracles' *katabasis* and scientific research.

Critics are divided as to how this scientific inquiry, rendered in Pound's French, should be read. According to Pearlman, science is seen as a constructive force and the scientist as a new hero-*polumetis* or creative-Odysseus who, in order to partake of the divine knowledge, involves himself in "repeated exposure of both mind and body to [dangerous] realities" (104). Angela Elliott, on the other hand, sees this scientific inquiry in the context of the Luciferian myth of dangerous pursuit of knowledge, since Pierre Curie burns himself with radium but persists, nevertheless, and continues his experiments ("Pound's Lucifer" 247-48). I think that the analogy between science and Heracles' successful *athlos* points to Pound's understanding of the scientist as an Odyssean hero.

There is another interesting aspect of scientific inquiry that Pound critics have not examined closely--which justifies, I think, the following digression. There are a number of Poundian statements, most of them concerning art, in which Pound alludes to Pierre and Marie Curie's discovery of radium and the phenomenon of radium's transformational properties (1898). In 1910 Pound wrote that "La virtù is the potency, the efficient property of a substance or person. Thus modern science shows us radium with a noble virtue of energy" (qtd. in Kenner, *Era* 154).³¹ In 1913 we find him writing that "the thing that matters in art is a sort of energy, something more or less like electricity or radio-activity, a force transfusing, welding, unifying" (qtd. in Bell 222).³² And again, in 1912, he writes that "The Art of Poetry consists

in combining these 'essential to thought,' these dynamic particles, si licit, this radium, with [the] melody of words..., and with [the] 'form' which shall most delight the intellect" (SP 360).

I think it is probable that behind these statements lies Pound's familiarity with the occult collapse of the distinctions between matter and spirit in favour of a cosmos thoroughly permeated by spirit as a creative, causative agent. It is as a hero of the cosmos of ordered dynamisms that Marie Curie's words about her husband Pierre are placed between the fragments involving the Neoplatonists and Herakles' palingenetic katabasis.

It is worth noting that Pound's concern with scientific discovery parallels that of some occultists. For example, Moina Bergson, in her "Preface" to the 1926 edition of her husband's (MacGregor Mathers) The Kabbalah Unveiled, writes that

The gigantic strides made by science since the end of the last century, the staggering facts disclosed by its practical demonstrations, simultaneously with the development of the great occult movement, must strike all thoughtful people as the evidence of some imminent change in the evolution of this planet. Material science would appear to be spiritualizing itself and occult science to be materializing itself.... Matter and Spirit are only opposite poles of the same universal substance. (vii-viii)

Mrs. Mathers goes on to discuss the indivisible unity of the cosmos under the ONE, a single god or a harmony of Supreme Forces. Interestingly enough, it is Radium that Mrs. Mathers chooses to demonstrate that ~~there is little difference between~~ monotheism, polytheism, and pantheism, since the indivisible unit may be one of many beings whose action are unified or a unity whose action is pluralised:

...take Radium as being so very close in nature to the one element of the Ancients and note its triune manifestation, through the alpha, beta and gamma rays. (xi)

As Mrs. Mathers does here, occultists seized on radiation as a subtle essence which was not physical or "hylic," and discussed the ultra-material potentialities of radium as proof of the existence of a power that science could not explain. After

all, one of the possible explanations offered by Marie Curie hinted at the substance's metaphysical attributes. As Robert Reid puts it,

[Marie Curie] supposed that her radioactive substances were borrowing their energy from some external sources and releasing it. Was it possible that there were some still unknown radiation permeating the whole of space which her radium was capturing and then releasing? (Lord Kelvin even went so far as to suggest that radium was getting its energy by absorbing mysterious 'etheral waves'!) (115)

Curie's, and even more pointedly Lord Kelvin's, conjecture regarding the origin of radiation was seized by various occultists who used it as proof of the validity of the traditional occult notions of the 'subtle body.'³³

Pound follows the Stesichorus fragment in which the curious verse discussed above is inserted with "a Homeric beaching of ships, as on some interlude on the return, and follows that with an idyllic, composite landscape--one more version of the Ithacan moment" (Peck 6). Peck's description of the fourth section of canto 23 (ll. 39-61) is rather accurate, except that the moment described is not so much Ithacan as it is Circean or Calypsean. (Pound, we need to remember, is not really interested in Penelope.) The idyllic interlude is full of Homeric echoes ("Where a man might carry his oar up") and also echoes of an erotic drama of violence which has been developed in earlier cantos (including, cantos 3 and 4). The interlude begins with an Odysseus figure awaking to behold a beaching of ships and a scene of satyrs dancing in the background of a Mediterranean landscape (ll. 40-42). The idyll is synthetic because the Odysseus figure seems to be beached in a Chinese landscape and the lady who is remembered is Fa-Han.³⁴

Fa Han and I at the window,
And her head bound with gold cords.
Cloud over mountains; hill gap, in mist, like a sea coast (ll.52-5)

The position of Fa-Han at the window serves to remind us of an earlier female figure placed in a similar setting: "Parisina--two doves from the altar--at the window" (20/90). This synthetic moment seems to exist in the mind of Niccolo

d'Este who, as in earlier cantos, is in a "sort of delirium" (Letters 210).

For those who fail to see the connections between this idyll and Niccolo's delirium, Pound provides the key word "arras," repeated twice in the same line (l. 46: "Under the arras, or wall painted below like arras"). This word alerts us to the recognition that the two lovers of this scene are Parisina Malatesta and Ugo Aldobrandino. Their story, which is the story of the Este family, is told by Pound in cantos 8, 20, 24 and is completed in canto 26.³⁵

The reference to the adulterous love and death of Parisina and Ugo in the idyllic passage of canto 23 serves to remind us, first, of all the tales of sexual violence and murder which we encounter in the early cantos (especially in canto 4), and, second, it re-introduces, by juxtaposition, the story of Peire de Maensac, of which Pound gives us two versions in the Cantos. The first version appears in canto 5 and is a condensed rendition of the story as it appears in "Troubadours -- Their Sorts and Conditions" (LE 96-7):

And Peire won the singing, Peire de Maensac,
Song or land on the throw, and was dreitz hom
And had De Tierci's wife and with the war they made:
Troy in Auvergnat
While Menelaus piled up the church at port
He kept Tyndarida. Dauphin stood with de Maensac. (5/18)

Though adultery is the cause of both the war in Auvergnat and that of Troy, the parallel is not complete here since De Tierci, unlike Menelaus, does not get his wife back nor does the castle fall.

As retold in canto 23, the story of De Maensac is linked with the destruction of the Albigenses. Thus Pound manipulates the account of the story he gave in his essay so that both the cause of the wars (adultery) and well as the consequence (destruction of castle and of a culture) correspond to the story of Troy:

And my brother De Maensac
Bet with me for the castle,
.....

And Tierci came with a posse to Auvergnat,
 And went back for an army
 And came back to Auvergne with the army
 But never got Pierre nor the woman.
 And he went down past Chaise Dieu,
 And went after it all to Mount Segur,
 after the end of all things,
 And they hadn't left even the stair,
 And Simone was dead by that time,
 And they called us the Manicheans
 Wotever the hellarse that is

And that was when Troy was down, all right,
 superbo Ilion... (ll. 62-82)

The narrator of this passage is clearly Austors de Maensac, Peire's brother. Tierci, we are told by Brooke-Rose, after failing to win back his unfaithful wife, "joined (a little later in the day) Simon de Montfort's Albigensian Crusade, which destroyed a whole civilization and its hard clear poetry of erotic love" (212). The last two lines of Austor's narrative (ll. 79-80) depict the Catholic church's manipulative methods and the confusion of this age in which people were persecuted for being something they were not (wonderfully captured in Pound's colloquial language in line 80).³⁶ Pound regarded the Albigensian Crusade as "a sordid robbery cloaking itself in religious pretence which ended "the gai savoir in southern France" (SR 101). Here Pound places Montségur (the symbolic last stronghold of the Provençal glory) and the ruins of the Provençal civilization beside the fallen city of Troy (l. 81).³⁷

Leon Sufette first discussed the important part played by the French Rosicrucian Joséphin Péladan (1885-1918) in the shaping of Pound's belief in the existence of an underground mystery cult (Eleusis 34-9, 40-1, 57-60).³⁸ Pound first regarded Péladan's ideas with skepticism which later became cautious agreement until finally, in the 1930s, he adopted the general outline of Péladan's hypothesis and identified Albigensianism with Eleusis. The following long quotation from "Terra Italica" provides a clear indication of Pound's position which, it should be added, conforms to the fantasy history of the occult outlined in Chapter II of the present

study:

For all its inclusiveness the new religion [Christianity] was for fifteen and more centuries troubled by heresies, mostly uninteresting and perhaps all of them traceable to some cult it had not included.

One cult it had failed to include was that of Eleusis.

It may be arguable that Eleusinian elements persisted in the very early Church, and are responsible for some of the scandals. It is quite certain that the Church later emerged riddled with tendencies to fanaticism, with sadistic and masochistic tendencies that are in no way Eleusinian.

It is...discernable upon study that some non-Christian and inextinguishable source of beauty persisted throughout the Middle Ages maintaining song in Provence, maintaining the grace of Kalenda Maya.

And this force was the strongest counter force to the cult of Atya and asceticism [Mithraism]....The usual accusation against the Albigensians is that they were Manichaeans. This I believe after a long search to be pure bunkum. The slanderers feared the truth. I mean they feared not only the force of a doctrine but they feared giving it even the publicity which a true bill against it would have required.

The best scholars do not believe there were any Manichaeans left in Europe at the time of the Albigensian Crusade. If there were any in Provence they have at any rate left no trace in troubadour art.

On the other hand the cult of Eleusis will explain not only general phenomena but particular beauties in Arnaut Daniel or in Guido Cavalcanti.

.....
I suggest that students trying to understand the poetry of southern Europe from 1050 to 1400 should try to open it with this key....[that is, the survival of the cult of Eleusis] (SP 58-9)³⁹

But what drew Pound's mind back to the subject of de Maensac and the Albigenses whom he associates with the Provençal culture and the Eleusinian mysteries? The answer to this question must be sought, I believe, in Pound's concept of the celestial tradition in which are included, besides the Albigenses and troubadours of Provence, Plethon--with whom the first section of this canto is concerned. The Albigenses, the troubadours and Plethon are all seen by Pound as inheritors of the pagan rituals of Eleusis.

Since at the heart of the Eleusinian mysteries there was an encounter with the dead and some theophanic revelation, this point is important for our understanding of canto 23 where we have a katabasis, a theophanic revelation which seems linked with the revelation of the epopteia, and an hieros gamos, the enactment of a literal sexual union which in the mysteries was performed by the Hierophant and the

Priestess of Demeter.

The sixth part of canto 23 which ends with the destruction of a temple (Montségur) as well as with the destruction of the Provençal culture. The seventh part then opens with the evocation of the end of another culture: "And that was when Troy was down, all right, / superbo Ilion..." (ll. 81-2). But Pound cuts short his fragment about the destruction of Troy and the use of the aposeiopsis signifies his expectation that the reader fill in the gap. Then, the ending of one culture is succeeded by the beginning of another, and Pound picks up, in medias res, Ovid's account of the flight of Anchises and Aeneas from Troy to Rome:

And they were sailing along
 Sitting in the stern-sheets, Under the lee of an island
 And the wind drifting off from the island
 "Tet, tet..."
 "What is it?" said Anchises.
 "Tethnekte," said the helmsman, "I think they
 "Are howling because Adonis died virgin" (ll. 83-90)

Aeneas and Anchises, sailing through the Aegean, hear a foreign chant ("Tet, tet...") which they cannot make out. The helmsman, who has probably travelled to Greek ports and understands Greek, comes to their aid, identifies the words and interprets them: "the women," he says, "are wailing because Adonis is dead." The muddled sounds reaching the ship are part of the rites associated with the worship of Adonis which involves ceremonial wailing and singing of dirges over the effigy of the dead youth. The reference to Adonis, the beloved of Aphrodite who was killed by a boar, introduces into the poem a variation of the myth of the Great Mother and her lover.

Still another variation of this myth is the story of Aphrodite and Anchises told in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite. Pound alludes to this next by paraphrasing Aphrodite's attempt to hide her identity from Anchises: "King Otreus, of Phrygia, / "That King is my father" (ll. 93-4). The allusion brings to mind the theogamy of Anchises and Aphrodite, of which Aeneas was the issue; and a rudimentary knowledge

of mythology serves to remind us that Aphrodite tried to hide her identity from Anchises by pretending that she was the daughter of Otreus, king of Phrygia. In this the goddess succeeds since "ἔπειτα θεῶν ἰότητι καὶ αἰῶνι / ἀφροδίτην ἔπειθε
ἄρα ποτὸς ἐν σάφει εἶδεν" (ll. 116-17: "Then by the will of the gods and destiny he [Anchises] lay with her / a mortal man with an immortal goddess, not clearly knowing what he did.)"⁴⁰

Carol H. Cantrell has noted the use of the word εἶδεν ("knowing") in the second of the two lines quoted above and has observed that, because Anchises does not know the identity of the goddess, he comes to know her sexually but does not achieve the "full εἶδεν," the ultimate knowledge [or gnosis] which comes when the union between the knower and the known is reached (Cantrell 16-8). That is, Aphrodite appears to Anchises not in her Eleusinian but in her Circean aspect. The "full εἶδεν" is reserved here, then, for the narrator and reader who as initiates are meant to witness and experience the revelation of the goddess in the canto's final lines.

The reference to the theogamy of Aphrodite and Anchises is accompanied by a theophany and so canto 23, like canto 1, ends with the birth of Aphrodite:

and saw then, as the waves taking form,
And the sea, hard, a glitter of crystal,
And the waves rising but formed, holding their form.
No light reaching through them. (ll. 95-8)

This must be a description of Aphrodite emerging from the sea (Ἀφροδίτη = "emerging from the foam"). The description is very important for a number of reasons: first, the theophany represents the mystes' ability to break through to a vision of the gods (it is "a bust thru from quotidien into divine"); second, the image of the crystal wave is a formula for the ecstatic moment—here the emergence of the visible form of the goddess from the sea-foam; and third, the last line of this canto relates the present theophanic moment with the Eleusinian mysteries, since the

who believed in the ability of the human mind to participate in the divine. This phrase which signals the presence of several Neoplatonists at the beginning of canto 23 is also important because Gemistus Plethon can be seen, first, as the organizing centre of many of the Italian themes of the first thirty cantos and, second, as an essential link in Pound's conception of the chain of the "celestial tradition." In A Touch of Rhetoric: Ezra Pound's Malatesta Cantos, Peter D'Epiro deals with the poem's Italian themes but adds little to what we already know about Pound's attraction to Plethon.⁴¹ Libera's "Casting His Gods Back into the NOUS: Two Neoplatonists and The Cantos of Ezra Pound," is the most complete study of the importance of Plethon for Pound. But even Libera misses, or rather fails to place enough emphasis upon, a very significant point: Marsilio Ficino's absorption of the idea of the Tradition of Wisdom as presented by Plethon. It is with this point in mind that I would like to rehearse some of the material which Libera includes in her excellent article.

There are seven references in all to Plethon in the Cantos and at least three additional ones in the drafts which were not included by Pound in the final text.⁴² The first three references (8/31, 23/107, and 26/123), together with the three references found in the Malatesta drafts, give us a rather complete sketch of the life of this Byzantine Neoplatonist--of course, the reader still needs to place these references in chronological order and to fill some of the gaps.

A Byzantine political reformer and Platonist philosopher, Plethon⁴³ was born in Constantinople but spent the later and better known part of his long life in the Peloponnesean capital of Mistra, near ancient Sparta, as a high official and political adviser of the princes of the Byzantine imperial house who resided there. It is in his role as political reformer that Pound presents Plethon in canto 23:

Gemisto:
"Never with this religion

— "Will you make men of the greeks.
 "But build wall across Peloponesus
 "And organize, and...
 damn these Eyetalian barbarians." (ll. 2-7)

From various extant testimonies from Plethon's time, it appears that he tried to bring about a reform of the declining Byzantine state, and to strengthen its resources and defenses against the mounting Turkish threats and Western pressures. It is in this light that we should view Pound's elliptical lines which refer, first, to Plethon's attempt to establish a new pagan religion (ll. 3-4); second, to a letter he sent to Emperor Manuel II (circa 1510) in which he outlined the urgent need for the erection of a wall across the Isthmus of Corinth designed to hold back the waves of Moslems (ll. 5-6); and, third, his strong opposition to making an appeal to the Latins for military help (ll. 6-7).

Plethon, then, was strongly opposed to making an appeal to the Latins for military help in order to hold back the waves of Moslems which for centuries kept falling on Byzantium with ever increasing intensity. Blaming the imminent danger faced by the empire upon the passivity of Christianity, Plethon proposed a radical reorganization for Byzantium. Attempting to reconstruct a new polytheistic system that would provide a new basis or culture, he created a new theogony in which Zeus is the highest god, followed by Poseidon, god of the sea, through whom all gods are governed and all things created--this is what we might call a hydrogenetic system or theogony.

Plethon was a prolific writer. He wrote a number of learned tracts on such subjects as the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the Procession of the Holy Spirit (hence Pound's flippant allusion: "And in February they all packed off / To Ferrara to decide on the holy ghost/ And as to which begat the what in the Trinity.--" (26/123)), as well as numerous works on rhetoric, history, philosophy, politics, national defense, geography, mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, and music. The

longest and most important of these works is the one entitled Νόμοι (Nomoi or Laws), of which many fragments are extant today. In this book, as Milton V.

Anastos writes,

Plethon set forth a new system of philosophy, by which he hoped to replace the Christian religion and help restore Greece to her ancient glory. Christianity is never directly mentioned in the extant fragments, and the Nomoi is so frankly pagan and so outspokenly polytheistic that the humanist George Scholarius, the first Patriarch of Constantinople after the fall of the city in 1453, felt constrained to consign it to the flames, saving only a few folia in order to prove that Pletho had lapsed into paganism and that the Nomoi was, therefore, justly suppressed. (186)

Pound shows himself aware of the controversial nature of Plethon's work and, no doubt, is attracted to it for that reason. In both the Guide and the Cantos, Pound refers to Plethon's hydrogenetic system and, especially in the Guide, to his influence and extant writings. First, in canto 8 (31) and in the Pisan Cantos, Pound points to the relationship between Plethon's notions about Poseidon and the sculpted aquatic scenes in the Tempio: "υδωρ / HUDOR et Pax/ Gemisto stemmed all from Neptune/ hence the Rimini bas reliefs" (83/528). Then, in the Guide, Pound provides many more details about his interest in Plethon and his writings:

Gemistus Plethon brought over a species of Platonism to Italy in the 1430s. I take it he is more known by his sarcophagus in Rimini than by his writings. There is a ms. of his greek in the Laurenziana in Firenze, a German named Schulze [Fritz Schultze] (or something of that sort) included him in a study of philosophy, I think Gemisto gets a whole vol. whereof a copy lies in the Marcian (Venice). A bit of him was translated early into latin and printed in the back pages of an early edtn. of Xenophon, but left out of the reprints. I think it is the edtn. of 1496. And they say Gemisto found no one to talk to, or more generally he did the talking. He was not a proper polytheist, in this sense: His gods come from Neptune, so that there is a single source of being, aquatic (udor, Thales etc. as you like, or what is the difference). And Gemisto had distinct aims, regeneration of greek people so they wd. keep out the new wave of Barbarism (Turkish) etc.

At any rate he had a nailed boot for Aristotle, and his conversation must have been lively. Hence (at a guess) Ficino's sinecure, at old Cosimo's expense, trained to translate the greek neoplatonists. Porphyry, Psellos, Iamblichus, Hermes Trismegistus...

Whence I suppose what's-his-name and the English mystics with reference to greek originals sometimes (John Heydon etc.)... (Guide 224-25)

Besides his interest in Plethon's writings and his hydrogenetic system, it is clear that for Pound Plethon was responsible for the transmission of the "celestial tradition" to the West. In fact, Pound's inclusion of Plethon in his standard occult list of carriers of the "celestial tradition" is clear in both the Cantos and his prose writings.

Plethon was one of the delegates who, in 1438, followed the Byzantine emperor and Patriarch of Constantinople to Italy and participated in the famous Council of Ferrara-Florence (referred to by Pound in cantos 8/31 and 25/123-24). The purpose of the conference was to effect a reconciliation between the Greek and Latin churches and secure aid for Byzantium's fight against the Turks. Plethon himself did not endorse the proclamation of the reunion of the Churches. Later developments justified his unwillingness to join the other Byzantine champions of the proclamation: the Greek mission was a failure because the short-lived reunion of the churches was not accompanied by the military aid for which the Greeks had hoped. Nonetheless, Plethon's presence in Italy was instrumental in the re-introduction of Platonism to the East. In Florence Plethon was befriended by Cosimo de Medici. It was his encounter with Plethon that prompted Cosimo to found a Platonic school. Thus Ficino's "Platonic" academy, which revived the study of Neoplatonism in the West, came into being.⁴⁴ Pound, as is made clear in the quotation from the Guidé (1938) as well as in the following passage from a New Age article (1914), was aware of and interested in these developments:

Ficino was seized in his youth by Cosimo dei Medici and set to work translating a Greek that was in spirit anything but "classic." That is to say, you had, ultimately, a "Platonic" academy messing up Christian and Pagan mysticism, allegory, occultism, demonology, Trismegistus, Psellus, Porphyry, into a most eloquent and exciting and exhilarating hotch-potch, which "did for" the mediaeval fear of the dies irae and for human abasement generally." (G-B 112)

Despite their light-heartedness ("messing up"), Pound's comments are favourable--and

it is clear that in the course of his comments on the syncretist character of Ficino's system Pound finds this "system" not only "eloquent" but also "exciting" and "exhilarating." After all, following Ficino's example, Pound is concocting here his own "celestial tradition"!

In addition to "old Cosimo," Plethon can also be related to Sigismundo Malatesta. The reference to Novvy, Malatesta's younger brother (ll. 8-9), alerts us to the fact that Malatesta himself was in Florence during the Council and that he too was impressed by Plethon's conversation so that, according to Pound's theory, "the ideas of Plethon had a direct influence in the bas-reliefs that Sigismundo Malatesta commissioned Agostino di Duccio to execute at the Tempio: 'Gemisto stemmed all from Neptune/ Hence the Rimini bas reliefs'" (Libera 273-74).⁴⁵ The associations between Plethon and Malatesta extend even further since the latter, when he went to Peloponnesus in 1464, searched for Plethon's remains, found them, brought them back to Rimini, and placed them in one of the sarcophagi of his Tempio Malatestiano.⁴⁶

Plethon's function with regard to the Tempio is catalytic; as well, the importance Pound attaches to his role in the transmission of the "celestial tradition" to the West is unquestionable. In canto 23 Plethon stands with those Neoplatonists who, throughout the Cantos, advance the dictum according to which each human being has the ability to achieve the state of divine nous. The canto ends fittingly, then, with an image depicting the theophany of Aphrodite, which represents the initiate's successful achievement of gnosis.

4. "THE DIMENSION OF STILLNESS": CANTOS 45-51

I have already remarked that the particular exoteric form that the initiation rite takes in the Cantos is ritual copulation. Pound makes copulation conform to the traditional tripartite structure of such mystery rites as those of Eleusis; but he has had to invent formulae and expressions for the hieros gamos, since it has rarely been represented in literature. In other words, Pound restructures the traditional association of eros with transcendence (one that has long recognized affinities with occult notions) as the "unromantic" act of phallic penetration. The very gynecological nature of his imagery has mitigated against any very candid discussion of it.

This section is an examination of cantos 45 to 51 that argues for the centrality of the hieros gamos in the Cantos, and views the phallic penetration as a form of katabasis leading to palingenetic illumination. The act of phallic penetration in canto 47 is parallel to the mystes' passing through the "hylic" cosmos of cantos 45 and 46 on his way to achieving the counterpoise of canto 49 and the state of nous of canto 51. This state of nous is the equivalent to the esoteric dimension of the stage of epopteia, a stage during which the mystes is metamorphosed inwardly and is readied for the attainment of soteria. Some emphasis is also placed in this discussion on the probability of the origin of the concept of the "fourth dimension" in canto 49 in Pound's involvement in London occult circles.

I use "hylic" here in the Gnostic, dualist sense, according to which the dark waters of the material world are set in sharp contrast against spirit, soul, and divinity. Pound's perspective, however, is not dualistic as in Gnostic doctrine. In his view, the fall into matter is not necessarily a bad thing, and he would agree with Mead, for example, that there is nothing wrong with Sophia's katabasis into matter

in the Simon Magus myth. Pound clearly dismisses the "idiotic asceticism and [the] belief that the body is evil" and favours, instead, the "conception of the body as [a] perfect instrument of...intelligence" (LE 150, 152).

Canto 45 is "hylic" in the sense that it constitutes a diatribe against "usura." Usury, which elsewhere is characterized as "a murrain and a marasmus" (Guide, 109), is seen here as a sin against nature and natural abundance. Usury, "age-old and age-thick," occupies a central place in Pound's cosmos and bears the burden of his critique against every conceivable human failure. Pound's memorable litany against the practice of usury achieves its purposes rhetorically (through the use of epanaphora, isocolon, and litotes which predominate in this canto).⁴⁷ By using the epanaphora and the isocolon Pound places rhetorical emphasis upon usury's ubiquity. "Usura" is offered as the cause of failure in every imaginable human activity: architecture, music, painting, crafts, agriculture, economics, sex, and religion. Throughout canto 45, Pound uses litotes, suggesting man's potential for achieving the opposite of that which Pound is presently criticizing. For example, when Pound writes that,

with usura
hath no man a painted paradise on his church wall (ll. 5-6)

he is implying that the vision of an earthly paradise is still within man's reach--but usury must first be eliminated. Litotes is even more prominent in such verses as the following:

Pietro Lombardo

came not by usura
Duccio came not by usura
nor Pier della Francesca; Zuan Belli' not by usura
nor was 'La Calunnia' painted.... (ll. 28-32)

Here Pound is actually celebrating the great works of art, even while his attention seems fixed on the evils of usury.

Destroying the "mystical affinity [that exists] between the artist and his

material, between man and nature" (Dekker 175), usury degrades the value of eros, turning eros into whoredom:

Usura slayeth the child in the womb
 It stayeth the young man's courting
 It hath brought palsey to bed, lyeth
 between the young bride and her bridegroom
 CONTRA NATURAM
 They have brought whores for Eleusis
 Corpses are set to banquet
 at behest of usura. (ll. 43-50)

The images of abortion, abortive love, sterility, and the analogy between whores and corpses (ll. 47-49) are succinct statements of Pound's belief that usury debauches what is sacred. According to his analogy, as whores are to sex (where sex should be a communal celebration and a means of illumination) so are corpses to a banquet (also a communal celebration). But what is the use of corpses brought to a banquet? Are corpses the guests or the meal? The analogy, especially its second part, is problematical. Perhaps Pound means that "at the behest of usura" the sacramental hieros gamos of the mysteries has been debased to the point that the communal banquet becomes a game for necrophiliacs.

While "usura" seems to be held responsible for the degradation of the mysteries in lines 43-50 of canto 45, in Pound's letter to Carlo Izzo in which he discusses these lines, the blame is directed toward Christianity. Pound's comments on line 47 reveal his high estimate of the initiatory hieros gamos which, however, has been eroded by Christianity's debasement of the flesh:

"Eleusis" is very elliptical. It means that in place of the sacramental _____ in the Mysteries, you 'ave the 4 and six-penny 'ore. As you see, the moral bearing is very high, and the degradation of the sacrament (which is the coition and not the going to a fatbuttocked priest of registry office) has been completely debased by Xtianity, or misunderstanding of that Ersatz religion. (L. 397)

The distinction between copulation and its legitimizing through marriage is seen by Pound as the result of Christianity's misunderstanding of the sacredness of coition.

Pound argues here that copulation itself is the sacrament; the marriage ritual is an empty form. Here, as he does throughout canto 45, Pound isolates the evils arising from a misunderstanding of the mysteries and from human greed, and, in his own "elliptical" way, he holds up his own Eleusinian celebration of the natural cycle as a counterforce to usury--a celebration whose focus is the "sacramental [fucking]".⁴⁸

The rhetorical fervour of canto 45 is succeeded by the more expository and discursive canto 46, where the attack against "usura" is made in terms of economics. The following gloss is necessary for understanding Pound's vociferous attack in canto 46:

Two kinds of banks have existed: the Monte dei Paschi and the devils. Banks differ in their intention. Two kinds of banks stand in history: banks built for beneficence, for reconstruction and banks created to prey on the people. (Impact 147)

Pound's "Seventeen/ Years on this case [1918-35]" (ll. 12-3) would seem to refer to his long struggle in discerning and understanding the differences between these two kinds of banks (the case of the Siena Bank, the praises of which are sung in cantos 42-3, against the evils of Geryon); canto 46 bears the fruits of this struggle since in it is enshrined what Pound considers his most important economic insight:

Said Paterson:

Hath benefit of interest on all
The moneys which it, the bank, creates out of nothing.

.....
1694 anno domini, on through the ages of usury

.....
The Macmillan commission about two hundred and forty years
LATE

with great difficulty got back to Paterson's
The bank makes it *ex nihilo* (ll. 75-7; 88; 94-7)

The emphasis on the length of time it has taken Pound to arrive at his insight regarding monetary usury seems to be directed at all those "who think/ you will/ get through hell in a hurry..." (ll. 3-5).⁴⁹ Pound's attack against the international bankers, profiteers, munitions manufacturers and dealers and all those interested in

quick profits is balanced by a list of constructive men labouring in a "hylic" hell created by the Geryon worshippers. Pound's list of constructive men includes Orage, Douglas, Mussolini, Jefferson, and Van Buren, and it is thanks to these men that the hope for the triumph of the Eleusinian ethos is never surrendered.

The polemic against "Geryon" and "hyperusufa" (46/235: l. 135) gives way, in the pivotal Canto 47, to an explicitly depicted hierogamy, a mythical equivalent to Pound's economic insights. Canto 47, the fourth Odyssean canto so far (1, 20, 39, 47--one such canto per section), achieves the ritualization of both the katabasis and the hieros gamos. Interweaving images borrowed from the vegetation rites of Adonis, contemporary Catholic rites, the story of Circe and Odysseus as narrated in the Odyssey, and the rites of sowing and plowing as explained in Hesiod's Works and Days, Pound creates a composite rite which is, in fact, his own conception of the rites of ancient cults.

The various strands are brought together by the idea of the hieros gamos as seen within gnostic allegory. The hieros gamos is allegorized as the union of the active, procreative, masculine principle (Odysseus, light, ploughman) with the passive, female principle (Circe, Tellus or earth or matter, cunnus). The katabasis is both the Nekuia and the sexual act. Both are seen as a fall of the male principle into the depths of the female principle, aiming at a recapture of primal oneness.

Leon Surette has already established Pound's familiarity with Mead's gnostic interpretation of the Simon Magus legend, concluding that by "linking a divine manifestation of beauty [Helen of Tyre] with the raw commercial sexuality of a brothel, the legend provides a bridge between Aphrodite and Circe, a bridge that Pound most certainly uses in cantos 39 and 47" (64). The legend of Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre is a particular example of the gnostic myth which deals with the fall of the female Pistis Sophia or Wisdom (archetype of the ψυχη, the soul) into

matter where she remains imprisoned until she can be liberated through the agency of the salvific male (archetype of yeús, the mind or spirit). In the Simon Magus legend, the fallen Sophia, sometimes provocatively called Sophia Prunikos, "Wisdom the Whore" (Jonas 187), is imprisoned within a human body. Sophia or Helen has had to wander throughout the centuries from vessel to vessel in ever changing bodies (the body of Helen of Troy has been one of them) until she ends up in a brothel (the soul as a fallen woman) from which Simon, the unrecognized Σωτήρ (Soter, Saviour) who has descended from above, delivers her. In Mead's words,

The main symbolism, which the evolvers of the Simon-legend parodied into the myth of Simon and Helen, appears to have been sidereal; thus the Logos and his Thought, the World-Soul, were symbolized as the Sun (Simon) and the Moon (Selene, Helen); so with the microcosm, Helen was the human soul fallen into matter and Simon the mind which brings about her redemption. Moreover one of the systems appears to have attempted to interpret the Trojan legend and myth of Helen in a spiritual and psychological fashion. (Fragments of a Faith Forgotten 167-68)

As to the theogony of this Gnostic system, Simon Magus' The Great Announcement includes this passage:

Of the universal Aeons there are two growths, without beginning or end, springing from one Root, which is the Power Silence invisible, inapprehensible. Of these one appears from above, which is the Great Power, the Universal Mind, ordering all things male; and the other from below, the Great Thought (or Conception), female, producing all things. (Fragments of a Faith Forgotten 173)

Mead himself insisted upon the symbolical nature of the legend's language and warned against taking "these allegories of the Soul as literal histories, for nothing but sorrow will follow such materialization of divine mysteries" (Simon Magus 75). But Pound, for whom sexual orgasm and the state of divine illumination often become fused (that is, the exoteric and esoteric phases of the initiation, respectively), pays no attention to Mead's warning.⁵⁰ The hieros gamos of canto 47 may be seen, then, as a ritual analogue of the penetration of the Great Thought by the Universal Mind, of matter by spirit, and this leads to revelation and rebirth.

At the start of canto 47, the Circean catechism concerning the necessity for sailing to Hell "after knowledge" (l. 11) is interwoven with references to ancient Near East rites celebrating the death and resurrection of Tammuz, the Babylonian fertility god who is the equivalent of Adonis, the beloved of Aphrodite. Both the death and resurrection of the god are symbolized here: his death by the "red flame" and "the small lamps float[ing] seaward" (ll. 19, 25) and "the sea...streaked red with Adonis" (l. 30);⁵¹ his rebirth by the "Wheat shoots [which] rise new by the altar/ flower from swift seed" (ll. 32-3): Lines 26 to 29, adapted from Bion's Lament for Adonis, allude to a classic paradigm of θρῆνος (threnos or lamentation) which is part of the sacred drama of Adonis' death and rebirth. The threnos is re-enacted here:

Τὴ Διώνῃ ["You Dione"]
TU DIONA

καὶ Μοῖραι Ἄδωνιν ["And the Fates [weep for] Adonis"]
Kai MOIRAI' ADONIN (ll. 26-9)

The katabasis of death is equivalent to the sexual katabasis of male into female and thus the twice repeated verse, "By this gate art thou measured" (ll. 20, 56), can be taken to refer to both the estuary of a river as well as the female vagina which, indeed, is a gate of death and rebirth. Intensifying the sexual symbolism, Pound describes, in lines 33 to 79, female sexuality as an undirected life force which has an irresistible effect upon the male, including the cautious Odysseus.⁵² We know from Porphyry, among others, that in ancient times mysteries took place in caves; it is to a cave, then, both as a place of initiation and as symbolic female anatomy, that Odysseus, like other male creatures, is drawn:

Moth is called over mountain
The bull runs blind on the sword, naturans
To the cave art thou called, Odysseus,
By Molt thou hast thou respite for a little,
By Molt thou art freed from the one bed
that thou may'st return to another
The stars are not in her counting,

to her they are but wandering holes.
 Begin thy plowing
 When the Pleiades go down to their rest,
 Begin thy plowing
 40 days are they under seabord,
 Thus do in fields by seabord
 And in valleys winding down toward the sea.
 When the cranes fly high
 think of plowing. (ll. 40-55)

But unlike the woman, who gives no care to the signs of seasonal propriety, since for her the stars are nothing more "but wandering holes," the man, following Hesiod's directive as to the necessity of precise observation and action, pays close attention to the natural cycle. He harnesses his impulses and achieves the ritualization of the sexual act. Pound is uncompromising about the active and passive roles played by males and females respectively in the sexual ritual which results in the coordination of human acts (e.g. plowing) with the natural cycle.

Besides the ritualistic celebration of the natural cycle (ll. 40-45) Pound is also thinking about Odysseus' encounter with Circe. Protected by the sympathetic magic of Hermes' *moly* (moly), and not without caution, Odysseus gives in to Circe's invitation and to his own nature. According to Thomas Taylor, Circe must be understood as "the goddess of sense". Odysseus or the soul must come to the cave or body where he must meet with, and overcome the power of, Circe--a power which is both corruptive as well as necessary for the completion of the initiatory *katabasis*.

This is how Taylor presents the matter:

"Homer calls Circe, the daughter of the sun, the period and revolution of regeneration [*ἀναγέννησις*] in a circle, who ever connects and combines all corruption with generation, and generation again with corruption." [Porphyry in Stobaeus 141] Hence, we may observe that the Aecean isle, or this region of sense, is with great propriety called the abode of trouble and lamentation. In this region then, the companions of Ulysses, that is, the thoughts and natural powers of his soul, are changed by the incantations of the goddess; and his opinions and natural motions, rashly wandering from the authority of ruling intellect, are converted through the allurements of delight, into an unworthy and irrational habit. Ulysses, however, or the rational soul, is by the assistance of Mercury [Hermes], or reason, prevented from destruction. Hence, intellect, roused

The light has entered the cave. Io! Io!
 The light has gone down into the cave,
 Splendour on splendour!
 By prong have I entered these hills:
 That the grass grow from my body,
 That I hear the roots speaking together,
 The air is new on my leaf,
 The forked boughs shake with the wind. (ll. 79-86)

The "light" (Universal Mind, active intelligence, male) enters the dark cave (soul, matter, female) and the result is both "splendour" (Great Thought, sexual rapture, mystical illumination, change of consciousness) and sprouting of plants in the spring. The god himself is pictured as taking part in the natural cycle: The sexual union of Odysseus and Circe, of Anchises and Aphrodite, of male and female becomes a sacred ritual act which may lead man to an understanding of the mystery of being. The act of entering through the "door" into "the hill" (l. 89) becomes, therefore, both a sexual penetration and a symbolic break-through into a new state of awareness. This is made clear in the reference to the rites of Adonis, described in such a way that the ritual fall or katabasis is seen both in terms of coitus and nature's impregnation:

By this door have I entered the hill.
 falleth,
 Adonis falleth.
 Fruit cometh after (ll. 89-91)

Gathering together some images from fertility rituals and the natural rhythms of life, canto 47 ends with a reference to the powers the mystes may expect as a result of the change in consciousness he has undergone:

When the almond bough puts forth its flame,
 When the new shoots are brought to the altar,
TU DIONA, KAI MOIRAI
 TU DIONA, KAI MOIRAI
KAI MOIRAI 'ADONIN
 KAI MOIRAI' ADONIN
 that hath the gift of healing,
 that hath the power over wild beasts. (ll. 102-09)

In placing the springtime act of ritual worship (ll. 102-03; the almond tree is the first plant to flower in Italy and Greece) besides the autumnal threnos of the Fates

for the death of Adonis, Pound places emphasis, once more, on the correspondence between human and natural palingenesis. In addition, he who understands this and the mysterious relation between the natural process and coition, Pound implies, has the capacity to become a participant in the mysteries, a mystes who, like the god Dionysus (2/8) and Apollonius of Tyana (91/616; 93/623), "hath the [magical] gift of healing" and "the [magical] power over wild beasts."⁵³

The intensity of canto 47 is exchanged, in canto 48, for the ironical loquacity of a narrator who brings together a number of historical anecdotes. The anecdotes belong together by virtue of the antithesis they create between two distinct groups in Pound's canon, the "monopolists" and the "adventurers" (Alexander 130). While the dominant theme in canto 48 is one of loss, this is counterbalanced by the importance Pound attached to moments during which intuitive and experiential understanding of natural processes shines through. On the one hand, there are such moments as that of the German sergeant's capricious but pointless and gruesome act of jamming the cadavers "down with his boots/ to get the place smooth for the Kaiser" (ll. 14-21) and the lady's shopping expedition designed to buy, among other items, "an orchid (artificial)" (ll. 78-9); on the other hand, there is the precise art of the Pacific islanders who can "spread threads from gun'ale to gun'ale/ in a certain fashion/ and plot a course of 3000 sea miles/ lying under the web, watching the stars" (ll. 74-7) as well as the account by Mary, Pound's daughter, of her excitement at being present in the celebration by the people of Gais, the mountain town where she grew up, on the occasion of a priest's first mass.

The hieros gamos of canto 47 resulted in the awakening of a new awareness which we may call "palingenetic." Most of the characters of canto 48 are oblivious to this insight and continue to live in the "hylic world." But there are also those for whom the meaning of the priest's "first mass" is not lost. Pound numbers

himself among this enlightened group, and his own awareness is registered in his reminiscence of the walking tour he, his wife, and T. S. Eliot took in Provence in 1919:

Velvet, yellow, unwinged
 clammers, a ball into its orchis
 and the stair there still broken
 the flat stones of the road, Mt Segur.
 From Val Cabriere, were two miles of roofs to San Bertrand
 so that a cat need not set foot on the road
 where now is an inn, and bare rafters,
 where they scratch six feet deep to reach pavement
 where now is wheat field, and a milestone
 an altar to Terminus, with arms crossed
 back of the stone
 Where sun cuts light against evening;
 where light shaves grass into emerald
 Savairic; hither Gaubertz;

Said they wd. not be under Paris (ll. 104-16)

Lines 104 and 105 recreate the dawn as it may have looked to the Albigenian worshippers while they were standing on "the altar of Mithras" (76/452), that is, "Mont Sègur, sacred to Helios" (87/573). Paradoxically, Helios the sun, as it labours to ascend through the atmosphere, is metamorphosed into a voluptuous flower: an *ὄρχις*, that is orchis or orchid. The image also includes a sexual allusion since *ὄρχις* also means "testicle."⁵⁴ The double allusion to flower and sex is Pound's way of drawing attention to the importance of the Albigenian concept of "in coitu inluminatio."

While Pound is clearly bemoaning the destruction of the Provencal culture in this passage, he is not without hope. Line 104, "and the stair there still broken" (italics mine), which refers to canto 23's "and they hadn't left even the stair" (23/109), implies the possibility of the reconstruction of the stair and, consequently, the resurrection of the dead civilization. The idea of the reconstruction of the temple is present here, as it is present elsewhere in the Cantos, and it constitutes a symbolic rendering of Pound's attempt to reconstitute the tradition of wisdom.

In the lines which follow (ll. 106-16), we discover images which register Pound's capacity for precise observation, prepare us for the strange beauty of canto 49, and communicate the emotions he felt while travelling through Provence: an imaginary cat moving on rooftops which no longer exist, a wheat field covering the pavement of an ancient road, and an altar engraved with crossed hands. And all this leading to "realities perceptible to the sense" (LE 154), "where [the] light [of Helios] shaves grass into emerald" (l. 114). The radiant world perceived here corresponds to the state of mind of Gaubertz de Poicebot, the troubadour, and Savairic de Mauleon, Gaubertz's patron, who, in defiance of the religious and political authorities of the Pope and the King of France, decided "not to be under Paris" and were prepared to suffer the consequences.

Having passed the gate ("By this gate art thou measured") and having entered the place of initiation in canto 47, the mystes is transported to a world of strange beauty and tranquillity in canto 49--a world which corresponds to other paradisaical and theophanic moments of the Cantos. The "Seven Lakes Canto," as canto 49 has come to be known, is a composite picture made up by stitching together a number of images in which the peace of country life in ancient China is celebrated. These scenes comprise a response to Hesiod's advice in canto 47: human life seems to be in perfect harmony with the rhythms of the seasons and antithetical elements within the social and natural worlds are perfectly balanced.

We know that in canto 49 Pound wanted to present a "glimpse of Paradiso" (Palandri 51). However, this is an earthly paradise in which paradisaical and hyllic images coexist. The palingenetic consciousness includes both the sun and the rain, spring and autumn, toil and leisure. Even Geryon is present here in an image in which he is balanced by the wisdom of the old king for whom that which gives him pleasure also brings prosperity to his people and their descendants:

State by creating riches shd. thereby get into debt?
 This is infamy; this is Geryon.
 This canal goes still to TenShi
 though the old king built it for pleasure (ll. 32-6).

Hence, the union of male mind and female soul, of spiritual consciousness and hylic unconsciousness results, in canto 47, in the emergence of a new palingenetic consciousness which, in canto 49, envelops and balances everything into an oneness of vision.

Balance in canto 49 is achieved through the agency of an all-pervading power which belongs to a dimension other than the three Euclidean dimensions of the hylic world. It is this power that Sanekide Kodama identifies as being at the very centre of the canto:

One is reminded of the idea in the first half of Canto 49 that there is something beyond the natural world which gives the scenes in nature mysterious calmness and profundity. Now in the second half of the Canto is the idea that there is the imperial power working behind the scenes of social life, invisible, omnipresent in, and influencing the world of daily life. In both, Pound is suggesting that some pivotal power in the non-physical world keeps our world in harmony and order.

The meaning of the last two enigmatic lines of the Canto seem now to be clearer. "The fourth; the dimension of stillness" is the pivotal centre in the world beyond this world, where a power for order and love comes from, without which the three dimensional world is in chaos like that of the "wild beasts." Canto 49 is not a mere nature poem. It is not only a social and political poem, but it is in a sense a religious poem, for it points to a vision of Paradise as well as of Hell. (131-45).

It is this pivotal power which belongs to the non-hylic realm of the nous to which the mystes achieves access. At the end of canto 49, the mystes stands at the threshold of illumination which is achieved upon rising above the "quotidien," three dimensional world and entering the "divine or permanent world" of the "fourth dimension."

Line 46, "The fourth; the dimension of stillness," is rather problematic, partly because it is so difficult to establish its source. Terrell, for example, discusses the meaning of "stillness" but is silent about the adjective "fourth."⁵⁵ Peter Brooker

thinks that this line is "a reply perhaps to Einstein's notion of the 'fourth dimension' in his theory of relativity" [italics mine]. But Brooker also rightly adds that Pound found it "confusing in Einstein" (Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony, 1927, 56) and of "no philosophical bearing" (Guide to Kulchur, 34)" (296).

In The Barb of Time, Daniel D. Pearlman deals with line 46 in more detail than any other Pound critic. Like Brooker, Pearlman suggests that the line presents Pound's response to Einstein's theory of relativity. He also points out that Pound resists not the highly involved mathematical theory but rather its philosophical implications as they are presented by the theory's popularizers. Einstein is brought into his discussion of canto 49 by Pearlman in order to highlight the importance of the theme of time. But Pearlman's reading of line 46 is not convincing:

For Pound, the fourth dimension is that of "stillness," and not that of "time," with which "the dimension of stillness" is here elliptically contrasted....

Time ("The fourth;"), in this canto, is an image structurally parallel to, and therefore identified with, previous imagery of social disorder. The concept of mechanical time as representing social disorder, established as the "evil" in the first thirty cantos, re-emerges now in a new guise. (203-04)

Pearlman's insistence on the use of time as a structural unit in the Cantos seriously flaws his otherwise excellent study. Here he reads line 46 as follows: "The fourth [dimension of time]; [versus] the dimension of stillness." Pearlman thus reads the semicolon as signifying antithesis. But this is not necessarily true. I think that here Pound is thinking not of time but exclusively of "the fourth dimension of stillness." I therefore read line 46 not as antithetical, as Pearlman does, but rather as a statement of belief in a dimension outside the physical, three-dimensional world.

The clearest statement on line 46 comes from Pound himself--and it supports my claim that Pound is not thinking at all about time in this line. In a letter to his Italian translator, Luigi Berti, Pound explains:

"Stillness--the word is more concrete than IMMOTO [the motionless], for

it also suggests silence. What is still is motionless and soundless. But the concept of motionlessness is more important in this line. In Dante, above the primum mobile there is the motionless, the sphere which does not turn. I conceive of a dimension of stillness which compenetrates the euclidean dimensions.⁵⁶

The "fourth dimension," then, is an otherworldly dimension which compenetrates the Euclidean three-dimensional reality.

But what about the source of the phrase "the fourth dimension"? It is possible, I think, that the phrase originated with Pound's theosophist friends. As indicated in the previous chapter, during the time that Pound was preparing to leave London for Paris (in 1920), the London theosophical circles were getting ready to receive P. D. Ouspensky, the prominent mystic and occultist. Interest in Ouspensky sprung from the publication in English of his Tertium Organum.⁵⁷ This book attracted the attention of both Orage and Mead. Tertium Organum was a remarkable synthesis of concepts of space, relativity, time, theosophy, cosmic consciousness, and Eastern and Western philosophy.

I do not know that Pound read Ouspensky's book, but he did meet Ouspensky's mentor, G.I. Gurdjieff (Guide 112). It is probable that Pound would have encountered Ouspensky's ideas as they were disseminated by Mead, who published two articles on Ouspensky in the Quest. The first one, "Some Remarks on Fourth Dimensionalism and the Time-Enigma" (1920-21), gave some advance notice of Ouspensky's imminent arrival. Mead's second article, "On a Speculation in Fourth Dimensionalism" (1921-22), is really a book review of Ouspensky's Tertium Organum. In this second article Ouspensky is presented as the champion of hyper-dimensionality. Mead approves of Ouspensky's belief in a higher psychic state beyond sensation, perception, and conception (which belong to the three-dimensionality):

There is, however, a higher form of consciousness latent in him [man], or only at times confusedly appearing, and thus requiring development--a certain combination of feeling and thought of higher tension which he would call 'intuition'....The general notion is that, if the psychic apparatus

were changed, the world around would be changed... The question of the possibility of the expansion of consciousness is a so-called 'fourth-dimensional direction,' thus conceived, is, he holds and we agree, experimentally verifiable in certain psychical states.⁵⁸

Ouspensky's ideas would certainly have had some appeal for Pound. The idea of "the expansion of consciousness" is certainly what Pound himself means when he speaks about the "bust thru into divine or permanent world."

Once more, at the end of canto 49, the mystes is at the threshold of illumination. One type of illumination is encountered in canto 50 where Pound, now counting himself as one of "those who know," presents a number of political and economic insights. Pound's insights include an emphasis on the parallel between the Leopoldine reforms and the American Revolution which were taking place at about the same time and also interpretation of Napoleon's fall as a victory for the powers of the usurers. Regarding the second insight, it is worth noting that Pound equates the opposition of the allies to Napoleon with the recent actions of the League of Nations imposing sanctions against Italy for its invasion of Ethiopia.

Leaving behind the political intrigues, the last four lines of canto 50 look back at "the fourth dimension of stillness" of canto 49 and intimate the paradisaical opening image of canto 51:

Lalage's shadow moves in fresco's knees
 She is blotted with Dirce's shadow
 dawn stands there fixed and unmoving
 only we two have moved. (ll. 113-16)

While cantos 48 and 50 deal with insight which takes place while the mystes remains in the hylic world, canto 51 focuses on the mystes' insight at the level of nous. Again, Pound uses antithetical units to take his reader from the light of the mind down to the mud of usury, and from "the light of the door" to Geryon, the personification of usury, and then back to cheng⁴ ming², the Chinese ideogram which in his translation of the Ta Hsio Pound renders as "precise verbal definitions" (Con-

fucius, 31) and which here is presented as a symbol of the mystes' awareness. Beginning with a celebration of the light of the mind whose source is not the physical sun but "the NOUS, the ineffable crystal" (40/201), canto 51 includes a description of the mystes as intellectus adeptus (skilled intellect) and concludes with a symbol, borrowed from the occidental tradition, of this type of awareness.

Having worked out the pattern of katabasis/palingenesis in previous cantos, Pound begins both parts of canto 51 with an epopteia. We have, then, a variation of the usual pattern as follows: epopteia/katabasis/palingenesis. The first section of the canto begins with two lines from Guido Guinizzelli's (circa 1230-1276) Neoplatonic canzone "A cor gentil repara sempre amore" ("Love always repairs to the noble heart"):

Shines
in the mind of heaven God
who made it
more than the sun
in our eye. (ll.1-5)

Pound's lines are a verbatim rendering of the first two lines of the fifth stanza of Guinizzelli's poem:

splende 'n la 'intelligenza del cielo
Deo criator piu che nostr' occhi 'l sole: (ll. 41-2)⁵⁹

The main theme of Guinizzelli's canzone is the idea that love dwells inherently and exclusively in the noble heart. Fusing courtly devotion to a lady with divine love, Guinizzelli introduces in the fifth stanza of his poem the idea that the lady should bestow upon her faithful lover the essence of her nobility. For this the poet finds an audacious simile: the lady's shining bestowal is likened to God's shining bestowal upon the obedient angelic host.

The fourth stanza from the same canzone, to which Pound alludes in canto 89 (600), provides the connection or katabasis from the celestial nous to the fifth element, mud:

The sun strikes full upon the mud all day:
 It remains vile, nor the sun's worth is less.
 "By race I am gentle," the proud man doth say:
 He is the mad, the sun is gentleness.
 Let no man predicate
 That aught the same of gentleness should have,
 Even in a king's estate,
 Except the heart there be a gentle man's.
 The star-beam lights the wave,--
 Heaven holds the star and the star's radiance. (ll. 31-40)

Guinizzelli's point in this discussion of the nature of nobility is that true nobility is a matter not of inheritance but of inner excellence. Pound does not necessarily agree with Guinizzelli's analogy. "Mud" for Pound, as Terrell points out, "seems to be a metaphor for the basic stuff of the universe through which mind can operate. He wrote: 'mud does not account for mind' [Guide 172]" (Companion, I 198). The hylic mud is not "vile" in itself as a dualistic perspective would dictate. According to Pound's monistic perspective, the hylic world is necessary, and the transcendence to the world of the nous can only be achieved through it. The fatally fractured moral order and the debasement of the flesh which are at the very centre of Pound's damnation of usury can be seen as the result of man's failure or refusal to perceive the inherent forms found in the hylic world. Usury "destroys the craftsman" and his "craft" when the mind of man, having no part in the divine light, is not allowed to operate through the hylic universe and discover there the inherent forms.

In contrast to usury, presented as a destroyer of arts, crafts, love, and life, the anonymous craftsman's rapport with his material and nature is advanced in canto 51 as a metaphor of palingenetic action. The meticulous instructions for the making and use of two kinds of fish-fly represent man's harmony with nature as well as his skill in finding the form inherent in the hylic stuff used to make fish-flies (ll. 33-50).

The first section of canto 51 deals with the divine light of heaven which is emphatically absent from Pound's diatribe against "usura" (ll. 7-32) but present in the

passage of human creativity and close observation of nature (ll. 33-50). The similar, briefer, second section of canto 51 begins with a quotation from Albertus Magnus which can be taken as a "bust thru" to "the mind of heaven" of the first section; following this there is a katabasis to the sour song of Geryon, the personification of usury. The second section then ends with two Chinese characters which, presumably, correspond to the first section's "Blue dun" passage.

Three analogies, each pertaining to a different level of human life, precede Pound's attack against usury in the second section. The first analogy pertains to the metaphysical level:

That hath the light of the doer, as it were
 a form cleaving to it.
 Deo similis quodam modo
 hic intellectus adeptus (ll. 51-4).

These lines belong to Albertus Magnus's De Apprehensione. Pound, as he notes in his essay on "Cavalcanti" found them in Ernest Renan's Averroes et L'averroisme (LE, p. 186). The passage Pound is looking at here is the following:

...habet lumen agentis ut formam sibi adhaerentem...Ex possibili et agente compositus est intellectus adeptus, et divinus dicitur, et tunc homo perfectus est. Et fit per hunc intellectum homo Deo quodam modo similis. (LE 186)
 (He has the light of the doer as a form cleaving to it...From this union of the possibilis and the agens, the intellectus adeptus is formed and is said to be divine: then a man is made perfect. And by this intellect man is made similar in a certain way to God.)

In his usual manner, Pound translates one fragment and includes a fragment in the original but inverts the order (ll. 53-4) and adds "hic" [this] for emphasis.

Albertus Magnus, the Christian theologian and teacher of Thomas Aquinas, fused Christian philosophy with that of the Arabian Platonic commentators Averroes, Avicenna, and Al-Farabi. It was from Arabian philosophy that Albertus Mangus adopted the concepts of the intellectus agens, intellectus possibilis, and intellectus adeptus. As Wendy Stallard Flory explains,

The "agent intellect" is the supreme Intellect which can manifest itself to the intellectus possibilis of the individual through the latter's disposition to receive intelligible forms. When these two function together, the individual attains to the intellectus adeptus, the state of having made contact with the nous. (297)

It is this intellectus adeptus, the Godlike intellect of the doer, the poet, the builder, the craftsman, and the inspired ruler, that Pound celebrates in the Cantos. The adept or palingenetic intellect not only comes in contact with the nous, but it also manifests this contact by translating the energeia it derives from it into action. As Pound puts it elsewhere, "the light of the DOER," as it were a form cleaving to it 'meant an ACTIVE pattern, a pattern that set things in motion'" (Polite Essays 51).

The power of the intellectus adeptus is also operative in the second analogy which involves the local economic phenomenon of the grass which is "nowhere out of place," that is, the unparasitic source of communal credit of Siena's Monte dei Paschi, the seventeenth-century bank which made credit on the surety "real capital," the community's pastures (see cantos 42-3).

The third analogy, at the level of politics, confirms Pound's attraction at this time (circa 1936) toward the Rome-Berlin axis. Pound apparently attributed the statement in German and Latin, "Zwischen die Volkern erzielt wird/ a modus vivendi" (Between the [two] people a modus vivendi is achieved/ a way of life, ll. 56-7), to Hitler. But, as Eva Hesse has established, the words actually belong to Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, who spoke them in a broadcast from Königsberg in East Prussia, July 8, 1934. (Companion, I 198) Without going into Pound's disturbing fascist views and the ironic inappropriateness of this particular paradigm, it seems that in his view this statement represents another example of the intellectus adeptus in action--here in a presumed attempt to achieve lasting peace.

As in the first section, the "bust thru" is followed by a katabasis into the hell of the arch-enemy, "usura":

circling in eddying air; in a hurry;
 the 12: close eyed in the oily wind
 these were the regents; and a sour song from the folds
 of his belly
 sang Geryone; I am the help of the aged;
 I pay men to talk peace;
 Mistress of many tongues; merchant of chalcedony
 I am Geryon twin with usura,
 You who have lived in a stage set.
 A thousand were dead in his folds;
 in the eel-fishers basket
 Time was of the League of Cambrai: (ll. 58-69)

Pound is here alluding to Dante's and Virgil's descent, on the backs of Geryon, down to the seventh circle of Hell, the abode of the usurers (Inferno, XVII). Of interest here are the similarity between the imagery used to describe Geryon's grotesque laughter and that emerging from the bellies of the dead in Poem IV of the Hugh Selwyn Mauberley sequence⁶⁰, and the deceptiveness of usury who seems to have one-thousand faces.

Pound ends canto 51 and "The Fifth Decad" with two Chinese ideograms which can be translated as "right name." After the Dantesquean katabasis, the Chinese ideograms return the reader to a sense of balance, which is the result of the mystes' achievement of a new awareness. In addition, the Chinese ideograms signal the culmination of the process of katabasis/ palingenesis/ epopteia, that is, the progression of actions or of moments through which the mystes passes on his way from the "hylic" inertia to the energeia of the state of nous.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. Colin McDowell and Timothy Materer, in "Gyre and Vortex: W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound," approach cantos 90 and 91 in a somewhat similar way to the one employed here. As I argue in Chapter V of this study, however, this approach to Pound's occult interests is too narrow. Instead of looking at the symbols of the "gyre" and the "vortex," we have to examine these cantos, it seems to me, in the light of the theory of the "subtle body."

2. The terminology here is derived from my readings on Gnosticism, and most particularly from Richard Reitzenstein's Hellenistic Mystery-Religions. It is Reitzenstein who points out that in the Poimandres Hermes, in his discourse dealing with the nature of the deity, had said that "no one could attain salvation, σωτηρία, without rebirth (παλιγενεσία) (47).

3. The noun μυστήριον comes from the verb μύωω, to initiate; ἐρωτησία has the same root as ἐρωτήσις, one initiated at the greater mysteries.

4. φανοποιεία is made up of φαίνω and ποιέω. φαίνω, to bring to light, make appear, to make clear or known, uncover, disclose; and ποιέω, to make, to create.

5. In his footnote to "Phanopoeia," the editor writes:

"Phanopoeia" ("light-" or "image-making," with "melopoieia" and "logopoeia" one of Pound's "kinds of poetry") is Pound's original, provisional title for his long poem. He also used the title for a vorticist poem, "φανοποιεία" (The Little Review, November 1918; "Phanopoeia," Personae, 1926) (102).

6. ἱεροφάντης (ἱερός + φαίνω): one who expounds sacred things; an initiating priest.

7. Raine & Harper (327-28). All further references will be to this edition of Taylor's essay and will be followed by Taylor and page numbers within parenthesis.

8. νεκρομαντεία: an oracle of the dead, a place where the ghosts of the dead were called up and questioned.

9. James Longenbach also makes this point in "The Order of the Brothers Minor: Pound and Yeats At Stone Cottage 1913-1916":

...it is...important to recognize how deeply the occult permeates Pound's work: when the Odyssey is read in the context of the other material Pound was studying, we see more clearly that The Cantos begin with a seance, an invocation of the dead. (401)

10. About this rite Thomas Taylor writes the following:

With respect to the recondite wisdom contained in the description of the infernal regions, I shall only observe from Porphyry that the reason why departed spirits are represented as possessing no knowledge of human concerns, till they inhale the vapour of blood, is because according to Homer and many of his successors, human intelligence or prudence consists of blood. (328)

11. In The Religion of the Greeks, K. Kerényi writes about the concept of εἶδός :
for the Greeks seeing was included in knowing.... The inseparable connection of knowing and seeing... had the consequence that the Greeks at once "saw" as "form" everything that they "knew".... Greek "knowing" means a viewing which, directed at the visible world, encounters something which is timeless and to that extent also eternal, forms which are invisible and can yet become objects of vision. (143-46)

12. For a more detailed discussion of the similarities between Dante's and Pound's epics see Wilhelm, Dante and Pound and Surette, Eleusis (55-56).

13. See also Wilson, Yeats and Tradition (201-17).

14. For more information on the various editions and reprints of Taylor's translation see Taylor (296, 534-35).

15. The boat-motif, we should note, is repeated often in the Cantos (e.g. cantos 90/605; 92/612; and 92/620).

16. Then again, "honey" is also the symbol of death and the ancients used to pour libations of honey to the chthonic deities, including Persephone or Koré whom they called μηξίρα, or "honey-like."

17. Akiko Miyake is another critic who discusses Pound's use of Odysseus in terms of occult meanings and mentions specifically Taylor as a possible source. In "The Greek-Egyptian Mysteries in Pound's 'The Little Review Calendar' and in Cantos 1-7," Miyake stresses the significance of Taylor's translations for the Cantos. For example, she writes, following Taylor: "The descent of Odysseus into the underworld means the soul's descent into the darkness of body in order to meet the radiance of the transcendent which is hidden inherent within his soul and which is symbolized by Isis..." (86). In her article, Miyake consults Taylor's "A Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries" rather than "Concerning the Cave of the Nymphs" as I do in this chapter. Of course, the two works have many elements in common.

18. See Harrison, Prolegomena (363-453) for details.

19. "IO" is also probably a form of the incantation "AOI" which, as explained in Chapter V, was used in connection with Dionysus in his function as an Eleusinian god.

20. In his "A Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries," Taylor concludes his discussion with a clear statement of the paligenetic function of the mysteries: the design of the mysteries is to lead us back to the perfection from which, as a principle, we first made our descent. (151)

21. See also Quinn (93-94) on Stokes.

22. Terrell's gloss is more appropriate for the reference to Memnon in canto 94/640.

23. That she is a sea-goddess we can assume from the fact that Aphrodite, who was born of the sea, is often pictured in the Cantos (though not identified) in a position similar to Aletha's here. For example, in Canto 39 Aphrodite is described in this way: "with the goddess' eyes to seaward" (39/195).

24. Leon Surette makes this point in Eleusis (49-51).

25. To get the cup Heracles threatened Helios with his bow and arrows. There were several ancient accounts of the cup and many explanations of how Helios traveled from West to East. A number of these are quoted by the second-century author Athenaeus in Book XI, Ch. 38-9, of his Deipnosophistae from which the present Stesichorus fragment is taken.

This passage which begins with the Sun's nightly journey and Heracles' conquest of death, "rhymes" with the earlier descents to the underworld of Homer (in canto 1), Dante (in the Hell cantos), and the mystes of canto 17. In addition, we are reminded that the Sun often appears in the Cantos in connection with the katabasis to the underworld (e.g. cantos 15/67 and 17/79).

26. One of these critics, Dudley Fitts, notes disapprovingly that Pound's Preoccupation with a detail for the detail's sake accounts for a...serious...failure [in the Cantos]. An example of this tendency may be noticed in the macaronic passage from the beginning of Canto XXIII. Here, Mr. Pound is having a perfectly grand time playing with the various meanings of αἰὼι; apparently, these maltreated words have overtones of emotional associations for him. But he has failed to convey these associations to the reader. For a moment, he is indulging pure pedantry-- and not very accurate pedantry at that. Again, he has ceased to assert; he has substituted something uncommonly dead for something convincingly alive.

See Dudley Fitts, "Music Fit for the Odes," in Ezra Pound: The Critical Heritage (254).

27. That Pound consulted this dictionary frequently is evident from the references to it in canto 96: "Which is not in Liddell D.D." (96/656) and "vocabulary not in Dr. Liddell's" [re: Byzantine Greek] (96/658).
28. "The soul," writes Mead quoting Damascius, "has a certain radiant vehicle (augoeides ochema), as it is called, starlike (astroeides) and eternal" (80-81). This concept will be discussed in more detail in the Chapter V of this study.
29. Characteristically, Mead writes that "these two allotments--the "light-wrapped" and the "gloom-wrapped"--are the extremes, having as their portions the heights [and depths] of bliss and misery" (107).
30. Akiko Miyake also treats Heracles' *katabasis* and the double nature of the sea in terms of palingenesis. As already mentioned, Miyake uses Thomas Taylor's *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries: A Dissertation* to explain some of Pound's esoteric notions. Regarding the sea's double nature, Miyake writes that
 Odysseus must pass the sea in order to return to his pristine nature, Penelope. For such pursuit of freedom from the senses, Taylor argues in his Neoplatonic interpretation of *The Odyssey*, the soul must take the risk of passing the Hades. The ocean, therefore, signifies the condition of material nature, the sorrow and sufferings the soul must undergo. Yet Poseidon, who possesses all the forms is the indispensable helper for the soul's imaginative creativity, free from material nature. Hence Taylor says that the ocean is the emblem of the purity under the rule of Neptune, too. In this duplicate sense of the sea lies the opportunity for the soul to choose either a mere generation or freedom from material nature. (88-9)
 Regarding Heracles' *katabasis*, Miyake, using Taylor, sees it as the soul's descent into body in man's attempt to find the pristine state of his soul. Miyake quotes from Taylor the following pertinent passage:
 The soul...descends Corically [or after the manner of Proserpine], into generation, but is distributed into generation Dionysiacally; and she is bound in body Promethiacally and Titanically: she frees herself therefore from its bonds by exercising the strength of Hercules..."
 Taylor thus explains the Heracleian *katabasis* and *athloi* esoterically as the process through which the soul is delivered from the grip of matter and is freed for the resurrection. This process is seen, then, by Taylor as well as by Pound as a palingenetic act.
31. Kenner says that Pound writes this "with his mind on Cavalcanti" (154).
32. This quotation is from Pound's "The Serious Artist, III: Emotion and Poesy," *The New Freewoman* 1 (1913): 194.
33. In his *Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Samuel Hynes discusses the new discoveries of science during the 1890s which were perceived by many as a possible way out of the mechanistic world of positivism:

-One way out of that world seemed to lie, paradoxically, through science. In the 'nineties the discovery of the X ray, of radioactivity, and of the electron had made the Victorian version of matter as obsolete as Genesis; and it seemed that further investigations might reveal new forces and new freedoms, by which the universe might be made teleological again. (136)

For an account of this new conception of existence which shares much with occultist perception at the turn of the century, Hynes quotes from Edward Carpenter's The Drama of Love and Death (1912):

...the existence of the X and N rays of light, and of countless other vibrations of which our ordinary senses render no account, the phenomena of radium and radiant matter, the marvels of wireless telegraphy, the mysterious facts connected with hypnotism and the subliminal consciousness, and the certainty now that telepathic communication can take place between human beings thousand of mile apart--all these things have convinced us that the subtlest forces and energies, totally unmeasurable by our instruments, and saturated or at least suffused with intelligence, are at work all around us. (qtd. in Hynes 137)

34. Fa-Han is given by Peck as "bound-hair" which corresponds to ~~the~~ the epithet of Circe, meaning "fair-tressed": "ἴσθα δ' ἔφατ' ἰκίαν ἐμπεδωμένην." (Homer, Odyssey, X, ll. 135-36). Wendy Flory reads the Fa-Han scene as autobiographical:

The central episode of the canto [23] is an idyllic interlude with the poet standing with his beloved at a window on a hill overlooking the sea, watching men on the beach below emptying sand from their boat. The hillside with its olive trees and view of the ocean suggests that Pound is...in Olga Rudge's apartment in Sant' Ambrogio, on the hill above Rapallo. As he looks at the view from the window he recalls standing at another window with a woman--presumably Olga Rudge, but possibly Bride Scratton--and looking at a deceptively similar view... (136-38)

35. In Canto 8, we are told about the beheading, ordered by Niccolo d'Este, of his second wife, the young Parisian, and his son Ugo (from his first wife), after discovering that they were lovers. The reference to this tale of adultery and murder is here spliced with two similar references to incest and murder: that of Paolo who was the lover of his sister-in-law, Francesca; and that of Agamemnon by his adulterous wife, Clytemnystra. In Canto 20, Pound presents Niccolo in a delirium; having taken violent revenge upon the two lovers, he is here "pronouncing judgement upon himself as a fanatical Roland whose religious sensibility has cut him off from all sense of reality [dromena]." (Peck 64) The Este theme is further developed in Canto 24 which is filled with records of the House of Este and treats the development of the Ugo-Parisian affair and Niccolo's journey to the Holy Land. This theme is then completed in Canto 30 which describes the marriage of Alonso d'Este, grandson of Niccolo, to Lucrecia Borgia, daughter of Pope Alexander VI. By this time, the House of the Estes has degenerated and this marriage, performed by proxy, symbolizes the triumph of materialism ("Madam Hule") over human values and instincts: "Honour: Balls for your honour!// Take two million and swallow it" (30/148).

36. In his essay on "Cavalcanti, Medievalism," Pound explains this aside. He says that "For centuries if you disliked a man you called him a Manichaean, as in some circles to-day you call him a Bolshevich to damage his earning capacity" (LE 176).

37. In addition, in canto 20 the story of Niccolo d'Este is closely related to the fall of Troy: "And that was when Troy was down" (90). This line is also the opening line of the last section of canto 23 (109). The repetition is probably Pound's way of drawing our attention to the hypothesis that the Estes are the descendants of the Trojans.

38. See also Peter Makin's detailed discussion of Pound's ideas regarding the Albigenes in Provence and Pound (217-59).

39. The same hypothesis is put forward by Pound in his essay "Psychology and Troubadours" (see §R 9), although not as clearly.

40. Hesiod: The Homeric Hymns and Homeric (ll. 416-17).

41. As one reviewer notes, "regrettably, he adds nothing to our scant knowledge of Gemisthus Plethon, so catalytic a presence in Pound's version of Renaissance-making." (Stephen J. Adams, "Books on Pound from University Microfilms International" (369).)

In his study of the Malatesta Manuscripts, A Touch of Rhetoric: Ezra Pound's Malatesta Cantos, D'Epiro has discovered two significant details regarding Plethon which Pound omitted from the final text. The first deals with how Malatesta "finds Gemisthus' ashes" in Morea (#49, 16). As D'Epiro explains, "This fact would have balanced the rather developed section of Gemisthus Plethon in Canto 8, which tells of the philosopher's visit to Florence in 1439 and suggests the influence that the neo-pagan cast of his conversations there might have exercised on the young Malatesta. To have retained the detail of Sigismondo's transferral of Gemisthus's ashes to the Tempio would have provided further justification (from the end of Malatesta's life) for the text's inclusion of an apparently extraneous episode that had occurred during his youth. It would also have added a sense of closure to the incident: the man who might have inspired the Tempio ends up reposing therein" (20). The second detail deals with another reference to Plethon, also excluded from the final text, where "Plethon's catalytic function with regard to the Tempio is made more explicit than in the final text: '...Gemisthus, an old man talking the gods./ Came later/ Later Alberti that the painter should/ set hunger in men for building./ And thus grew, thus sprang to flower./ sea poppy, luteumve papaver./ By the sea gate./&/the sun's gate./ caught in the stone./ a song caught in the stone (#53 36)" (28).

42. References to Plethon in the Cantos: 8/31; 23/107; 26/123; 83/528; 98/685; 98/688; 98/690. In addition to the two references mentioned in endnote 31 of this chapter, there is also the following reference in the Malatesta drafts:

And Gemisthus...
who had talked the gods, gone back to Morea,
but the word burning and hot... (D'Epiro, #53 43)

43. Plethon seems to have made a conscious effort, throughout his life, to follow Plato's example. The very name Plethon (Πληθων), which Georgios Gemistos (Γεωργιος Γεμιστος) added to his own name after 1439, was chosen because of its

resemblance to that of Plato (ἑστίασε).

44. For detailed discussions of this point see Paul O. Kristeller, The Philosophy Of Marsilio Ficino, and Frances Yates, Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Traditions.

45. Libera also mentions Andrian Stokes' Stone of Rimini, which was in part inspired by Pound's Malatesta Cantos, and says that "If Pound had not already felt this "water" theme himself, in his wilfully cryptic way, he offers a possibility unmentioned by Stokes--that a knowledge of Plethon's theory of the gods was behind Agostino's work" (375).

46. In the Guide, Pound notes the importance of Malatesta in preserving something of Plethon: "And the Malatesta had his high sense of justice, for I think Gemisto wd. be even more forgotten without Sigismundo's poetry" (160).

47. Epanaphora, that is intensive anaphora (the repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive clauses or verses), is used in lines 10, 14, 16-18, etc.; isocolon (the repetition of phrases of equal length and usually corresponding structure) is used in lines 35-6; and litotes (the denial of the contrary or understatement that intensifies) is used throughout the canto.

48. Pound uses the term "fucking" in his letter (Yale #1603). D.D. Paige, the editor of The Letters of Ezra Pound, has substituted the term with "_____"--so as not to offend the sensibilities of the readers, I suppose. In canto 39, the term is also used:

When I lay in the ingle of Circe
I heard a song of that kind.
Fat panther lay by me
Girls talked of fucking, beasts talked there of eating,
All heavy with sleep, fucked girls and fat leopards,.... (193)

I am not aware of Pound's use of the word elsewhere in his writing. Mr. James Laughlin has told me that Pound was not foul-mouthed and that he was surprised at his use of this term in canto 39. The explanation to this might be that for Pound the term is not a "swear" word but has, rather, a sacramental function.

49. Pound himself was, of course, guilty of impatience, which was certainly a contributing factor to some of his own unfortunate political and racial views.

50. James Laughlin has told me that in one of their private conversations Pound did indeed make the connection between sexual intercourse and the experience of the divine.

51. The ritualistic act described here by Pound is actually fashioned after the custom of setting candles afloat in Tigullio Bay on the night of July 3; the custom of the Italian women is associated in Pound's mind with Aphrodite's grief over the death of Adonis. For more details see Massimo Bacigalupo (71, 271).

52. For a discussion of Pound's celebrations of sexuality and Remy de Gourmont's influence upon him in this area, see Richard Sieburth, Instigations: Ezra Pound and Remy de Gourmont (129-58).

53. See also cantos 49/244 (l. 25) and 52/258 (l. 56).

54. Pound has used the same "pun" in Mauberley.

55. "Pound told a visitor that in Canto 49 he intended to present 'a glimpse of Paradiso'" (Palandri 51). The paradisaical thrust of the lines is suggested by stillness ["the still point of the turning world" in Eliot] as well as the Dionysian power over wild beasts [cf. 2/8]. Note also rhyme with Apollonius [94/635]" (Companion, I 192).

56. Translated and quoted by Massimo Bacigalupo, The Formed Trace: The Later Poetry of Ezra Pound (78). This letter to Luigi Bertì is dated 7 June 1942 and was published in Tempo, 26 November 1972.

57. P.D. Ouspensky, Tertium Organum: The Third Key of Thought: A Key to the Enigmas of the World (first ed., St. Petersburg, 1912; rev. ed., Petrograd, 1916). First English translation by Nicholas Bessaraboff and Claude Bragdon, Rochester, N.Y. 1920; rev. by Ouspensky, London, 1923. My copy: London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.

58. G.R.S. Mead, "On a Speculation in Fourth-Dimensionalism," Quest 13 (1921-1922): 48-9. Mead's other article on Ouspensky, "Some Remarks on Fourth Dimensionalism and the Time-Enigma," appeared in the Quest 12 (1920-1921): 493-505.

59. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in The Early Italian Poets, translates these lines as "God, in his understanding of High Heaven,/ Burns more than in our sight the living sun:" (29).

60. In Hugh Selwyn Mauberley, Pound refers to Geryon in this way: "and a sour song from the folds/ of his belly/ sang Geryone"/ "hysterias, trench confession,/ laughter out of dead bellies" (SP 64).

CHAPTER V

"THE SUBTLE BODY": CANTOS 90 & 91

1. "OUT OF EREBUS": Canto 90

This chapter presents an analysis of cantos 90 and 91 in terms of palingenesis. The chapter is designed to illustrate the applicability of the palingenetic and epopteic or metamorphic phases of the triple schema developed earlier (katabasis/palingenesis/epopteia). Canto 90 illustrates the motif of rebirth of the mystes to a higher plane of existence (not a higher realm like the traditional paradise or heaven), and canto 91 illustrates the nature of that higher plane as understood through Mead's doctrine of the "subtle body" which grounds the topos of the epopteia. Thus, what is proposed here is a reading of these two cantos which illustrates the spiritual drama enacted by the illuminated soul of the mystes.

A number of other cantos could have been chosen to illustrate this palingenetic pattern. For example, the pattern is found in the Pisan Cantos, where the palingenetic drama is acted out—but here, because of the special circumstances, the stage which is emphasized is the Katabasis, especially in the chthonic cantos 82 to 84. The Later Cantos also contain numerous examples of the palingenetic movement of the Cantos. But cantos 90 and 91 are the best brief, succinct, and accessible paradigm of Pound's preoccupation with palingenesis.

The critical consensus about these cantos has changed little since Clark Emery's account of them as "paradise" (1958). Emery wrote that in canto 90 "Paradise is regained...by the reader who has followed on the heels of the poet, and by the poet himself, who has been elevated 'from under the rubble heap'....Canto 91 continues the ascent, from the circle of light to the circle of crystal..." (156). The "paradise

[which] is regained" is either seen as an earthly or celestial paradise.¹ Emery's concepts have not been challenged or fundamentally altered by later critics who have merely elaborated and fleshed-out his observations. The present discussion does not differ from earlier ones in its treatment of details; but it differs in at least one fundamental way: it is suggested here that the nature of paradise is spiritual, since the mystes enters not a higher realm like that of the traditional paradise but rather a higher plane of existence.

The present discussion has been anticipated by Noel Stock and Leon Surette. In a very brief discussion, the former of these critics writes that cantos 90 to 95 present an Eleusinian paradise.² Leon Surette also deals with the Eleusinian character of these cantos and makes the following significant observation: "[Pound's] whole conception of divinity militates against the notion of paradise as a place of bliss in the eternal presence of god." (Eleusis 235) My discussion builds on Professor Surette's and represents an advancement on his in so far as it is not limited to a search for Eleusinian correspondences (since it is proposed in this study that the character of the initiation is conceptual and syncretic rather than particular, that is, the palingenetic character of the Cantos does not correspond to the external features of the Eleusinian mysteries), and also in so far as a model is applied to explain the general character of the initiation as a state of mind, and even more significantly, as a state of being. In other words, what is proposed here is that these cantos are a representation of the mystes' rebirth into a higher plane of existence so that he exists simultaneously in the normal human plane while at the same time he is participating in a higher state of being.

One more study deserves mention here. In "Gyre and Vortex: W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound," Colin McDowell and Timothy Materer deal with canto 90 in terms of the spiral and the vortex, images which the authors situate within the same occult

tradition outlined in this study. I think, however, that the palingenetic analogy, though it is not the sole analogy in the Cantos, works better in the two cantos discussed here as well as in the poem as a whole. It works better because, unlike the vortex which is a specific and limited image, the palingenesis is a sort of drama or story with actors and events that can be used to explain the multiple layers of the Cantos.

This chapter begins with a forward-looking digression which precedes discussion of the palingenetic aspects of cantos 90 and 91. This digression is undertaken in order to suggest the palingenetic character of the later cantos and to demonstrate that Pound is constantly thinking in terms of the "celestial tradition."

In the last section of "Notes for CXVII et seq.," whose last line was intended to be the poem's last line as well,³ the palingenetic action of the Cantos is rehearsed for the last time:

La faillite de François Bernouard, Paris;
 or a field of larks at Allègre,
 "es laissa cader"
 so high toward the sun and then falling,
 "de joi sas alas"
 to set here the roads of France.

Two mice and a moth my guides--
 To have heard the farfalla gasping
 as toward a bridge over worlds.
 That the kings meet in their island,
 where no food is after flight from the pole.
 Milkweed the sustenance
 as to enter arcanum.

To be men not destroyers. (117/802)

This section includes "one last ideogrammic tribute to the troubadours" (Wilhelm, The Later Cantos 45), a metaphor of the psyche's preparation for its migratory flight into the empyrean, and a final aside, in the optative mood, in which Pound's programme is expressed.

The first verse paragraph places the Icarian failure of François Bernouard ("so

high toward the sun and then falling") side by side with a natural image of the arch made by the flight of larks. The natural scene which is celebrated in the lines Pound quotes from Bernart de Ventadour's poem (ll. 29, 31)⁴ is analogous to the "flight" of Bernouard, the artisan-visionary whose quest to print handsome editions of important books (like the *Cantos*) ended in bankruptcy.⁵ This bankruptcy is another example of the destructive power of Usura which "has made printing a midden, a filth, a mere smear, bolted down by the bank racket, which impedes the use of skills and implements for the making of proper books or of healthy populations." (*Guide* 184)⁶ Along with the lark's failure to reach the sun and Bernouard's failure to continue printing the classics, is implied Pound's own anxiety about the success of his epic.

Though real, the intimations of *katabasis* in the first verse paragraph are only momentary and are quickly succeeded, in the next verse paragraph, by the palin-genetic soul-in-flight motif leading to the metamorphic "arcanum" which bestows upon those who enter it the power of healing and whose transformational power is such that destroyers may be turned into men. For Pound "the natural object is always an adequate symbol" (*LE* 5) and here, again, the gesture toward the "arcanum" has its genesis in the recollection of a particular, natural, auditory image: the "gasping" sound made by a butterfly.⁷ The butterfly, the traditional symbol of the psyche, is also the palin-genetic symbol *par excellence*, for it dies to a lower life and is reborn to a higher. Here, Pound's company of psychopompoi ("two mice and a moth my guide") preside over the psyche's ascent which leads to "a bridge over worlds," a soul-bridge leading to the Empyrean.

The paradisaical image of souls in flight is continued in the next few lines where, as Richard Sieburth remarks, "the Odyssean moths of Canto XLVII [and the kingwings of migration of canto 106], called over mountain at last reach shore" at

Coming just before his self-interrogation concerning the coherence of his long poem--an issue not resolved within the poem itself--the emphatic first line which is followed by two questions shifts the burden of the responsibility from poet to reader. I intend to return to the symbolism of "the great ball of crystal" in my discussion of canto 91; for now let it suffice to say that these are not merely paradisaical images but also pointed questions directed at the reader as mystes. The ordinary reader will take notice of these lines for their "lyric sentiment"; but the reader/mystes will understand them, Pound hopes, as forming part of the initiatory drama which, despite being incomplete on the page, is nevertheless occluded and is meant to be performed through an enlightened reading of the text. As stressed in Chapter I, the Cantos resemble in this the Hermetic writings which were designed with a similar purpose in mind.

Pound addresses the reader/mystes in a number of other places in the Cantos. The most pointed example is found in canto 90 where the poet's attempt to write the "paradise" he had planned in 1940 begins in earnest:⁸

"From the colour the nature
 & by the nature the sign!"
 Beatific spirits welding together
 as in one ash-tree in Ygdrasil.
 Baucis, Philemon.
 Castalia is the name of that fount in the hill's fold,
 the sea below,
 narrow beach.
 Templum aedificans, not yet marble,
 "Amphion!"
 And from the Sun Ku
 to the room in Poitiers where one can stand
 casting no shadow,
 That is Sagetrieb,
 that is tradition.
 Builders had kept the proportion,
 did Jacques de Molay
 know these proportions?
 and was Erigena ours? (90/605, ll. 1-20)

Beginning with an allusion to John Heydon, Pound searches for paths leading to the

third subject of his epic, the epopteia or "bust through into the divine." To this end he brings together a number of images, many of which have already been introduced earlier in the poem. Thus we encounter the union of "beatific spirits" in the context of the principle of universal correspondence as exemplified by "Ygdrasail," the ash tree of Norse mythology, whose roots and branches join the heaven, earth, and hell (there are similarities here with the Sephiroth of the Cabala). In an earlier canto, Pound encouraged his reader thus: "That you lean 'gainst the tree of heaven,/ and know Ygdrasail" (85/545). The point here is that for Pound, for whom it is always this world that matters most, even though the roots of things might be in heaven we arrive to a "full Εἰδωλός" by understanding their particular manifestations on earth--this is the concept of correspondence, an idea which is universal in the occult and fundamental to it.

The idea of the divine tree is continued in line 5 where the Ovidian characters, Baucis and Philemon, are presented as physical manifestations of the divine world of the gods of which they have been allowed to partake as a result of their natural kindness to Zeus and Hermes--a theme which found its early expression in "The Tree," the poem Pound placed, significantly, at the beginning of his Personae. Before their final reward (their metamorphosis into two entwined trees), the couple served as keepers of the divine temple which was, in fact, their old cottage transformed by the gods into a topos of worship. This provides the link with the next cluster of images. From the temple suggested by the mention of Baucis and Philemon we move to the temple of Delphi, near the brook of Castalia; next comes an image of "metamorphosis in action": we watch Amphion building the temple ("Templum aedificans") in Thebes with his music. The reader witnesses this marvelous event as it is taking place, while the building is being raised and is "not yet marble." It is precisely within this framework of thought, that of the

building of temples, that Pound's next two references occur (ll. 11-19). These references, the first to a Chinese "secret society" and the second to the Knights Templar, are drawn from beliefs and practices of Freemasonry. I think that Noel Stock was the first one to point out this connection:

But when we examine it [lines 11-20] in detail we find it is based upon the idea of an ageless 'secret society'. The San Ku was a sort of masonic council in ancient China in connection with which we find a grade of initiation called the "Widow's Son" which is also to be found in some of the Romance literature of the Middle Ages and in the Masonic ritual of the present day. The town of Poitiers, which also crops up in the same Romance literature, is not only famous for its romanesque architecture but for its connection with the Order of Templars of which Jacques de Molay was grand master. And ceremonies remembering de Molay are also preserved today in some Masonic rituals. (Poet in Exile 24)

The idea of a secret community of mystai who have preserved a secret tradition passed on by direct descent takes here the shape of a masonic brotherhood. This point is especially true since these mystai are viewed as "builders" who "had kept the proportions." Boris de Rachewiltz has convincingly shown that the science of keeping the right proportions is closely connected in Pound's mind with the erection of the temple and altar and the building of the city (188-91).

The references to esoteric architecture are central to Pound's concept of reconstruction and reconstitution. Lines 11-20 of canto 90 have already made their appearance, in more or less the same form, in an earlier canto where the train of Pound's associations is perhaps even clearer than in canto 90:

Only sequoias are slow enough
BinBin is 'beauty'.
'Slowness is beauty':
from the



San



Ku
to Poitiers.

The tower wherein, at one point, is no shadow,
and Jacques de Molay, is where?
and the "Section", the proportions,
lending, perhaps, not an interest, but resisting.

Then false fronts, barocco.
 "We have", said Mencius, "but phenomena."
 monumenta. In nature are signatures
 needing no verbal tradition,
 oak leaf never plane leaf. John Heydon.
~~εεεεεε~~ sleep there on the ground
 And old Jarge held there was a tradition
 that was not mere epistemology. (87/572-73)

The wisdom of Laurence Binyon, orientalist and translator of Dante, gives way first to San Ku, the Chinese Council of three instituted by Cheng Wang of the Chou dynasty (11th century B.C.) to "display brightly the powers of heaven and earth," and then to the tower of Poitiers, built by the Knight Templar Jacque de Molay (Grieve 418). Looking forward to canto 90 and backward to cantos 76 and 85, we find that a number of images ranging from "the tree of heaven" (85/544) to the golden "Section" of Pythagoras (87/573) have their source in the ancient Chinese tradition of chien-mu, a mythological tree situated at the "centre of the universe" (Rachewiltz 189-90).

The most interesting feature of this Chinese conception is that "the gnomon standing in the exact meridian does not cast any shadow on the day of the summer solstice" (Rachewiltz 190). This principle helps explain the following cryptic line: "a gnomon/ Our science is from the watching of shadows" (85/543). On one level, the science described here is that of the astronomers who in the Chou King watch their gnomons or sundials and fix the seasons; on a more mystical level, this is a "science" which is used to discover the cosmic centre, since on the day of the summer solstice the sun and the shaft form a cosmic axis and no shadow is cast. Like the astronomers in Chou King who learned about their universe by observing "the shadows," Mencius's and John Heydon's "nature gospels" are also derived from observing the workings of nature--although the observer of nature does not need verbal instruction ("in nature are signatures/ needing no verbal tradition/ oak leaf never plane leaf").

The reference to John Heydon's "doctrine of signatures" explains Pound's allusion in the following line: "~~Selloi~~ sleep there in the ground." The Selloi are the ancient inhabitants of Dodona, mantic priests and guardians of the oracle of Zeus (*Iliad*, XVI, 235), where the god "was revered in the oracular oak" (Frazer 358). The association between Heydon's oak and Zeus's oracular oak reminds us of Pound's Sophokles: Women of Trachis (1956), where Heracles can be heard saying: "The dead beast kills the living me/ And that fits another odd forecast/ breathed out at the Selloi's oak--/ Those fellows rough it, sleep on the ground, up in the hills there" (italics mine).¹⁰ The ancient San Ku, who were appointed to "display brightly the powers of the heaven and earth," are seen as equivalent to the Selloi who observed and listened to Zeus's oak tree oracle, another "tree of heaven." Terrell goes a step further. He points out that in From Ritual to Romance Jessie L. Weston connects the Knights Templar with Pagan priests known as "Salloi", and conjectures that "Pound prob. rhymes the "secret society" ambience of the Selloi with other secret societies, such as the San Ku" (Companion, II 495).¹¹

The idea of a science which springs "from the watching of shadows" functions as an organizing principle and links several associated images. The tower of the Hall of Justice in Poitiers, "the tower wherein, at one point, is no shadow," was built by the Knights Templar who were said to be in possession of the secret knowledge of this science of proportions (both architectural and seasonal). The Golden "Section" of Pythagoras, "a numerical process which seemed to involve mystical relationships representing proportions in nature," is a Western equivalent to the Chinese "science" and is supposedly part of the tradition in the possession of the Knights Templar (Terrell, Companion 495).¹² Associated with the tower of Poitiers in Pound's mind is the fortress-temple of Montségur, whose peculiar shape was designed to ensure that the light of the rising-sun should fall on the altar at a certain time;¹³ however,

as in Poitiers, "in Mt. Segur there is wind space and rain space/ no more an altar to Mithras" (76/452).

As always, Pound's economics and religion are closely linked. Accordingly, he associates the destruction of the Knights Templar with contemporary economics and conjectures that the Templar money dealers were distributors of credit ("lending, perhaps, not at interest but resisting" (87/573)). The consequence of the suppression of the religio-economic vision of the Templars produces bad architecture: "Then false fronts, barocco" (l. 116).¹⁴

Out of all these associations emerging from an analysis of canto 87 (lines 106-123) and canto 90 (lines 1-20), the outline of a "tradition" can be discerned. This is Pound's rediscovered, fictional "tradition" according to which there is a continuity from the ancient rites of Delphi, Dodona, and Mithras to the Medieval manifestations of the tradition in the Albigenses, the Knights Templar, and Erigena, and to its later appearances in John Heydon and others. It is a "tradition" which "Old Jarge," that is George Santayana, accepts; he, too, "held [that] there was a tradition,/ that was not mere epistemology" (87/573).

The rhetorical questions regarding the brotherhood of the "celestial tradition," in the opening lines of canto 90, point to Pound's certainty that, indeed, such a tradition exists and they initiate a meditation composed of visions of ascent and peopled by some of those who belong to the tradition. That is, the rhetorical questions, quite pointedly (lest we have missed it), emphasize the occult source of Pound's tradition, bring to our attention the fact that his paradiso terrestre is peopled by a galaxy of occult heroes or illuminated souls, and prepare us for the realization that his paradise is ultimately not a place but rather a state of being. It turns out, then, that the soul of the mystes does not depart from the ephemeral world but merely enters a higher plane of existence, and the individual becomes a

magically Dionysus' hieratic animals ("the great cats appear"; "and where was no thing/ now is furry assemblage"), voices are heard ("and in the boughs now are voices"), and scents fill the air ("myrrh and olibanum on the altar stone/ giving perfume"). This is a composite rite, a paradisaal version of the rite performed by Odysseus in canto 1. But this is no *nekyomanteia*. Here οἱ χθονιοὶ are not mere shades emerging momentarily to satisfy the sacrificer's thirst for knowledge regarding his future. Here the ascension "out of Erebus" is real enough:

out of Erebus, the delivered,
 Tyro, Alcmene, free now, ascending
 e i cavalieri,
 ascending,
 no shades more,
 lights among them, enkindled,
 and the dark shade of courage
 ^{ἠΰεκτρα}
 bowed still with the wrongs of Aegisthus.
 Trees die and the dream remains. (ll. 111-120)

Unlike the "souls out of Erebus" of canto 1, described by Pound there as "cadaverous,...impetuous, impotent dead" (1/2-4), the souls in canto 90 are "no shades more" but truly "delivered" and "free." Though the direction of their movement is heavenward and though they are escaping from the world of the dead, these souls, nonetheless, do not ascend into a celestial paradise. This is clearly indicated by the inclusion among them of "ἠΰεκτρα" who is "bowed still with the wrongs of Aegisthus" [emphasis mine].¹⁶

→ The rite of the initiation is performed in canto 90 for the benefit of the mystes who descends into Erebus (katabasis), and then re-ascends to the same old world but now is in possession of the "gnosis." In the words of Leon Surette,

The ascension is more like a return to the daylight world of the Eleusian initiate, who, according to Plutarch, 'lives with pure and holy men', and 'sees on earth the 'crowd' of the uninitiated 'crush and jostle themselves in the mud and darkness'. (238-9)

Professor Surette speaks of "the motif of resurrection" in canto 90 and, as I argue in

this study, Pound viewed the initiatory experience as a sort of resurrection or palingenesis. The resurrection is experienced by the initiates while the rest remain "mere shades."

The theme of resurrection is discussed at length by Mead in The Subtle Body. Mead writes that the Christian doctrine of a fleshly resurrection was repudiated by all Gnostic schools and, instead, in these schools

the resurrection is equated with the new birth or birth from above [palingenesis], the spiritual birth out of or through the pure virgin substance into the consciousness of immortality. (130)

Mead goes on to point out that following his "resurrection" a man was thought to become a god. Though the ultimate purpose of the exercise was to enter paradise, however, the experience was not something which had to be postponed to a time after the mystes' death:

The mystery of 'divinising' (apotheosis) or 'transcending death' (athanasia) was not, ...to be deferred to post-mortem existence, though it had to be preceded by a mystical death. It was a mystery wrought in the living body of a man. (131)

Canto 90 represents a palingenetic experience such as the one described by Mead. There is no movement to an Earthly paradise, nor is there a "transportation" taking place to a celestial paradise. The mystes remains on earth. But as a result of his myesis, he is now in the possession of gnosis and thus exists on earth while at the same time he enters another level of existence, a paradisaal state of mind or being. The paradisaal images of the canto should be seen, then, as a representation of this "state of being" entered by the mystes following his initiation.

2. "THE SUBTLE BODY": CANTO 91

The motif of the mystes' palingenesis is continued in canto 91. While canto 90 illustrates the motif of the mystes' rebirth rise "out of Erebus" into a higher plane of existence, canto 91 illustrates the nature of this higher plane as understood through the doctrine of "the subtle body" and, by introducing into the world of the Cantos such personages as Apollonius of Tyana, points toward the nature of the illuminated soul of the mystes who does not depart from the world but rather enters a higher plane of existence.

In my discussion of palingenesis I have quoted from Mead's The Doctrine of the Subtle Body. In glossing the opening verses of this canto, Terrell notes that with "the word 'body'" Pound brings into the Cantos more specific allusions to the mystical symbolism of the alchemists as set forth in the summary work of G. R. S. Mead, The Doctrine of the Subtle Body (Companion, II 546). Terrell goes on to use a number of passages from Mead's work to gloss several of the verses of canto 91. Before tackling canto 91, I would like to examine Mead's discussion of the history and use of the term "subtle body" in order to reflect, subsequently, upon Pound's understanding of the term.

That Pound was familiar with the doctrine of the "subtle body" is certain. Herbert N. Schneidau (in Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real (1969)), was the first to call attention to Pound's awareness of a long occult tradition behind the idea of mind as it is employed in "Psychology and Troubadours," a "tradition which was probably outlined for him by Mead, who was gathering material that was to appear in his Doctrine of the Subtle Body in Western Tradition" (126). More recently, I. F. A. Bell and Kevin Oderman have dealt with Mead's "subtle body" theory. While Schneidau uses Mead's book to examine the "sexual mysticism" of "Psychology and

Troubadours" and to show how Mead's "Subtle universe" is similar to Upward's conception of the universe as a "fluid force" (120-31), Bell focuses on Mead's purpose in writing his book to defend and outline the concept of the sensorium against what Mead calls "the prevailing habit of the skeptical rationalism of the present day to dismiss summarily all such beliefs of antiquity as the baseless dreams of a pre-scientific age, and to dump them all indiscriminately into the midden of explored superstition" (Subtle Body 1). Schneidau is not so much concerned with Pound's poetry as with his metaphysics; and Bell with his use of a language fit for the scientific age. Thus neither critic identifies the importance of Mead's palingenetic theories for the Cantos.

Kevin Oderman has shown that Pound indubitably knew enough of Mead's work on the "subtle body" theory to include the term "augeides" (which is a misspelling of "augoeides") in his notes for canto 25:¹⁷

languid move [ment] of the inner body
preceding the meat move [ment]

moving from wihot [without] the othr [other]
arms of siva

augeides--the gods--

Augoeides is a term meaning approximately "luminous being" or "form of splendour." Mead insisted that the "augoeides" was a spiritual body joined to the physical body by a light-spark at a point near the head. It is clear from Mead's discussion that the "subtle body" is, more than anything else, a state of being. Whatever his understanding of Mead's explication of the "subtle body" concept, the lines quoted above register Pound's familiarity with the an ethereal body associated with the world of the gods, which surrounds the hyllic or "meat" body.¹⁸

Oderman, however, adds that Pound chose not to adapt "augoeides" into his

terminology and insists that "Indeed, in both his poetry and prose, he chose to avoid terminology that smacked of theosophy" (75)--and this is where my argument differs from that of Oderman. In my discussion of Guide I have already shown that Pound, though often obliquely, does refer to and employs the language of the wisdom tradition of which theosophy forms a part (Chapter I, 25-6). The following long quotation from an early prose piece dated from the same time that Mead's articles on the doctrine of the "subtle body" were appearing in The Quest reproduces Mead's terminology.¹⁹

In his discussion of "the relation of certain words in the original to the practice of [his] translation [of the Cavalcanti Poems]," Pound pauses over the word virtute:

Virtute. 'virtue,' 'potency,' requires a separate treatise. Pater has explained its meaning in the preface of his 'The Renaissance,' but in reading a line like

'Vedrai la sua virtù nel ciel salita'

one must have in mind the connotations alchemical, astrological, metaphysical, which Swedenborg would have called the correspondences.

The equations of alchemy were apt to be written as women's names and the women so named endowed with the magical powers of the compounds. La Virtù is the potency, the efficient property of a substance or person. Thus modern science shows us radium with a noble virtue of energy. Each thing or person was held to send forth magnetisms of certain effect...

It is spiritual chemistry, and modern science and modern mysticism are both set to confirm it....

The heavens were, according to the Ptolemaic system, clear concentric spheres with the earth as their pivot; they moved more swiftly as they were far removed from it, each one endowed with its virtue, its property for affecting men and destiny; in each its star, the sign visible to the wise and guiding them. A logical astrology, the star a sort of label of the spiritual force, an indicator of the position and movement of that spiritual current. Thus 'her' presence, his Lady's, corresponds with the ascendancy of the star of that heaven which corresponds to her particular emanation or potency. Likewise,

'Vedrai la sua virtù nel ciel salita'

Thou shalt see the rays of this emanation going up to heaven as a slender pillar of light, or, more strictly in accordance with the stanza preceding: thou shalt see depart from her lips her subtler body, and from that a still subtler form ascends and from that a star, the body of pure flame surrounding the source of the virtù, which will declare its nature.

I would go so far as to say that 'Il Paradiso' and the form of "The Commedia" might date from this line.... (emphasis mine; Translations 18-9).

Pound's "Introduction" to the "Cavalcanti Poems" is dated 15 November 1910. Besides giving us a clear indication of Pound's early interest in and knowledge of the occult tradition (including alchemy, astrology, and Swedenborg), this long passage also points to Pound's special interest in observing the various levels of existence which though not immaterial belong to an order of corporeality too fine for man to perceive under normal circumstances; and both the ideas as well as the language--as it becomes evident in the discussion which follows below--resemble Mead's.

Like many of his other books and essays, Mead's Subtle Body is, to a large extent, an anthology of quotations from Neoplatonic, Gnostic, and Christian sources. The volume deals with the "spirit-body" and "radiant-body" concepts of Neoplatonic thinkers and with Christian notions regarding the resurrected body. Many of the concepts Mead brings into his discussion are echoed in Pound's prose and poetry. In his "Proem," Mead explains that his studies of the subtle-body concept "might perhaps be called studies in Alexandrian psycho-physiology" (8), since Alexandria was the chief centre of the philosophic culture which comes under his scrutiny here. Mead claims that man's subtle body "is of the material order, but of a more dynamic nature than his physically sensible frame" (4-5). In characteristically theosophical manner, Mead observes that even though the subtle body "pertains to the normally invisible," the latest concepts of modern physics come to the support of this ancient notion and that the advance of science will ultimately prove this ancient hypothesis of the subtle body true. Mead sees the subtle body notion as being at the core of astrology and alchemy. Alchemy, in its best forms, deals with things subtle, since the central secret of the alchemists was the deeper knowledge of palingenesis: "The prime secret of alchemical transmutation was an inner mystery--the purgation and perfecting of this subtle embodiment" (18). Palingenesis was central to alchemy and this is reflected in various ancient treatises. Mead refers to two such treatises in

particular. The first is a poem whose contents were thought by such notables as Porphyry and Proclus to enshrine the wisdom of Chaldaea. This poem, which Mead does not identify, is said to present, among other things,

a highly mystical doctrine concerning the nature of the subtle body, and of the soul and mind of man, and purports to reveal the mystery of the divine paternal fire and the secret of life of the great mother (30).

The second treatise referred to by Mead is the chief document of the Gnostic School of Simon Magus, the so-called Great Announcement. This, Mead says,

presents us with a highly developed doctrine of the divine fire and of the tree of life, and with psycho-physiological speculations which are entirely in keeping with the subtle body theory of psychical alchemy. (32)

In "The Augoeides or Radiant Body," repeated virtually unchanged in The Subtle Body as "The Radiant Body," it is explained that

In classical Greek, augoeides is an adjective meaning 'possessed of a form of auge'--that is, of a form of splendour, brightness, brilliance, radiance; hence brilliant, shining, radiant, ray-like, luciform, glorious, etc. (76).

This etymological exegesis is followed by an investigation of Neoplatonic and Gnostic sources for the purpose of finding out what they have to say about "the augoeides as the radiant body, or glorious vehicle or vesture of the soul" (77). Quoting Damascius, the last occupant of the Platonic Chair in Athens, Mead says that the soul's radiant vehicle (augoeides ochema) is starlike (astroeides) and eternal. This brings Mead to the relation of augoeides to the physical body and here, looking back to his essay on "The Spirit-Body," he makes the following distinction:

The augoeides was,...thought more usually to be treated, as it were a light-spark, in the head--that is, its only point of contact with the physical body was imagined to be in the head--whereas the spiritous body,...was thought of as pervading the whole gross body and surrounding it. (82)

Thus Mead makes the distinction between the "augoeides," a spiritual body joined to the physical by a light-spark at a point in or near the head, and the "spiritous body," a sort of aura around the physical body. As Oderman suggests, it is not clear

whether Pound himself is aware of this distinction.

In his discussion Mead emphasizes the palingenetic preoccupation of his sources. Quoting from Hierocles, he writes that "we [must] make our radiant (augoeides) [body] pure and free from [gross] matter, in order that it may support communion with the aetheral bodies" (87). This description of the communion with the "aetherial bodies" and the definition of the "spirit body" as the "spirituous embodiment, [which] was often called the aery or ethereal body" (48), recall Pound's phrase "the body of air clothed in the body of fire" (LE 153).

Speaking about the ousia or substance of the augoeides, Mead quotes from Philoponus:

Speaking of this heavenly 'body' [augoeides] from the macroscopic standpoint, Philoponus tells us that, according to the Platonici, "the matter of celestial [bodies] "is not of the four elements, but "there is another kind of body--the fifth," element, or quintessence, and its form (eidos) is spherical. (89)

Again quoting from Philoponus, Mead goes even further and describes the nature of the augoeides as a sublime, transparent, crystalline, flowing substance:

'The everlasting, the sublime (áno) body, partakes of transparency; and he calls it [Aristotle; Philoponus himself is discussing Aristotle's De Ano, ii, 7] the out-flow, [chúma] of the spheres, for all [of them] are transparent'. It pertains to the 'crystalline'. (89-90)

All these observations from Mead's often heterogeneous essays should be reflected upon in terms of his central notion of "an intimate correspondence between man's psychical and sensible apparatus, or his inner embodiment, and the subtle nature of the universe" (12). This "theory of correspondence" between a subtle organon of the great nature, or world soul, and man fits well into Mead's doctrine of palingenesis. Mead explains that palingenesis was "the chief end not only of the higher mystery-institutions but of many an open philosophic school and saving cult of later antiquity," and that it can be imagined as an ascent from earth to the light-world (20). Once again, it should be emphasized that Mead does not mean here an

actual ascent to a higher world but rather the mystes' participation in a "higher state of being."

Considering the various strands Mead brings together in his essays on the "subtle body," not in their particular or specific significations but in terms of the general effect they create, one is impressed with the number of the similarities between them and many of the images that are scattered in the Cantos, especially the later ones, and the prose pieces. It might be useful to list the most important of these concepts as they appear in Mead: it is like a light-spark, centred in the head, whose source is often seen as a divine fire; it is the glorious vehicle or vesture of the soul; it is transparent; it flows like a crystal; its form is spherical; it is corporeal but more fine in its composition than the four elements; and, finally, it is radiant, luminescent, and lucid.

In the prose pieces and the Cantos, Pound seems to be using the language and the concepts of the "subtle body" doctrine to elaborate upon the moments of ~~metamorphosis, the outward sign of the epopteia~~. The ultimate moment is represented by Pound in the Cantos as a "transportation" of the hylic into the subtle body.

Before turning to canto 91, I would like to cite three examples, taken from Pound's prose, whose source is likely Mead's essays on the subtle body. In "Psychology and Troubadours" (1912), he discusses sex in terms of "a possibly 'subtler form of energy'" and says that "Sex is, ... of a double function and purpose, ... or as we see it in the realms of fluid force, one sort of vibration produces at different intensities heat and light." (SR 94) In his "Translator's Postscript to Remy de Gourmont's The Natural Philosophy of Love" (1931), Pound discusses light in these terms: "Let us say quite simply that light is a projection of the luminous fluid, from the energy that is in the brain,..." (154). Finally, in Guide (1938), he speaks of the

nous as a "sea crystalline and enduring, bright as it were molten glass that envelops us, full of light." (44) The italics are mine; the emphasis is placed on concepts which approximate those in Mead's essays. Numerous other examples exist in the Pound canon.

Turning now to canto 91, we find that it opens with two lines of a melody in medieval notations over Pound's adaptation from several lines of Bernart de Ventadorn's and Guillaume de Poitiers troubadour songs.²⁰ The poetry and music of Provence belong, as we have seen, to Pound's fictional history of a continuity of belief reaching from Eleusis to the medieval cult of amor and further to the present. Thus the canto's subsequent lines need to be located within Pound's understanding of the mystical cult of amor; these lines also present additional examples of hieros gamos, which Pound views as the central rite of the syncretic mysteries.

In canto 90 we observed the beginnings of the ascension motif which is part of the palingenetic structure of the Cantos. This motif is continued and completed in canto 91, where the figure of the beloved becomes the focus of the lover's/mystic's intentness:

that the body of light come forth
 from the body of fire
 And that your eyes come to the surface
 from the deep wherein they were sunken,
 Reina -- for 300 years,
 and now sunken
 That your eyes come forth from their caves
 & light then
 as the holly-leaf
 qui laborat, orat
 Thus Undine came to the rock,
 by Circeo
 and the stone eyes again looking seaward (ll. 5-17)

In the "Cavalcanti" essay, Pound notes that in ages of dissociation, like that of the Renaissance (and presumably his own), flesh "is no longer the body of air clothed in the body of fire; it no longer radiates, light no longer moves from the eye" (153).

Lines 5-6 of canto 91 constitute the mystes' return to a world in which the physical body is enveloped in the light of the "subtle body" that, in turn, has its origin in the "'divine' body of fire." The anadysis or rise out of the water of "Reina," the "queen" or ideal woman, the "donna" of Provencal verse (this is an anadysis not an anodos because the ascent is from the sea and not from the underworld), should be seen within the context of Gnostic "light emanation." Mead writes that

Hidden in the seed of the tree is the principle (ratio, logos) of the tree. This is the formative power (virtus, dynamis) in the seed, the spermatic principle, which is called symbolically in Greek spinterismos...[which] means, literally, 'emission of sparks,' 'sparking'...[and is used] as a symbolic expression for the 'germ' of the spiritual man. (113-14)

In this passage Mead speaks from the microcosmic point of view. Thinking in terms of the macrocosmos in the Guide, Pound speaks of "God and soul" as being unlike the "immaterial 'noos' (mind)" by being "more subtle corporeal substances." (123) He goes on to describe God as "the architectural fire, pyr texnon" (124). Later, quoting from the Stoics, Pound discusses creation as an emanation in the form of ekpyrosis:

~~From god the creative fire, went forth spermatic logoi, which are a~~
gradula and organic distribution of an unique and spermatic word (logos).
(128)

Taking lines 5-6 of canto 91 as a symbolic expression of the germ of the mystes or spiritual man, the anadysis of Reina could then be seen as the revelation which is said to accompany the palingenetic phase of the initiation rite.

Pound's emphasis on the "eyes" of the rising goddess is natural, since the eyes are often associated with vision. But the submergence of the visionary eyes may also be seen as the katabasis of the soul into the human body which, as in the dromena of the initiation, results in dimness of vision. Of some relevance here is Mead's discussion in The Subtle Body of the Platonized dogmas of syncretic mystical Alexandrian psychology or psycho-physiology. Focusing on the theme of the imprisonment of the soul in the body, Mead writes:

(ll. 171-76).

Undine's anadysis may be viewed, in the present context, as representing the mystes' vision of an ascent from the troubling world of the dromena to a state of being that transcends the "TLEMOUSUNE" (l. 176) or misery of every-day life. The rock to which Undine comes is "by Circeo," that is near Circeo, a mountain near Terracina, "a seaport in C[entral] Latium,...where the ruins of a temple to Jupiter still stand." (Companion, I 162) The naming of Circeo and the allusion to Aphrodite in the following line remind us of Pound's repeated pronouncements of the value of placing the statue of the goddess on her pedestal near Terracina. For example, in 1930 he claimed that "Given the material means I would replace the statue of Venus on the cliffs of Terracina" (SP 53).²¹ While Pound did not have the "material means" to realize this ambition, he has done so symbolically in the Cantos.

Between the vision of Aphrodite and Helen of Tyre, the next female to be named in canto 91, Pound interposes Apollonius of Tyana. Apollonius is the first century Pythagorean philosopher, wandering mystic, man of wisdom, and miracle-worker, who is presented in Philostratus's Life of Apollonius of Tyana as a rival of Christ. Apollonius is one of the sages who belong to Pound's "celestial tradition," a number of whose members are listed in cantos 90 and 91, and his exploits are given in more detail later on in canto 91 and in even more detail in canto 94; but his presence here, beside Helen of Tyre, seems problematical. Terrell suggests that his presence here can be explained by the fact that Apollonius' transformation at the end of his trial in Rome rhymes with Helen's transformation in Gnostic tradition (Companion, II 547). Since Apollonius, like Undine, Aphrodite, and Helen and Troy, "came to the rock" ("Thus Undine...Thus Apollonius"), he is seen as partaking in the movement into paradise.²² I think, however, that Apollonius is found here because as a Magus, a beatified one, he belongs to Pound's paradiso terrestre which, as

already pointed out, turns out to be a state of the illumined soul rather than an actual place. Like Odysseus, Apollonius speaks to the dead (94/638) and, like Leucothea, he calms the seas. Apollonius is Pound's best example of the illumined soul, and he is the individual most likely to be encountered by the mystes in this "paradise." Apollonius belongs to a timeless state, a higher level of existence, which the soul of the mystes enters not by departing from the ordinary world but rather by merely entering a higher plane of existence, and by becoming himself a Magus.

Though because of his chastity Apollonius is the prototypical hero and probably the best representative of the illumined soul, there is a galaxy of occult heroes populating the Cantos. A list would include all those who belong to the "celestial tradition"--most of these heroes populate the paradisaal state described in cantos 90 and 91. As well, if we accept the reading proposed in this study according to which the Odyssey was read by Pound as an occult text, then, Odysseus is one of these Magi. His voyages from one island to the next should be seen as analogues of interior voyages. His series of experiences with the dead, Circe, Leucothea, et cetera are representations of the experiences of Greeks who laboured in the Mysteries.

Joining the palingenetic, rising movement of women in canto 91 are also the Byzantine empress Theodora--whose husband built the Ἁγία Σοφία (Divine Wisdom) and codified Roman Law--and Miss Tudor, that is, Queen Elizabeth I. We may add to these the Princess Ra-Set and Diana who appear later in the canto. All these women, whether mortal or divine, seem to be manifestations of Aphrodite and are united in that they, like Princess Ra-Set, seem in their ascension to enter "the protection" of the augocides or subtle body.

Besides being an image of paradisaal clarity, "The GREAT CRYSTAL" is also a symbol of the "subtle-body" which envelops the mystes and unites him with the

primal creative fire. The importance of the subtle-body concept for Pound is captured, I think, in lines 34-59 of this canto. Here "crystal" is presented as the medium through which move not only the gods but also those "who have some part of divine vision":

Crystal waves weaving together toward the gt/
healing

Light compenetrans of the spirits
The Princess Ra-Set has climbed
to the great knees of stone,
She enters protection,
the great cloud is about her,
She has entered the protection of crystal
convien che si mova
la mente, amando

XXVI, 34

Light & the flowing crystal
never gin in cut glass had such clarity
That Drake saw the splendour and wreckage.
in that clarity
Gods moving in crystal

ichor, amor
Secretary of Nature, J. Heydon.
Here Apollonius, Heydon
hither Ocellus
"to this khan"

The golden sun boat
by oar, not by sail
Love moving the stars παρα πύργου
by the altar slope
"Tamuz! Tamuz!" (ll. 34-59)

The rising and falling waves of canto 90 ("and the waves rise and fall" (606)), becomes here "Crystal waves weaving together the gt/healing." The motif of the transformation of the waves into crystal, which Pound underscores with his use of alliteration and assonance, is used throughout the Cantos, perhaps most memorably in canto 23, and is associated with theophanic moments (see 23/109; 27/131).²³ But while references to crystal formation from waves is usually taken as a sign of the presence of gods (and as I have been suggesting here a signal of the mystes' entry into a higher plane of existence), in lines 34-35 of canto 91 the formed crystal becomes the topos of palingenesis which is what Pound means, I think, by

"gt/healing."²⁴ Here, again, we need to point out that the signs which appeal to "εἶδω" as "seeing" belong to the exoteric dimension of the epopteia, while those signs which appeal to "εἶδω" as "knowing" belong to the esoteric dimension of the initiation and have no equivalent in the physical world. The reader of the Cantos is allowed a glimpse of the exoteric manifestation of palingenesis; the esoteric manifestation, however, is intelligible and "entered into" by the mystes/reader but cannot be manifested.

It is the topos of the "gt/healing" which "Princess Ra-Set" enters in canto 91. Ra-Set is an invented Egyptian goddess. Her name is made up of Ra, the Egyptian sun-god, and Set, the moon god, who is also the evil male deity whose association with moisture and passivity may be taken as feminine qualities. Boris de Rachewiltz explains that the transformation of the two ancient Egyptian male divinities into a single female entity "suggests that the poet's esotericism may have a microcosmic as well as a macrocosmic significance" (181). This fact, Rachewiltz continues, is prefigured in The Spirit of Romance where Pound discusses the "ancient hypothesis that the little cosmos 'corresponds' to the greater, that man has in him both 'sun' [Ra] and 'moon' [Set]" (94).

Pound's esotericism carries sexual implications as well--which is to be expected considering his understanding of the trobar clus and his attitude toward the sexual act in general. Not only do we have an androgynous synthesis in the transformation of Ra-Set, but the interpenetration of spirit through the medium of light (line 36) and Ra-Set's climbing to the "great knees of stone" (the knees were taken as the seat of virility), all these carry sexual implications. Thus, the union of Ra with Set, which represents the "essential cosmic equilibrium of good and evil," corresponds to the in coitu inluminatio, the mystes' vision of the hieros gamos, imaged here as Ra-Set's "entering" into the crystalline "subtle body." The whole passage has both

"spiritual" and "sensual" significance. Like Ra-Set and the other females of canto 91, in his vision the mystes enters the "GREAT CRYSTAL"--that is, he enters the plane of existence populated by such personalities as Apollonius. But this mystes has his attention still fixed on things within generation and, therefore, the "subtle body" appears to him as a "great cloud...about her [Ra-Set]" since, as Porphyry explains,

according to the Stoics, souls who ~~leave~~ the body attract a moist spirit to them, and condense it like a cloud (for the moist being condensed in air constitutes a cloud). That when the spirit in souls is condensed by a superabundance of the moist element, they become visible. (Subtle Body 64-5)

The manifestation of the goddess entering the substance of the "GREAT CRYSTAL" represents the culmination of the palingenetic process. In becoming aware of this stage of his initiation, the mystes himself enters this substance. The purpose of the palingenetic experience is the rebirth or reconstitution of the mystes' soul--this reconstitution is accomplished here since the "protection" of the crystalline substance is also the "gt/healing," a metaphor for spiritual regeneration. Ultimately, the "gt/healing" is the goal of palingenesis in the Cantos and it parallels the redeemed soul in Dante's Paradiso, where the goal is "That Essence wherein is such supremacy that whatever good be found outside of it is nought else save a beam of its own radiance" (Singleton 291). The Dante quotation ("convien che si mova/ la mente, amando" "it is right that the mind should move by loving") returns us to Sir Francis Drake's vision of Miss Tudor:

Light & the flowing crystal
 never in cut glass had such clarity
 That Drake saw the splendour and wreckage
 in that clarity
 Gods moving in crystal

ichor, amor (ll. 50-55):

In this remarkable image Elizabeth's eyes become the mirror of history and Drake sees in them the defeat of the Spanish Armada. But these lines are equally remarkable in their depiction of a world Pound elsewhere laments as lost to us:

We appear to have lost the radiant world where one thought cuts through another with clean edge, a world of moving energies 'mezzo oscuro rade', 'risplende in se perpetuale effecto', magnetisms that take form, or are seen, or that border the visible, the matter of Dante's paradiso, the glass under water, the form that seems a form seen in a mirror,.... (LE 154)

"These realities [which are] perceptible to the sense" (LE 154) seem to be recaptured here. The "subtle body" flows and pours and in its splendour and clarity the mystes sees "Gods moving." Boris de Rachewiltz notes that "in hermetic philosophy, 'to know' or be aware of a god means to break through to and reunite with the creative state" (186). The perception of "Gods moving in crystal" represents such a reunification of the mystes and the "divine or permanent world"--a world elsewhere given as in the following image: "The liquid and rushing crystal/ beneath the knees of the gods" (4/15).

In the passage from the "Cavalcanti" essay quoted above, Pound attributes the loss of the "radiant world" to the lack of "intelletto [understanding]." This "radiant world" belongs to those numbered with the "celestial tradition." Pound proceeds to enumerate some of them before undertaking to describe another katabasis:

Secretary of Nature, J. Heydon.

Here Apollonius, Heydon
hither Ocellus

"to this khān"

The golden sun boat

by oar; not by sail.

Love moving the stars αρά πυρρός
by the altar slope.

"Tamuz! Tamuz!"

They set lights now in the sea

and the sea's claw gathers them outward.

The peasant wives hide cocoons now

under their aprons
for Tamuz

that the sun's silk

hsien

tensile

be clear

Egyptus That Drake was the armada
& sea caves

Ra-Set over crystal

moving

in the Queen's eye the reflection
& sea-wrack-- (51-73)

Coming after the experience of epopteia, these lines, whose world is populated by three members of Pound's "celestial tradition" (Apollonius, Heydon, and Ocellus), describe a composite rite made up of fragments taken from Oriental, Egyptian, Greek, Babylonian, Lugurian, Chinese, and English sources. Central to this rite is the motif of katabasis. Ra-Set, Pound's synthetic deity, descends to the underworld on the barge of the Sun, Helios ("In the barge of Ra-Set," l. 108), which Pound depicts in the text by drawing an hieroglyph borrowed from Rachewiltz's Egizio degli Inferi (Rome, 1959). Rachewiltz tells us that Pound has excerpted the drawing along with the central concept of what is an Italian version of the ancient Egyptian Book of the Underworld. In this sacred text, Rachewiltz explains, "we find a description of the nightly progress of the sun through the underworld, along with various magic formulae by which humans may attain immortality....The symbolic oar signifies that the voyage is a carefully charted one that will not rely upon the fortuity of the winds." (184)²⁵

Following the description of a composite rite, the rest of canto 91 ranges over a variety of topics, from Brutus' hunting rite in honour of "the wood-queen Artemis" (an hieros gamos which resulted in Merlin's birth), bits of British lore and history, a passage (in italics) about the degradation of the democratic system in the hands of usurers (ll. 116-23) and Pound's personal reminiscences of Verona, to glimpses of Apollonius' humour and Odysseus' rescue from drowning by the sea-nymph Leucothoe. A common thread in all this seems to be the "subtle body" which in its manifestations as light and crystal allows the mystes glimpses of the world of the gods (the "kikery" passage represents, of course, the demonic inversion of the paradisaical images). Borrowing from the final line of the Paradiso, Pound writes about "Love moving the-stars." This love is metamorphosed into flowing light that

pervades everything:

Over harm
Over hate
 overflowing, light over light
and yilden he gon rere
.....
the light flowing, whelming the stars. (ll. 107-112)

The alchemical process which underlies the subtle body concept is also described in this canto:

& from fire to crystal
 via the body of light,
 the gold wings assemble (ll. 154-55).

Following his personal reminiscences, Pound initiates another sequence of associations which begins with a mythological image of the "dawn" (Rhea, the mother of Zeus is pictured as a dawn goddess) and ends with a reference to Odysseus' encounter with Leucothea:

That Rhea's lions protect her...
Rose, azure,
 the lights slow moving round her,
Zephyrus, turning,
 the petals light on the air.
Bright hawk whom no hood shall chain,
They who are skilled in fire
 shall read tan, the dawn.

Waiving no jot of the arcanum
 (having his own mind to stand by him)
As the sea-gull *Káδov δyjátnp* said to Odysseus
KADMOU THUGATER
 "get rid of parapernalia"
 TLEMOUSUNE (ll. 162-76).

The "arcanum" of the passage turns out to be both an image "connoted by the...character *tan* (sun over horizon) which only a few may read" (Bacigalupo 298) as well as the magic veil which Leucothea, appearing in the form of a seabird, gives to Odysseus the *mystes*. But though on the hylic level he is in real danger and though Leucothea's instructions are clear ("get rid of parapernalia", that is, get rid of the clothes given to you by Galypso), Odysseus, already an initiate into the mysteries

and thus "having his own mind to stand by him," is not completely persuaded by the goddess' advice to get rid of his clothes and abandon his raft (declined to be buggar'd (l. 178)). Instead, Odysseus does the sensible thing and stays on his raft until it is destroyed by Poseidon. Odysseus' ability to think for himself and his ability to transcend the misery ("TLEMOUSUNE") of the hyllic world are clear signs of his achievement of gnosis.

Leucothea's instruction to Odysseus to get rid of his clothes provides the link to the next segment which begins with an amusing bath-house anecdote about Apollonius (ll. 177-82) and continues with Heydon's description of the state of the "subtle body" as a world full of light and populated by nymphs.

to ascend those high places

wrote Heydon

stirring and changeable

"light fighting for speed"

and if honour and pleasure will not be ruled

yet the mind come to that High City...

who with Pythagoras at Taormina

Souls be the water-nymphs of Porphyrius

ΜΥΣΤΕΣ δ' αὐτ' αἰθέρα τε καὶ γαῖαν ζῶντες ἄρπυιαι ... (185-93).

Though not as reputable as Apollonius with whom he is unfavorably contrasted here, Heydon too is a Magus, one of the illuminated souls. Heydon was one of the major characters in Pound's abandoned *Ur* canto III, where his vision of the goddess, as it is given in *The Holy Guide*, is described. Lines 185-202 of canto 91 are largely lifted from Heydon's *The Holy Guide*. However, as Leon Surette has noted, Pound does not revive Heydon's vision of the goddess here. Instead, he takes "Heydon's statement that men desire heaven, and turns it into an assertion that the mind can attain heaven" (*Eleusis* 265). Though he is unfaithful to Heydon, Pound uses phrases from Heydon's text to point out that the *mystes*, or rather his "mind," is able to "ascend those high places" and "come to that High City..." Thus, Magi such as Apollonius, Odysseus, and Heydon himself can inhabit the hyllic world of

"TLEMOUSUNE" and at the same time enter a higher level of existence where "light [is] fighting for speed."

Finally, the canto ends with an affirmation of the validity of the visionary experience:

NUTT overarching
 "mand'io a la Pinella"
 sd/Guido
 "a river",
 "Ghosts dip in the crystal,
 adorned"
 That the tone change from elegy
 "Et Jehanne"
 (the Lorraine girl)
 A lost kind of experience?
 scarcely,
 O Queen Cytherea,
 che 'l terzo ciel movete. (ll. 188-98)

In the "Cavalcanti" essay, and with his eye on Cavalcanti's Sonnet XVII, Pound had asked: "What is the magic river 'filled full of lamias' that Guido sends to Pinella in return for her caravan?" (Translations 58-9). Speaking about Cavalcanti's sonnets in general, Pound had also spoken of them in terms of the "arcanum":

These are no sonnets for an idle hour. It is only when the emotions illumine the perceptive powers that we see the reality. It is in the light born of this double current that we look upon the face of the mystery unveiled. (Translations 24)

It is this "mystery unveiled" that Pound wants to suggest by bringing together Cavalcanti's lamias, the vision of gods dipping in a river of crystal, and by alluding to the visionary experiences of Joan of Arc (Villon's "Lorraine girl" in Le Testament 42). Picking up the optative mood of the canto's opening lines ("That the body of light come forth... That the tone change from elegy") Pound finally names Aphrodite as the goddess of his initiatory syncretic rite. He has already suggested her presence by naming a host of mortal women and goddesses whose characteristics she encompasses (Reina, Persephone, Diana, Helen of Troy, Miss Tudor, Tyro, Alcmene, Princess Ra-Set, NUTT, Pinella, Undine, Teodora, Leucothea, Marlin's mother, and

"Et Jehanne"). The theophany of Queen Cytherea represents the culmination of the process of initiation, since her appearance signals the movement from the ephemeral "into 'divine or permanent world. *Gods, etc."

Notes to Chapter V

1. See, for example, Wilhelm's discussion which is still the standard one (The Later Cantos of Ezra Pound, 29-63, 79-87, 167-78).
2. "The universe is alive to the initiate, who permeated by, or transformed perhaps into, the spirit of Eleusis, finds entrance into the 'great crystal of paradise.'" (Reading the Cantos 98)
3. See William Cookson, A Guide to the "Cantos" of Ezra Pound: "Pound told Olga Rudge that he intended this to be the last line of the Cantos" (165).
4. For Pound's translation of this poem, which he calls "the best known of Ventadorn's songs," see The Spirit of Romance (41-2).
5. He was the first printer of XXX Cantos.
6. See R. Sieburth, Instigations, pp. 156-57 for similar examples from Pound's canon.
7. Cookson reports that line 34 refers to the "gasping" sound made by a "butterfly [which] was heard by Pound and Marcella Spain during a walk in the Tyrolese mountains" (164-65).
8. Pound's original plan "to write paradise" (120/803) was to begin after the completion of canto 71; "from 72 on we will enter the empyrean" (Stock, Life 376) he said in 1940. But because of historical circumstances, the original plan did not materialize. His intentions having been carried adrift by the titanic waves of World War II, Pound wrote instead the Pisan Cantos which were not part of the programme he had envisioned upon the completion of the Adams Cantos.
9. Stock also mentions Weston's work in connection with Masonry and the occult tradition.
10. Pound, Sophokles: Women of Trachis (66).
11. See Jessie L. Weston, From Ritual to Romance (91-94, 100).
12. See also Forrest Read, "The Mathematical Symbolism of Ezra Pound's Revolutionary Mind" (29ff).

13. See Kenner, The Pound Era (335).

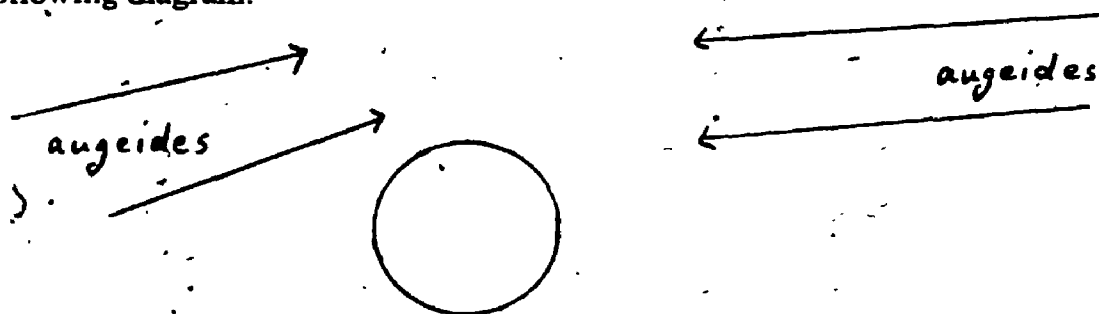
14. In a letter to Olivia Rossetti Agresti, dated 7 December [1956], Pound makes the same point about the degradation of Renaissance art into "barocco" (Beinecke Library). This is the same letter in which Pound reveals his interest in masonry and Swedenborg.

15. According to Hesiod's genealogy in Theogony, Erebus and his sister Nyx (Night) were born of Chaos. Erebus later fathered Aether (Upper Air) and Hemera (Day) on Nyx. He is generally considered no more than a synonym for Hades, the Underworld.

16. Of course, Aegisthus' "wrongs" refers to his murder of Agamemnon, Electra's father. According to Sophocles, Electra persuaded Orestes to murder Aegisthus, but Pound seems to think that she is still saddened ("bowed") by his murder of Aegisthus.

17. In his examination of the holograph notes for canto 25 (Beinecke Library), Kevin Oderman discovered that Pound uses the term "augeides" at least three times (72-5).

18. Oderman provides another example from the notes to canto 25 (74). This is the following diagram:



19. "The Augoeid for Radiant Body," Quest 1 (1909-10): 705-25.

20. For further details on these four lines see James J. Wilhelm, "Notes and Queries" (333-35).

21. See also SP (320) and cantos 17, lines 91-2; 39/203 or 195; 74: lines 341, 344-45; 106/79/54.

22. Taking Terrell's hint together with the fact that Apollonius participates in the movement into the permanent world of the gods, Massimo Bacigalupo suggests that in this particular locale Apollonius is present as an analogue of his contemporary Simon Magus (282-84). If this is true, then, Apollonius is, in Pound's personal mythos, a link in the wisdom tradition between Pythagoras ("by Pythagoras/ by Ocellus") and the trobar clus. Pound's 1916 note to "Psychology and Troubadours" is worth

repeating in this context:

Let me admit at once that a recent lecture by Mr. Mead on Simon Magus has opened my mind to a number of new possibilities. There would seem to be in the legend of Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre a clearer prototype of "chivalric love" than in anything hereinafter discussed.... (SR 91)

The presence of Apollonius, as an analogue of Simon Magus, should alert us to Pound's mythos according to which the secrets of gnosticism are also the secrets of the trobar clus. Our guide to an understanding of this mythos is Helen of Tyre herself; she acts as a "pilot-fish" or guide to the truths of this tradition. After having been delivered from a brothel in Tyre to be made Simon Magus' mystical spouse, Helen became a symbol of the female Great Thought "which descended into the world for the salvation of man." Helen, in her soteriological role is "hav[ing] no part in lust" ("et libidinis experts"), at least not in the ordinary sense. We know that while Pound adapted the concept of the mystical union of Simon Magus and Helen of Tyre from Mead, he rejected Mead's reading of it as an allegory of the soul, accepting instead a more literal reading according to which coitus is central to the wisdom tradition of Eleusis, the Simon Magus myth, and the trobar clus. That Pound is thinking about this tradition is suggested by his veiled reference to Eleanor of Aquitaine, the queen of the troubadours, in the line from Arnaut Daniel's "En breu brisara'l temps braus": "pensar di lieis m'es es ripaus" ("to think of her is my rest," Translations 171; LE 135).

23. In canto 23, for example, Aphrodite's appearance is "staged" amid a scene in which waves are formed into crystal:

and saw then, as the waves taking form,
As the sea, hard, a glitter of crystal,
And the waves rising but formed, holding their form. (23/109)

24. There are a number of other references to this motif, interspersed throughout the Cantos. I take this motif to represent the topos of palingenesis. Here are some examples: "Thus the light rains, thus pours,.../The liquid and rushing crystal/ beneath the knees of the gods" (4/15); "NOUS, the ineffable crystal" (40/201); "no cloud, but the crystal body" (76/456); "the sphere moving crystal, fluid" (76/457); "the crystal can be weighed in the hand/ formal and passing within the sphere: Thetis./ Maya, Aphodite" (76/459); "The light there almost solid" (95/644); "the great acorn of light bulging outward" (106/755); "the crystal body of air" (107/762); "the ball of fire" (108/764). The best example is, of course, the one already quoted: "I have brought the great ball of crystal;/ who can lift it?/ Can you enter the great acorn of light?" (116/795).

25. Boris de Rachewiltz also notes the thematic rhyme of the Egyptian sun-boat, the "golden cup" of the Stesichorus passage (canto 23), and the "moon barge" ("80/510: "Cythera, in the moon's barge wither?"; 80/511: "in the moon barge profelareses Hies"; 90/605: "Moon's barge over milk-blue water"). The lunar motif is developed in the Pisan and Rock-Drill Cantos until, eventually, it assumes the attributes of Isis-Luna (canto 93), a conflation of Isis (the Egyptian fertility goddess, who was also queen of the dead and here mysteries akin to those of Demeter and Persephone) and Artemis/Diana (the moon goddess). The lunar motif is further developed in canto 96 and 97. In "all under the Moon is under Fortuna" (96/656);

Pound seems to be referring "to the esoteric doctrine of the moon as the mediatrix of changes of fortune that are related to its various phases" (185). Finally, the lines "above the Moon there is order/ beneath the Moon, forsitan" (97/677) recall De facie in orbe lunae, a little known text attributed to Plutarch, according to which man experiences two deaths:

the first when the body is returned to the earth as a corpse and separated from his soul and the mind (νοῦς), the second when the soul is separated from the mind, an event which occurs on the moon when man's individual existence is reabsorbed into the cosmic cycle. Only initiates ascend beyond the lunar sphere to become what Plutarch calls "conquerors". (186)

APPENDIX I

The following two pages are reproduced from Iahannes Schweighaeuser's bilingual (Greek and Latin) edition of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*:

p. 469

LIBER XI.

237

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΟΝ. Πείσανδρος, ἐν δευτέρῳ Ἡρα- XXXVIII.
 κλειῆς, τὸ δέπας ἐν αἷ διαπλευσῶν ὁ Ἡρακλῆς τῶν Herculis
 ὠκεανῶν, εἶναι μὲν Σητῶ ἡλίου, λαβεῖν δ' αὐτὸ παρ' poculum.
 ὠκεανῷ Ἡρακλείᾳ. Μὴ ποτε δὲ, ἐπὶ μεγάλοις ἔχαι-
 ρε ποτηρίῃς ὁ ἥρως, διὰ τὸ μέγεθος παίζοντες οἱ πικ-
 τὰ καὶ συγγραφεῖς,¹ πλεῖν αὐτῶν ἐν ποτηρίῃ ἐμβολό-
 γησαν; Πανύσις δὲ, ἐν πρώτῳ Ἡρακλείᾳ, παρὸς
 Νηρέως, Σητῶ, τὴν τεῦ ἡλίου Σιάλην κομίσασθαι τῶν
 Ἡρακλείᾳ, καὶ διαπλευσῶν εἰς Ἐρύθειαν. ὅτι δὲ εἰς
 ἢ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς τῶν πλεῖστον πάντων, προαίπομεν.
 Ὅτι δὲ καὶ ὁ ἥλιος ἐπὶ ποτηρίου διακομίζεται ἐπὶ τῆν
 δέπῳ. Στησίχορος μὲν οὕτως Σητῶ

- 1 Ἄελιος ὁ ὑπεριονίδας δέπας ἐγκατεβαίνε } ①
 2 χρῆστον, ὅσα δὲ ὠκεανῶν περάσας } ①
 3 αὐτῶν ἱεράς ποτὶ βένθρα ρυκτῆς εἰμυῶς } ⑤
 4 ποτὶ ματέρα, κρυβίδας τ' ἀλογοῦ, } ⑤

1 ὁ αὐτὸν ἐδδ. 2 καὶ οἱ γρηκὶς corr. Cal. 3 Ἄλιος νεῖου. ③

38. *Heraclium*: id est, *Herculis poculum*. Pisanter, libro secundo *Heraclieae*, poculum in quo oceanum transvectus est Hercules, Solis fuisse poculum ait, accepisseque illud a Sole Herculem. Fortasse vero, quoniam magnis delectabatur poculis ille heros, propter illorum magnitudinem iudentes poetae & historici, navigasse in poculo sixerunt. Panyasis vero, primo libro *Heraclieae* ait, a Nereo accepisse Herculem Solis phialam, eaque transnavigasse in Erytheam. Fuisse autem Herculem unum ex eis qui plurimum biberent, in superioribus dictum est. Solem vero etiam ad occasum transvchi poculo, Stesichorus ait his verbis:

Sol vero Hyperionis filius in poculum inscendebat

aurum, ut per oceanum trajiciens.

perveniret sacras ad ima vada noctis obscurae. ②

ad matrem, & virginalem uxorem.

5 παιδας τι Οίλους. ὁ δ' ἐς ἄλλος ἔβα } ⑤
 6 δαΐωνασι κατασκίω
 7 ποσὶ παῖς Διός.

καὶ Ἀντίμαχος οὕτως λέγει·

— Τότε ὅτ' εὐχρηθὲν ἔσται¹

Ἥλιον πέριπτεον² ἀγακλυμένην Ἐρύθειαν

καὶ Αἰσχύλος ἐν Ἠλιάδῃ·

„Εἰς ἑπὶ ἀστράϊς ἰσθῆ³ πατρὸς Ἡρακλειτεῦ-
 χῆς δέπας, ἐν τῷ διαβάλλων⁴ πολλὸν αἵμα-
 τούτα Σίρει Ἰρήμου πέρον.⁵ εὐδ' εἰς⁶ μελαίπ-
 που προθύγαν ἱρᾶς⁷ νυκτὸς ἀμύλων.“

XXVII.

Mimnermus
de lecto
solis.

Μίμνερμος δ' ἐν Ναννοῖ, ἐν εὐνῇ Σησι χροστῆ κατε- 2

σκευασμένη πρὸς τὴν χροστὴν αὐτῆν ὑπὸ Ἡρακλειτεῦ.

τὴν ἡλιον καθύπνυοντα περιαιευσθῆαι πρὸς τὰς ἀνατολάς·
 αἰτιστόμανος τὸ κεῖθεν τοῦ ποτηρίου. λέγει ὁ οὗτος·

1 χροστὴ δὲ ἀνατολῆς corr. Caf. cum Dalec. 2 τετρατῆ Μs.
 Forf. πέριπτεον, αὐτὸ τετρατῆ ἢ ἀγαστῆ. 3 ἀστράϊς Forf.
 corr. Caf. 4 διαβάλλων Μs. 5 Forf. ἰρήμου. 6 εὐδ' ἢ
 εὐδ' corr. Cafand. 7 ἱρᾶς edd.

liberorūde caros. Ipse autem in incam se cotinūis

lanti obumbratum

— pōthas filius Iovis.

Et Antimachus ita scribit:

Tunc vero composito in poculo

Solem in pompā ostendit illiūtris Erythea.

Et Aeschylus in Hehiadibus:

*Ibi in occidente est poculum patris tui, Vulcani
 4 orus: in quo traūiciens, longum ἔσ' αἰσχυρόν cur-
 niculum conficit; cum abis fugiens nigris—cui-
 vellam factam noctem.*

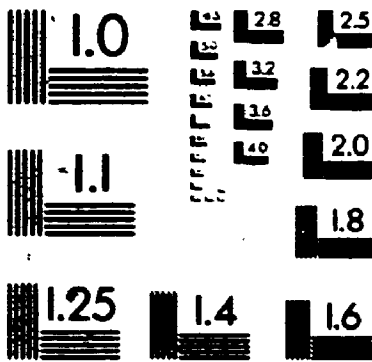
39. Μίμνερμος vero, in Nanno, ait: aureo in lecto,
 in hunc ipsum usum a Vulcano constructo, dormien-
 tem solem transvahi ad Orientem, obscure sig indicans
 poculi cavitatem. Ea eius verba:

By comparing the above text with the Stesichorus passage in canto 23 (ll. 19-23) we can see how Pound's rehearsal of the Deipnosophistae works. First, Pound transcribes lines 1 and 2 of the Stesichorus fragment—found in lines 21 and 22 of canto 23 (1). Next, Pound jumps to the bottom of page 237 of Schweighaeuser and transcribes half of line 3 of the Latin version of the fragment (2). Noticing emendation number 3 on page 237 (3) he then goes off to his Greek Dictionary in an attempt to make sense of the variation (see Appendix 2). **ἘΚΚΑΤΕΘΑΙΒΕ** is then used again in line 28 of canto 23, but transliterated into Roman letters (4). Following this Pound transcribes part of line 3, part of line 4 and the whole of line 5 of the fragment—ll. 31-33 of canto 23—manipulating in the process the verse length for emphasis.

4

of/de

4



Furthermore, he also notices that there are two more entries for ἀγρος: ἀγρος, "of, from, or belonging to the sea" (2), and ἀγρος = κεραιος, "fruitless, unprofitable; idle..." (3). This process of looking up words in the dictionary is then reproduced by Pound in line 25 of canto 23. By observing that ἀγρος = κεραιος Pound also transcribes this and the lexicographer's remark "(Deriv. uncertain)" in line 26 of canto 23 (4). In addition, Pound notices that the triple ἀγρος is 'enclosed' in the lexicon by the following two words: ἀγροειδης, "worn by the sea," and ἀγροειδης, "sea-nurtured" (5). Since these two words are consistent with the double meaning of the nature of the sea, he transliterates and transcribes them in line 28 of canto 23.

WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED

WORKS BY EZRA POUND

- ABC of Reading. 1934. New York: New Directions, 1960.
- The Cantos of Ezra Pound. New York: New Directions, 1972.
- Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound. Ed. Michael King. Introd. Louis L. Martz. New York: New Directions, 1976.
- Ezra Pound/Dorothy Shakespear. Their Letters: 1909-1914. Ed. Omar Pound and A. Walton Litz. New York: New Directions, 1986.
- Ezra Pound/John Theobald Letters. Eds. Donald Pearce and Herbert Schneidau. Black Swan Books, 1984.
- Ezra Pound: Selected Poems. Introd. T. S. Eliot. 1928. London: Faber, 1968.
- Ezra Pound: Translations. Introd. Hugh Kenner. New York: New Directions, 1963.
- Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir. 1916. New York: New Directions, 1970.
- Guide to Kulchur. 1938. New York: New Directions, 1970.
- Impact: Essays on Ignorance and the Decline of American Civilization. Ed. Noel Stock. Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1960.
- Jefferson and/or Mussolini. 1935. New York: Liveright, 1970.
- Literary Essays of Ezra Pound. 1954. Ed. T. S. Eliot. New York: New Directions, 1972.
- Pavannes and Divisions. New York: Knopf, 1918.
- Personae: The Collected Shorter Poems of Ezra Pound. 1926. New York: New Directions, 1971.
- Polite Essays. London: Faber, 1937.
- Pound/Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce, with Pound's critical essays and articles about Joyce. Ed. Forrest Read. New York: New Directions, 1967.
- Pound/Lewis: The Letters of Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis. Ed. Timothy Materer. New York: New Directions, 1985.
- Selected Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907-1941. 1950. Ed. D.D. Paige. New York: New Directions, 1971.
- Selected Prose, 1909-1965. Ed. William Cookson. New York: New Directions, 1973.

Sophocles: Women of Trachis. New York: New Directions, 1956.

The Spirit of Romance. 1910. New York: New Directions, 1968.

GENERAL WORKS

Anastos, Milton A. "Pletho's Calendar and Liturgy." Doumbarton Oaks Papers 4 (1948): 186-269.

Aldington, Richard. Life for Life's Sake. New York: Viking, 1941.

Atwood, M. A. Hermetic Philosophy and Alchemy. 1850. New York: Julian P, 1960.

Bachchan, Harbans Rai. W.B. Yeats and Occultism: A Study of his Works in Relation to Indian Lore, the Cabbala, Swedenborg, Boehme, and Theosophy. Delhi: Motilal Barnarsidass, 1965.

Banta, Martha. Henry James and the Occult. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1972.

Bays, Gwendolyn. The Orphic Vision. Seer Poets from Novalis to Rimbaud. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1964.

Beer, John. Coleridge the Visionary. London: Chatto, 1959.

Blackstone, Bernard. The Consecrated Urn: An Interpretation of Keats in Terms of Growth of Form. London: Lungmans, 1959.

Blavatsky, Helena P. The Key to Theosophy. 1889. Pasadena, Calif.: Theosophical P, 1946.

Bloom, Harold. Kabbalah and Criticism. New York: Seabury, 1975.

---. "Myth, Vision, Allegory." Yale Review 54 (1964): 143-49.

Brooks-Davis, Douglas. The Mercurian Monarch: Magical Politics from Spenser to Pope. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1983.

Bryson, Mary E. "Metaphors for Freedom: Theosophy and the Irish Literary Revival." Canadian Journal of Irish Studies, 3.1 (June 1977): 32-9.

Butler, E. M. Ritual Magic. 1949. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979.

Campbell, Bruce F. Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement. Berkeley: U of California P, 1980.

Cantor, Paul A. Creature and Creator: Myth-making and English Romanticism. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.

Colquhoun, Ithell. Sword of Wisdom: MacGregor Mathers and 'The Golden Dawn'. New York: Putnam's, 1975.

- Dante Alighieri. Paradiso. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1982. Vol. 1 of The Divine Comedy. Trans. C.S. Singleton. 3 vols. 1982.
- Dean, Barbara. "Shaw and Gnosticism." The Shaw Review 16.3 (1973): 104-22.
- Doherty, Gerald. "Connie and the Charkas: Yogic Paterns in D.H. Lawrence's 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'." D.H. Lawrence Review 13 (1980): 79-93.
- Doolittle, Hilda. End to Torment: A Memoir of Ezra Pound by H.D.. Eds. Norman Holmes Pearson and Michael King. New York: New Directions, 1979.
- . HERmione. New York: New Directions, 1981.
- Eliade, Mircea, ed. Encyclopedia of Religion. New York: Macmillan, 1987.
- . Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism. Trans. Philip Mairet. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961.
- . Occultism: Witchcraft, and Cultural Fashions: Essays in Comparative Religion. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1976.
- . The Sacred and the Profane. New York: Harper, 1961.
- Ellmann, Richard. The Identity of Yeats. 1954. New York: Oxford UP, 1964.
- Ellwood Jr., Robert S. Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973.
- Epstein, Perle S. The Private Labyrinth of Malcolm Lowry: "Under the Volcano" and the Cabbala. New York: Holt, 1969.
- Farnell, Lewis Richard. The Cults of the Greek States. 5 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1907.
- Flanery, Mary C. Yeats and Magic: The Early Works. Gerrards Cross, Bucks.: Smythe, 1977.
- Frazer, Sir James George. The New Golden Bough: A New Abridgment of the Classic Work. Ed. Theodor H. Gaster. New York: Criterion, 1959.
- Friedman, Susan Stanford. H.D.: The Life and Work of an American Poet. Boston: Houghton, 1982.
- Galbreath, Robert. "Explaining Modern Occultism." The Occult in America: New Historical Perspectives. Ed. Howard Kerr and Charles L. Crow. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1981.
- . "Introduction: The Occult Today." Journal of Popular Culture 5 (1971): 629-34.
- . "The History of Modern Occultism: A Bibliographical Survey." Journal of Popular Culture 5 (1971): 726-54.

- Gibbons, Tom. "The Waste Land Tarot Identified." Journal of Modern Literature 4 (1972): 560-65.
- Gilbert, R. A. "'The One Deep Student': Yeats and A. E. Waite." Yeats Annual 3 (1985): 3-14.
- Gilbert, Stuart. James Joyce's 'Ulysses'. 1930. London: Faber, 1952.
- Goldfarb, Russell M. "Madame Blavatsky." Journal of Popular Culture, 5 (1971): 660-72.
- Gross, Kenneth. Spenserian Poetic: Idolatry, Iconoclasm and Magic. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP, 1985.
- Guest, Barbara. Herself Defined: The Poet H.D. and Her World. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1984.
- Harper, George Mills. W. B. Yeats and W. T. Horton: The Record of an Occult Friendship. London: Macmillan, 1980.
- . The Neoplatonism of William Blake. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1961.
- and John S. Kelly. "Preliminary Examination of the Script of E[lizabeth] R[adcliffe]." Yeats and the Occult. London: Macmillan, 1975. 130-171.
- , ed. Yeats and the Occult. London: Macmillan, 1975.
- . Yeats's Golden Dawn. London: Macmillan, 1974.
- Harrison, Jane. Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion. 1903. New York: Meridian Books, 1955.
- Harwood, John. "Olivia Shakespear and W. B. Yeats." Yeats Annual 4 (1986): 75-98.
- Hastings, James, ed. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. 13 vols. New York: Scribner's, 1955.
- Henricksen, Bruce. "Heart of Darkness and the Gnostic Myth." Mosaic 11 (1978): 35-44.
- Herr, Cheryl T. "Theosophy, Guilt, and 'That Word Known to All Men' in Joyce's Ulysses." James Joyce Quarterly, 18 (1980): 45-54.
- Hesiod. Hesiod: The Homeric Hymns and Homeric. Trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Loeb Classical Library. 1914. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1970.
- Hoeller, Stephan A. The Gnostic Jung and the Seven Sermons of the Dead. Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1982.
- Homer. Homer: The Odyssey. Trans. A. T. Murray. Vols. 104 & 105. Loeb Classical Library. 1919. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1966.

- . The Odyssey of Homer. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. New York: Harper, 1965.
- Hough, Graham. The Mystery Religion of W. B. Yeats. New Jersey: Bantam, 1984.
- Hynes, Samuel. The Edwardian Turn of Mind. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1968.
- Inge, William Ralph. The Philosophy of Plotinus. 2 vols. London: Longmans, 1948.
- Jenkins, Ralph. "Theosophy in 'Scylla and Charybdis'." Modern Fiction Studies 15 (1969): 35-48.
- Johnson, Josephine. Florence Farr: Bernard Shaw's 'New Woman'. Gerrards Cross, Colin Smythe, 1975.
- Jonas, Hans. The Gnostic Religion. Boston: Beacon, 1967.
- Kerenyi, Karoly. The Religion of the Greeks. Trans. Christopher Holme. London: Thames and Hudson, 1962.
- King, Francis. Ritual Magic in England. London: Neville Spearman, 1970.
- Knight, Gareth. A History of White Magic. London: Mowbrays, 1978.
- Kristeller, Paul Oskar. The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino. Trans. Virginia Conant. Gloucester, Mass.: P. Smith, 1964.
- Kuch, Peter. Yeats and A.E.: 'The antagonism that unites Dear Friends'. Gerrards Cross, Bucks: Colin Smythe, 1986.
- Kuhn, Alvin Boyd. Theosophy: A Modern Revival of Ancient Wisdom. New York: Henry Holt, 1930.
- Lacarrière, Jacques. The Gnostics. Trans. Nina Rootes. Foreword by Lawrence Durrell. London: Owen, 1977.
- Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott, eds. A Greek-English Lexicon. 8th ed. New York: American Books, 1897.
- MacKenna, Stephen. Plotinus. 2 vols. 1916. London: Faber, 1969.
- Mairet, Philip. A.R. Orage: A Memoir. New York: University Books, 1966.
- Autobiographical and Other Papers. Ed. C. H. Sisson. Manchester: Carcanet, 1981.
- . "Allen Upward and His Order of Genius." New Age 40 (1927): 162.
- Martin, Heather C. W.B. Yeats: Metaphysician as Dramatist. Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1986.
- Martin, Wallace. The New Age Under Orage. New York: Barnes, 1967.

- Mathers, S.L. MacGregor, trans. The Kabbalah Unveiled. Introd. M[oina] MacGregor Mathers. New York: Weiser, 1887.
- McIntosh, Christopher. Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival. New York: Weiser, 1974.
- Mead, G.R.S. Apollonius of Tyana. London: Watkins, 1901.
- . Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.? London: Theosophical Society P, 1903.
- . Echoes from the Gnosis. 11 vols. London: Theosophical Society P, 1907-1908.
- . Fragments of a Faith Forgotten. 1900. London: Theosophical Society P, 1906.
- . "Notes on the Eleusinian Mysteries." The Theosophical Review 22 (1898): 145-157, 232-242, 312-323.
- . "Occultism." Vol. 9 of The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Ed. Hastings, James. 13 vols. New York: Scribner's, 1955. 444-48.
- . "On a Speculation in Fourth-Dimensionalism." Quest 13 (1921-22): 48-9.
- . Orpheus. 1896. London: Watkins, 1965.
- . Pistis Sophia: A Gnostic Gospel. 1896. New Jersey: University Books, 1974.
- . Simon Magus: An Essay. London: Theosophical Society P, 1892.
- . ed. Quest. London: Watkins, 1910-1930.
- . "Some Remarks on Fourth Dimensionalism and the Time-Enigma." Quest 12 (1920-21): 993-505.
- . "The Augocides or Radiant Body." Quest 1 (1909-10): 705-24.
- . The Gospel and the Gospels. London: Theosophical Society P, 1902.
- . The Doctrine of the Subtle Body in Western Tradition. London: Watkins, 1919.
- . "'The Quest'-Old and New: Retrospect and Prospect." Quest 17 (1925-26): 289-307.
- . "The Resurrection of the Body." Quest 1 (1909-10): 271-87.
- . "The Rising Psychic Tide." Quest 3 (1912): 401-21.
- . "The Spirit-Body: An Excursion into Alexandrian Psycho-Physiology." Quest 1 (1909-10): 472-88.
- . The World-Mystery: Four Comparative Studies in General Theosophy. 1895. London: Theosophical Society P, 1907.

- . Thrice-Greatest Hermes. 3 vols. 1906. London: Watkins, 1964.
- Moore, Virginia. The Unicorn: William Butler Yeats' Search for Reality. New York: Macmillan, 1954.
- Moore, Robert Lawrence. In Search of White Cows. New York: Oxford UP, 1977.
- Murphy, William M. "Psychic Daughter, Mystic Son, Sceptic Father." Yeats and the Occult. Ed. George Mills Harper. London: Macmillan, 1975. 11-26.
- Mylonas, George E. Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries. New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1967.
- Nethercot, Arthur H. The First Five Lives of Annie Besant. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1961.
- O'Brien, Elmer. The Essential Plotinus. New York: Mentor Books, 1964.
- O'Donnell, William H. "Yeats as Adept and Artist: The Speckled Bird, The Secret Rose, and The Wind Among the Reeds." Yeats and the Occult. Ed. George Mills Harper. London: Mamillan, 1975. 55-79.
- Oppenheim, Janet. The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1915. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985.
- Ouspensky, P. D. Tertium Organum. Trans. Nicholas Bessaraboffard and Claude Bragdon. London: Routledge, 1957.
- Page, Denys. The Homeric "Odyssey". Oxford: Clarendon P., 1966.
- Philostratus. Philostratus: The Life of Apollonius of Tyana. Trans. F. C. Conybeare. 2 vols. 1912. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1960.
- Plotinus. Select Works of Plotinus. Trans. Thomas Taylor. Ed., Introd. G. R. S. Mead. London: Bell, 1914.
- Porphyry. Lamberton, Robert. Trans. Porphyry: "On the Cave of the Nymphs". Barrytown, New York: Station Hill, 1983.
- Powell, Barry B. Composition by Theme in "The Odyssey", Herstellung, Germany: Verlag Anton, 1977.
- Raine, Kathleen and George Mills Harper, eds. Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1969.
- . William Blake. London: Thames and Hudson, 1971.
- . Yeats, the Tarot and the Golden Dawn. Dublin: Dolmen P, 1975.
- Ramacharaka, Yogi. Fourteen Lessons in Yogic Philosophy and Oriental Occultism. Chicago: The Yoga Publishing Society, 1903.

- Reid, Robert. Marie Curie. London: Collins, 1974.
- Reitzenstein, Richard. Hellenistic Mystery-Religions: Their Basic Ideas and Significance. Trans. John E. Stealy. Pittsburgh, Penn.: Pickwick, 1978.
- Rieger, James. The Mutiny Within: The Heresies of Percy Bysshe Shelley. New York: Braziller, 1967.
- Roberts, Marie. British Poets and Secret Societies. London: Groom Helm, 1986.
- Rogers, Neville. Shelley at Work: A Critical Inquiry. 1956. Oxford: Clarendon, 1967.
- Rössetti, Dante Gabriel. Early Italian Poets. London: Anvil P. 1981.
- Rudolph, Kurt. Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism. Trans., ed. Robert McLachlan Wilson. San Francisco: Harper, 1977.
- Saurat, Denis. Literature and Occult Tradition. Trans. Dorothy Bolton. London: Bell, 1930.
- Schweighaeuser, Iohannes, ed. Athenaei Naucratis Deipnosophistarum. 5 vols. Argentorati: Ex Typographia Societatis Bipontinae, 1802.
- Schmitt, Charles B. "Reappraisals in Renaissance Science." Historical Science 16 (1978): 200-14
- Scholem, Gershom G. Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism. London: Thames & Hudson, 1955.
- Schuré, Edouard. The Great Initiates: A Study of the Secret History of Religions. Trans. Gloria Rasberry. Introd. Paul M. Allen. New York: St. George Books, 1966.
- Scott, Bonnie Kimæ. "Joyce and the Dublin Theosophists: 'Vegetable Verse' and Story." Eire-Ireland, 13 (1978): 54-70.
- Scott, W., ed. Hermetica. 4 vols. 1924-36. Boston: Shambhala, 1985.
- Segal, Robert A. The Poimandres as Myth: Scholarly Theory and Gnostic Meaning. Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton de Gruyter, 1986.
- Senior, John. The Way Down and Out: The Occult in Symbolist Literature. 1959. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1968.
- Shepard, Leslie A. Encyclopedia of Occultism & Parapsychology. 3 vols. Detroit: Gale Research, 1972.
- Smith, Warren Sylvester. The London Heretics: 1870-1914. London: Constable, 1967.
- Spence, Lewis. An Encyclopedia of Occultism. 1920. New York: University Books, 1960.

- Stockenström, Göran. "The Symbiosis of "Spirits" in Inferno: Stringberg and Swedenborg." Structures of Influence: A Comparative Approach to August Strindberg. Ed. Marilyn Johns Blackwell. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1981. 3-37.
- Taylor, Anya. Magic and English Theatre. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1979.
- . "The Occult in Romanticism." The Wordsworth Circle 8 (1977): 97-102.
- Tindall, W.Y. D.H. Lawrence: Susan His Cow. New York: Columbia UP, 1939.
- . Forces of Modern British Literature: 1885-1956. 1947. New York: Vintage, 1956.
- . "James Joyce and the Hermetic Tradition." Journal of the History of Ideas 15 (1954): 23-39.
- . The Literary Symbol. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1955.
- Tuveson, Ernest Lee. The Avatars of Thrice Great Hermes: An Approach to Romanticism. London: Associated UP, 1982.
- Upward, Allén. Divine Mystery. Santa Barbara, Cal.: Ross-Erikson, 1976.
- . New World. New York: M. Kennerley, 1910.
- Waite, Edward Arthur. A New Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry. 2 vols. New York: Weathervane Books, 1970.
- Walker, Benjamin. Gnosticism: Its History and Influence. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Aquarian P, 1983.
- Watkins, Geoffrey N. "Yeats and Mr. Watkins' Bookshop." Yeats and the Occult. Ed. George Mills Harper. London: Macmillan, 1975. 307-10.
- Webb, James. The Occult Establishment. La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1976.
- . The Occult Underground. La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1974.
- , ed. A Quest Anthology. New York: Arno Press, 1976.
- Welburn, Andrew J. Power and Self-Consciousness in the Poetry of Shelley. London: Macmillan, 1986.
- Weston, Jessie L. From Ritual to Romance. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1920.
- Wilson, Edmund. Axel's Castle. New York: Scribner's, 1931.
- Wilson, F. A. C. W.B. Yeats and Tradition. London: Gollancz, 1958.
- . Yeats's Iconography. London: Gollancz, 1960.

- Wind, Edgar. Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance. London: Faber, 1967.
- Yates, Frances A. Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition. London: Routledge, 1964.
- . Theatre of the World. London: Routledge, 1969.
- . "The Hermetic Tradition in Renaissance Science." Art, Science, and History in the Renaissance. Ed. Charles S. Singleton. Baltimore, 1967. 255-74.
- . The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age. London: Routledge, 1979.
- . The Rosicrucian Enlightenment. London: Routledge, 1972.
- Yeats, William Butler. Letters of W. B. Yeats. Ed. Allan Wade. London: Hart-Davis, 1954.

WORKS ON EZRA POUND

- Adams, Stephen S. "Ezra Pound and Music." Diss. Univ. of Toronto, 1974.
- . "Books on Pound from University Microfilm International." Canadian Review of American Studies 17 (1986): 367-73.
- Alexander, Michael. The Poetic Achievement of Ezra Pound. London: Faber, 1979.
- Anderson, David. "Breaking the Silence: The Interview of Vanni Ronsisvalle and Pier Paolo Pasolini with Ezra Pound in 1968." Paideuma 10 (1981): 331-45.
- Bacigalupo, Massimo. The Formed Trace: The Later Poetry of Ezra Pound. New York: Columbia UP, 1980.
- Baumann, Walter. "Ezra Pound and Magic: Old World Tricks in a New World Poem." Paideuma, 10 (1981): 209-24.
- . "Ezra Pound's London Years: From Late-Romanticism to Modernism." Paideuma, 13 (1984): 357-73.
- . "Secretary of Nature, J. Heydon." New Approaches to Ezra Pound. Ed. Eva Hesse. Berkeley: U of California P, 1969. 303-18.
- . The Rose in the Steel Dust: An Examination of the Cantos of Ezra Pound. 1967. Coral Gables: U of Miami P, 1970.
- Bell, Ian F. A. Critic as Scientist: The Modernist Poetics of Ezra Pound. London and New York: Methuen, 1981.
- Bowers, Faubion. "Memoir Within Memoirs." Paideuma 2 (1973): 53-68.
- Brooke-Rose, Christine. A ZBC of Ezra Pound. London: Faber, 1971.

- Brooker, Peter. A Student's Guide to the Selected Poems of Ezra Pound. London: Faber, 1979.
- Bush, Ronald. The Genesis of Ezra Pound's Cantos. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1977.
- Cantrell, Carol H. "Quotidian to Divine: Some Notes on Canto 81." Paideuma 12 (1983): 11-20.
- Cookson, William. A Guide to the Cantos of Ezra Pound. New York: Persea Books, 1985.
- Davenport, Guy. Cities on Hills: A Study of I-XXX of Ezra Pound's Cantos. Ann Arbor: UMI, 1983.
- Davie, Donald. Ezra Pound. New York: Viking, 1975.
- , Ezra Pound, Poet as Sculptor. London: Routledge, 1965.
- Davis, Kay. Fugue and Fresco: Structures in Pound's "Cantos". Orono: National Poetry Foundation, 1984.
- Dekker, George. Sailing after Knowledge: The Cantos of Ezra Pound. A Critical Appraisal. London: Routledge, 1963.
- Dennis, Helen M. "The Eleusinian Mysteries as an Organizing Principle in The Pisan Cantos." Paideuma 10 (1981): 273-82.
- D'Epiro, Peter. A Touch of Rhetoric: Ezra Pound's Malatesta Cantos. Ann Arbor: UMI, 1983.
- Eastham, Scott. Paradise & Ezra Pound: The Poet as Shaman. New York: UP of America, 1983.
- Edwards, John H. and W. W. Vasse. Annotated Index to the Cantos of Ezra Pound. Berkeley: U of California P, 1957.
- Elliott, Angela. "Pound's 'Isis Kuanon': An Ascension Motif in The Cantos." Paideuma 13 (1984): 327-56.
- , "Pound's Lucifer: A Study of the Imagery of Flight and Light." Paideuma 12 (1983): 237-66.
- Emery, Clark. Ideas into Action: A Study of Pound's Cantos. Coral Gables: U of Miami P, 1958.
- Fitts, Dudley. "Music Fit for the Odes." Ezra Pound: The Critical Heritage. Ed. Eric Homberger. London: Routledge, 1972. 246-55.
- Flory, Wendy S. Ezra Pound and the Cantos: A Record of Struggle. New Haven: Yale UP, 1980.

- French, William and Timothy Materer. "Far Flung Vortices & Ezra's 'Hindoo' Yogi." Paideuma 11 (1982): 39-53.
- Gallup, Donald. A Bibliography of Ezra Pound. 1963. London: Hart-Davis, 1969.
- Géfin, Laszlo K. Ideogram: History of a Poetic Method. Austin: U of Texas P, 1982.
- Grover, Philip, ed. Ezra Pound: The London Years, 1908-1920. New York: AMS, 1978.
- Grundberg, Carl. "Ezra Pound and the 'Trobar Clus'." San Jose Studies 12.3 (1986): 119-124.
- Hall, Donald. Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews. 2nd Series. New York: Viking, 1963.
- Hesse, Eva, ed. New Approaches to Ezra Pound. Berkeley: U of California P, 1969.
- Homburger, Eric, ed. Ezra Pound: The Critical Heritage. London: Routledge, 1972.
- Hutchins, Patricia. Ezra Pound's Kensington Years. An Exploration 1885-1913. London: Faber, 1965.
- Jackson, Thomas H. The Early Poetry of Ezra Pound. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1969.
- Kenner, Hugh. Gnomon: Essays in Contemporary Literature. New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1951.
- . The Poetry of Ezra Pound. New York: New Directions, 1951.
- . The Pound Era. Berkeley: U of California P, 1971.
- Knox, Bryant. "Allen Upward and Ezra Pound." Paideuma 3 (1974): 71-83.
- Laughlin, James. "Ez As Wuz." San Jose Studies 12.3 (1986): 6-28.
- Laurie, Peter. "Peacocks in Kore's House: A Note on Pound's Alchemy." Paideuma 9 (1980): 333-37.
- Leary, Lewis, ed. Motive and Method in the Cantos of Ezra Pound. New York: Columbia UP, 1954.
- Levenson, Michael H. A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine 1908-1922. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.
- Libera, Sharon Mayer. "Casting His Gods Back into the NOUS: Two Neoplatonists and The Cantos of Ezra Pound." Paideuma 2 (1973): 355-78.
- . "Ezra Pound's Paradise: A Study of Neoplatonism in the Cantos." Diss. Harvard U, 1971.
- Litz, A Walton. "Pound and Yeats: The Road to Stone Cottage." Ezra Pound Among

- the Poets. Ed. George Bornstein. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1985. 128-48.
- Longenbach, James. "The Order of the Brothers Minor: Pound and Yeats At Stone Cottage 1913-16." Paideuma 14 (1985): 395-403.
- . "The Secret Society of Modernism: Pound, Yeats, Olivia Shakespear, and the Abbé de Montfaucon de Villars." Yeats Annual 4 (1986): 103-20. Ed. Warwick Gould.
- Makin, Peter. Pound's Cantos. London: Allen, 1985.
- . Provence and Pound. Berkeley: U of California P, 1978.
- MacDowell, Colin. "'As Towards a Bridge Over Worlds': The Way of the Soul in The Cantos." Paideuma 13 (1984): 171-200.
- and Timothy Materer. "Gyre and Vortex: W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound." Twentieth Century Literature 31 (1985): 343-67.
- . "'The Toys...at Auxerre': Canto 77." Paideuma 12.1 (1983): 21-30.
- Materer, Timothy. "Ezra Pound and the Alchemy of the Word." Journal of Modern Literature 11.1 (1984): 109-24.
- . Vortex: Pound, Eliot, and Lewis. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1979.
- McDougal, Stuart Y. Ezra Pound and the Troubadour Tradition. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972.
- Michaels, Walter B. "Pound and Erigena." Paideuma 1 (1972): 37-54.
- Miyake, Akiko. "The Greek-Egyptian Mysteries in Pound's 'The Little Review Calendar' and in Cantos 1-7." Paideuma 7 (1978): 73-112.
- Moody, A. D. "Pound's Allen Upward." Paideuma 4 (1975): 55-70.
- Nanny, Max. Ezra Pound: Poetics for an Electric Age. Verlag Bern, 1973.
- Nassar, Eugène Paul. The Cantos of Ezra Pound: The Lyric Mode. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1975.
- Neault, James. "Apollonius of Tyana." Paideuma 4 (1975): 3-36.
- Norman, Charles. Ezra Pound: A Biography. 1960. London: Macdonald, 1969.
- Oderman, Kevin. Ezra Pound and the Erotic Medium. Durham: Duke UP, 1968.
- Palandri, Angela Jung. "The 'Seven Lakes Canto' Revisited." Paideuma 3 (1974): 51-4.
- Pearlman, Daniel S. The Barb of Time. New York and London: Oxford UP, 1969.

- Peck, John. "Arras and Painted Arras." *Paideuma* 3 (1974): 61-66.
- Perret, N. M. "'God's Eye Art 'Ou': Eleusis as a Paradigm for Enlightenment in Canto CVI." *Paideuma* 13 (1984): 419-32.
- Quinn, Sister Mary Bernetta. *Ezra Pound*. New York: Columbia UP, 1972.
- Rachewiltz, Boris de. "Pagan and Magic Elements in Ezra Pound's Works." *New Approaches to Ezra Pound*. Ed. Eva Hesse. London: Faber, 1969. 174-97.
- Read, Forrest. *'76: One World and the Cantos of Ezra Pound*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1980.
- Reck, Michael. *Ezra Pound: A Close-Up*. New York: McGraw, 1967.
- Rosenthal, M. L. "Pound at his Best: Canto 47 as a Model of Poetic Thought." *Paideuma* 6 (1977): 300-21.
- Schneidau, Herbert N. *Ezra Pound: The Image and the Real*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1969.
- . "Pound and Yeats: The Question of Symbolism." *ELH*, 32 (1965): 220-37.
- Schultz, Robert. "A Detailed Chronology of Ezra Pound's London Years, 1908-20, Part One: 1908-1914." *Paideuma* 11 (1982): 456-72.
- . "A Detailed Chronology of Ezra Pound's London Years, 1908-1920, Part Two: 1915-1920." *Paideuma* 12 (1983): 356-73.
- Sicari, Stephen. "The Secret of Eleusis, or How Pound Grounds His 'Epic of Judgement'." *Paideuma* 14 (1985): 303-21.
- Sieburth, Richard. *Instigations: Ezra Pound and Remy de Gourmont*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1978.
- Stock, Noel. *Ezra Pound's Pennsylvania*. Toledo, Ohio: U of Toledo Libraries, 1976.
- . *Poet in Exile: Ezra Pound*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1964.
- . *Reading the Cantos: A Study of Meaning in Ezra Pound*. New York: Random, 1966.
- . *The Life of Ezra Pound*. New York: Random, 1970.
- Surette, Leon. *A Light from Eleusis*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1979.
- . "Economics and Eleusis." *San Jose Studies* 12 (1986): 58-67.
- . "Helen of Tyre." *Paideuma* 2 (1973): 419-22.
- Tay, William. "Between King and Eleusis." *Paideuma* 4 (1975): 37-54.

- Terrell, Carroll F. A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound. 2 vols. Berkeley: U of California P, 1980-1984.
- . "Mang-Tsze, Thomas Taylor, and Madam '77." Paideuma, 7 (1978): 141-54.
- . "Pound and KRH: An Introduction to Bowers' Memoir." Paideuma 2 (1973): 49-52.
- Tytell, John. Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano. New York: Doubleday, 1987.
- Wilhelm, James J. Dante and Pound: The Epic of Judgement. Orono: U of Maine P, 1965.
- . The American Roots of Ezra Pound. New York: Garland, 1985.
- . The Later Cantos of Ezra Pound. New York: Walker, 1977.
- Yeats, W. B. A Packet for Ezra Pound. 1929. Rpt. Shannon: Irish UP, 1970.