

## АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ ТЕОРІЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ ТА ЛІТЕРАТУРНОЇ КРИТИКИ

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### THE ESSENCE OF AN IMAGE IN ENGLISH-AMERICAN IMAGISM: SINGULAR VERSUS UNIVERSAL

Ця розвідка має на меті з'ясувати, в чому саме полягає специфіка образу в поезії імагізму, як саме співвідносяться внутрішні і зовнішні, де «точка» їх взаємодії, адже саме тут криється відповідь на те, чому Т.С.Еліот вважав імагізм «реперною точкою», «першим залпом» у розвитку англо-американського модернізму, а коротке за часом «життя» імагізму мало довготривалий вплив на англійську поезію ХХ ст. Попри очевидну важливість концепту образу саме для імагізму, імажисти не залишили після себе розлогої теоретичної рефлексії щодо того, яким саме критеріям мають відповідати «тверді, сухі образи» (Т.Е. Г'юм). Саме подоланню цієї лакуни в контексті сучасних теоретичних візій присвячено статтю. Наголошується на дуальній (семантичній і психологічній) природі образу (П. Рікер); майже повній втраті однієї з важливих складових його цілісності (аксіологічної), що робить неможливою концентрацію виключно на його семантиці (М. Гіршман); «мінливий» природі образу (Г. Башляр). Саме ці особливості мав на увазі Езра Паунд, даючи своє надто загальне визначення нового образу як інтелектуального та емоційного комплексу. Застосовується ідея Ролана Барта («L'imagination du signe», 1962) про принциповий вплив характеру внутрішнього і зовнішніх відношень знаку на формування окремого образу та образності в різних художніх системах. Постулюється, що для символізму характерне саме внутрішнє, ієрархічне відношення, для романтизму – парадигматичне, віртуальне відношення, а для імагізму – синтагматичне, актуальне відношення. Так, «хвиля-сосна» в «Ореаді» Гільди Дуліттл – це зв'язка-комплекс, який створюється виключно одним враженням поета і читача, стає унікальним образом одного окремого вірша і виключає його подальше «універсальне» застосування.

Синтагматичні відношення передбачають також подальшу взаємодію знаків у вигляді того самого «накладання», формуючи, в тому числі, монтаж як один із важливих модерністських прийомів не тільки в поезії, а й модерністській прозі. Таким чином, стає очевидним, що монтаж не є просто механічно запозиченим у кінематографу важливим прийомом модерністської поетики, але має у своїй основі більш глибоку, «синтагматичну» природу. На прикладі поезій Т.Е. Г'юма, Езри Паунда, Вільяма Карлоса Вільямса, Гільди Дуліттл (Г.Д.) доводиться, що імажистський образ – це кожного разу нова синтагма, яка створюється виключно одним враженням поета і читача, стає унікальним образом одного окремого вірша і виключає його подальше «універсальне» застосування як складової будь-якої сталої художньої парадигми.

*Ключові слова: парадигма, синтагма, символ, Ролан Барт, романтизм, символізм, імагізм, Т.Е. Г'юм, Е. Паунд, В. Карлос Вільямс, Г.Д., Едвард Томас.*

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**A** literary image is the basis of any literary text, the goal and at the same time the means, the alpha and omega of that “literariness” that transfers text into a “higher register”, makes it the art.

Imagism hasn't left any extended or profound theory as far as the criteria for producing images as “hard, dry things”, as one of the founders of Imagism Theodor Ernest Hulme wrote in his essay *“Romanticism and Classicism”*. Actually, Hulme's statement, later repeated by Ezra Pound almost verbatim, is fundamental: *“Images in verse are not mere decoration, but the very essence of an intuitive language”* [Hulme, 2004]. And it was Imagism that made the image a content-forming factor, subject and object of its theoretical reflection and artistic practice. During the short period of Imagism development, Pound's broad definition of the image as a complex (which will be discussed below) was never specified “theoretically”: a complete answer was not formulated as to what exactly the specificity of the image in the poetry of Imagism is; particularly how the internal and external are related, and where the “point” of their interaction is. Studying out these issues is the purpose of the current research.

So, the nature of fiction that forms any artistic text, as well as the nature of the image that is the basis of any fiction, have always been and will remain a debatable theoretical problem since the time of Aristotle. The very name “Imagism” indicates the concept of an image as the central theoretical category for this school. In view of this, it is necessary to briefly outline some modern approaches to the definition, functioning and transformation of the literary image. Therefore, taking into account the huge amount of theoretical works, we will have to focus on certain aspects of present image theory that are important for our poetic and historical-literary context.

First of all, it is important to note the dual nature of the image. Thus, Paul Ricoeur in his work *“The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling”*, speaking about a metaphor as an image, emphasizes the need to interpret it: *“I would rather characterize it [image] as a problem arising on the boundary between a semantic theory of metaphor and a psychological theory of imagination and feeling”* [Ricoeur, 1978, p. 143]. This also proves the development of linguistic cognitivism as a separate branch of modern linguistics.

At the same time, Ukrainian scholars M. Hirshman and A. Domashchenko, relying on Hegel's opinion about the organic integrity of image as a structure and considering mainly its semantic nature, emphasize the inextricable connection of its epistemological, ontological and axiological aspects as the defining characteristic of the artistic image: *“the work of art accordingly learns the world, in depicting – depicts, in portraying – portrays, in evaluating – evaluates, [while] learning”*. The scholars here rightly emphasize that the predominance or isolation of any constituent of these characteristics destroys the artistic nature of the image, brings it into the sphere of science or journalism [Гиршман, Домашченко, 2008, p. 149]. But, in my opinion, despite the general validity of the point, it does not abolish the possibility and desire to “redistribute” the influence of each of the three named aspects within the semantics of the image, which significantly affects its internal nature, determines its specific common features in each artistic system, genre or style paradigm. In the case of Imagism, it seems that the axiological component of the image almost loses weight, and this transformation of the Imagist image was both the intention and the ultimate goal of its creators. Of course, “artistic opinion” is also present here, but it concerns the “internal validity” of the Imagist image, its deep “formal” quality, which, in addition, can be noted as a common denominator for any avant-garde.

This is fundamentally related to the “meaningful form”, to how hermetic the image itself is, namely, how new the image in Imagism is, not only from the point of view of Romantic paradigmatics (this is clearly visible at the first stage of the Imagism development), but also from the point of view of interaction with the image-symbol of another influential artistic system of the time. At the time Imagism appeared, European poetry had made its way from emblematic Romantic topos (“common places”) to Symbolism, and the Romantic image was transformed into an image-symbol. So, as it seems, “make it new” refers primarily to the choice of what N. Tamarchenko calls a “*semantically open poetic image*”, “*the structure of which is isomorphic to the structure <...> of the poetic world created by it or in it*”. The “finished” poetic image (in all its varieties) is opposed by the images with an unhardened semantic core and unlimited potential: first, a parallelism, a metaphor (not as “techniques”, but as forms of pre-logical thinking) and an im-

age-symbol; secondly, a “simple” (non-style, non-poetic) word. These types of verbal image do not carry a ready-made meaning, but actualize a potentially endless meaning in the context of the poem as a whole [Тамарченко, 2010, p. 151].

Perhaps, as for the nature of artistic image in Imagism, the most important theoretical aspect is the degree of “*deviance*” as an inner space of the language, as Paul Ricoeur says about it, mentioning G. Genette, and the mode of repulsion from an iconic image or a “finished” poetic image. Relying on M. Black’s semantic theory, P. Ricoeur believes that it is not enough to simply “transfer” the meaning or “rename” an object or phenomenon with a “strange” name: “*The interaction process does not merely consists of the substitution of a word for a word, of a name for a name – which, strictly speaking, defines only a metonymy – but in an interaction between a logical subject and a predicate*”. That is, it emphasizes not only the presence of a semantic conflict, but also a new predicative meaning, “*which emerges from the collapse of the literal meaning*”, because “*the metaphor is not the enigma but the solution of the enigma*” [Ricoeur, 1978, pp. 145-146].

Roland Barthes’ work “The Imagination of the Sign” (“*L’imagination du signe*”, 1962), in our opinion, provides the necessary tools for determining what distinguishes an image in Imagism.

The fundamental idea of structuralists about three types of relations between linguistic units (paradigmatic, syntagmatic and internal hierarchical) is generally known. But Roland Barthes, in full accordance with the “linguistic turn” in philosophy and literature, goes further, believing that it is logical to consider the entire artistic text and even groups of texts of one artistic system through the lens of linguistic relations.

Barthes singles out one internal, hierarchical (symbolic) relation of the sign and two external (virtual – paradigmatic and actual – syntagmatic) relations: “*...when we consider the signifying phenomenon <...>, we are obliged to focus on one of these three relations more than on the other two, sometimes we ‘see’ the sign in its symbolic aspect, sometimes in its systematic aspect, sometimes in its syntagmatic aspect <...>*”. And since each individual (or each school) seeks to base one’s analysis on only one dimension of the sign, the result is the predominance of one vision over the integrity of the sign phenomenon. In this sense, the scholar speaks of the probable presence of different semiological consciousnesses. At the same time, Barthes specifically emphasizes that it is about the “consciousness” of the researcher of the sign, not its “consumer” [Barthes, 1972, p. 206]. But, in my opinion, we can also consider an “objective” redistribution in the hierarchy of dimensions of a sign: and in the process of creating an integral image, some of its dimensions can gain more weight. The interaction of external (means of artistic expression) and internal (the “picture” being created) forms are united by the modality of poetic expression, intonation [Гиршман, Домащенко, 2008, p. 150], which, under certain conditions of interaction of formal and content components, becomes decisive for character of the image, as we will see below in the poem “*The Red Wheelbarrow*” by William Carlos Williams. Accordingly, these preferences seem to determine the nature of the image in symbolism, romanticism, and imagism and provide an important basis for searching for the “truth” of theory in the artistic “chaos” of their practice.

At the first stage of the development of Imagism the poems of T.E. Hulme (“Autumn”, “Conversion”, “Above the Dock” and others) are based on an analogy. It is the analogy which provides the fundamental objective vision of the world for the new “School of Images”: the moon, the night sky and other images in our eyes cease to be symbols and turn into a red-faced farmer (“Autumn”), or a child’s balloon frozen after playing with its string-mast of yachts (“Above the Dock”); or on a star-eaten blanket to warm a homeless man (“The Embankment”). But they still retain what Barthes considers to be the characteristic features of a symbol: in addition to the relation of analogy, in a symbol the form is always similar to the content to one degree or another – an example of the cross as a symbol of Christianity [Barthes, 1972, p. 207]. And the main thing: in the poetry of imagists there is no such fundamental characteristics of symbol which S. Averintsev insisted on: “*a symbol is an image taken in the aspect of its significance, and at the same time it is a sign endowed with all the organicity of a myth and the inexhaustible ambiguity of an image*” [Аверинцев, 2004, p. 178].

Hugh Witemayer considers Pound’s “*In a Station of the Metro*”, H.D.’s “*Oread*” and Williams’s “*The Red Wheelbarrow*” to be classic examples of perfect Imagist practice. At the same

time, as an example, he cites Pound's poem "Papyrus", an allegedly found fragment of ancient Greek poetry (Sappho), only partially preserved, and dedicated to Sappho's student Gongula:

Spring...  
Too long...  
Gongula... [Pound, 1991, p. 115]

The researcher emphasizes: "In theme and form, the poem enacts a drama of presence and absence. The presence of spring whets Sappho's appetite for the absent Gongula. The presence of three line-beginnings whets our appetite for an absent text. By honing language's presence to an absolute minimum, the Imagist poem sharpens our intuition of its expressive gaps and omissions" [Witemeyer, 2003, p. 11]. M.L. Gasparov ("Verlibre and Summarized Lyrics") also cites this poem by Pound, calling it "the condensate of all early Greek lyrics" and emphasizing that laconism, although it cannot be unequivocally called "a universal feature of poetics of the 20th century", was one of the important trends in poetry of this century, started by the Imagists [Гаспаров, 2000, p. 193]. According to the apt expression of Richard Ellman, the Imagists "put poetry on a thin diet" [Ellman, O'Clair, 1973, p. 409]. But M.L. Gasparov adds an important clarification: "brevity was perceived as a protest against rhetoric – although in fact it was also rhetoric, only a different one" [Гаспаров, 2000, p. 193]. Pound's credit lies in the development of just such a "new rhetoric" for new poetry in the work "A Few Don'ts by an Imagist" (1913), which in five years he almost completely included to "A Retrospect" (1918), expanding and clarifying the main points of his early work.

Initially dictated by a purely utilitarian purpose (as a limitation for those who claimed to be published in "Poetry"), the famous principles of Imagism are nevertheless not accidentally formulated in the form of a denial of previous experience of poetry ("A Few Don'ts by an Imagist"): "An image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time"; "Go in fear of abstractions"; poetry is not the place for discursive comment ("Don't be 'viewy'"); leave landscapes to painters ("Don't be descriptive") [Korg, 2003, p. 131]. As we can see, all these "don'ts" belong mainly to poetics, which, in the end, was supposed to determine semantics.

In the above-mentioned poems by Hulme, the images still retain an internal similarity with the signified objects. But one can see how gradually this connection weakens, leaving only a distant external resemblance. The short heyday of Imagism gives us many examples of such complexes, starting with the most famous – Pound's "In a Station of the Metro" (1913). The most quoted Imagist poem ever, manifests what the imagists "must do":

"The apparition of these faces in the crowd;  
Petals on a wet, black bough" [Pound, 1991, p. 111].

George Bornstein rightly points out that this verse "in its Haiku-like terseness, meter, and subject exemplified the Imagist principles he was promulgating" [Bornstein, 2001, p. 31]. In 1916, Pound wrote about this poem, which he also called "a hokku-like sentence" ("Gaudier-Brzeska"): "Three years ago in Paris I got out of a 'metro' train at La Concorde, and saw suddenly a beautiful face, and then another and another, and then a beautiful child's face, and then another beautiful woman, and I tried all that day to find words for what this had meant to me, and I could not find any words that seemed to me worthy, or as lovely as that sudden emotion". As Pound recalls, the first version of the poem consisted of thirty lines, then it was shortened by half, and as a result two lines remained. "It was just that a 'pattern', or hardly a pattern, if by 'pattern' you mean something with a 'repeat' in it". And further: "The 'one image poem' is a form of super-position, that is to say, it is one idea set on top of another. I found it useful in getting out of the impasse in which I had been left by my metro emotion. I wrote a thirty-line poem, and destroyed it because it was what we call work 'of second intensity'. As we see, Pound calls his destroyed long versions a work of 'secondary intensity', and what he managed to find – an 'equation'" [Pound, 1916, p. 100, 103]. David Perkins also notes the "juxtaposition" of two complex images without any comment on them, which creates a powerful imaginative impact through their suggestive relation

[Perkins, 1976, p.463].<sup>1</sup> “Equation”, “pattern” and “superposition” (“juxtaposition”) – formulated by Pound, these are exactly the most important properties of a new image characteristics in Imagism, and, taken together, they form its basis.

We should note that in the above-mentioned work of Pound, we see another important clarification regarding the definition of the image, which is based on two important things that have so far remained outside the priority attention of researchers. First, it emphasizes the weight, which, according to Hulme, has the receptive aspect – the perception of modern poetry. Secondly, what is important for Imagism and will later appear as a structuralist distinction between “language” and “speech”, “word” and “utterance” is actualized: “[t]he point of Imagisme is that it does not use images as ornaments. The image is itself the speech. The image is the word beyond formulated language” [Pound, 1916, p. 102]. In turn, the latter leads the researcher to the necessity of “superposition” of Imagism and Symbolism.

Is such a comprehensive and “universal” image a symbol? Here Pound answers the question of how Imagism and Symbolism differ, and this question is so important that he returns to it again and again in his work. Here he says openly that “Imagism is not Symbolism”, because “Symbolists deal with association, that is, a kind of allusion, almost an allegory. They reduce the symbol to the status of a word. They make it a form of metonymy. You can be extremely ‘grossly symbolic’, for example, using the word ‘cross’ in the sense of ‘trial’. Symbolist symbols have a fixed value, like numbers in mathematics, like 1, 2, and 7. Imagist images have variable significance, like the symbols *a*, *b*, or *x* in algebra” [Ibid, p. 97]. That is, in his own analogy, Pound is talking about what modern mathematics defines by the term “a variable”, and this is demonstrative.

Later, in the second half of the twentieth century, Gaston Bachelard in “*The Poetics of Space*” states that the reader of poetry needs not to perceive an image as an object, and even more so, as some substitute for an object, but to catch its specific reality, for which it is necessary to constantly correlate the act of creativity of consciousness with its most volatile product – the poetic image. As if continuing Pound’s phenomenological approach, Bachelard reflects on the phenomenology of the poetic image, defining it as “changeable in its essence, <...> not constitutive, unlike the concept” (and to some extent, unlike a more “stable” symbol). There is also the development of the Imagists’ ideas about the nature of the image as something that “precedes thought” and gives rise to a “new language» [Bachelard, 2004, p.10].

A little further in “Gaudier-Brzeska”, Pound resorts to a less quoted, but more related to art (after all, this is a book about a sculptor and a painter), an analogy that immediately reminds of the textbook poetry of the French Symbolists. The allusion to Arthur Rimbaud’s “Voyelles” is easy to read, as is Pound’s noticeably superior “tone”, because he cannot agree with the very idea of “childish fixation” along the “sound – colour” line: “I do not mean that I was unfamiliar with the kindergarten stories about colours being like tones in music. I think that sort of thing is nonsense. If you try to make notes permanently correspond with particular colours, it is like tying narrow meanings to symbols” [Pound, 1916, p.100]. That is, it is a purely situational, each time new, analogy (“face – moon” or “face – petal”): when in the known definition of an image it is characterized as a complex, it means that the image (meaning) is not “firmly attached” to words as a symbol; it exists and “works” only at a certain time, in a certain place, with a certain reader. Like, for example, “wave-pine” in “*Oread*” by H.D.: it is a connection-complex created exclusively by a single impression of the poet and the reader, and it becomes a unique image of one separate poem and excludes its further “universal” application.

And here again Pound is focused on the receptive potential of the image-symbol, on its semantic “openness” as the main criterion, which precisely eliminates the fundamental fixity of

<sup>1</sup> The Ukrainian translation by Ihor Kostetskyi, as well as the Russian translations by Yan Probshtein and Anatoly Kudryavtyskyi, unfortunately, make obvious “improvements” to Pound’s original text, producing a kind of stylistic “comment” by using conjunctions, verbs, or evaluative adjectives [Anthology, 2001]. And it leads to creating different, post-Romantic “pattern”, detested by the Imagists:

“В толпе безликой появились эти лица  
На черной влажной ветке листья”.  
(Y. Probshtein)

“Виденье этих лиц в толпе несметной –  
Как россыпь лепестков на черной, мокрой ветке”.  
(A. Kudryavtyskyi)

“Споглядна з’ява оцих облич у людському натовпі;  
Пелюстки, що квітчать ось вогуку, чорну галузку”. (I. Kostetskyi)

the meaning to the symbol. In “Credo” from “A Retrospect” he writes: “I believe that the proper and perfect symbol is the natural object, that if a man use ‘symbols’ he must so use them that their symbolic function does not obtrude, so that a sense, and the poetic quality of the passage, is not lost to those who understand the symbol as such, to whom, for instance, a hawk is a hawk” [Pound, 1954, p. 9].

Pound also carefully delineates the formal features of the new poetry, dedicating a separate section to it in “A Retrospect”. First of all, this is the problem of rhythm in modern poetry. The first publication of “In a Station of the Metro” in the April (1913) issue of “Poetry” even contained special spaces between words to direct the reader to the rhythm that the poet conceived. Pound’s famous phrase about the need to be guided by the rhythm of a musical phrase, not the rhythm of a metronome [Ibid, p. 3], is consistent with the unacceptability of extending the musical term “harmony” to poetry. His analogy of the rhythm of poetry with the sound of an organ is not so well known: “There is, however, in the best verse a sort of residue of sound which remains in the ear of the hearer and acts more or less an organ-base” [Ibid, p. 6]<sup>2</sup>. In “Credo”, Pound summarizes his vision of the rhythm of the new poetry: “I believe in an ‘absolute rhythm’, a rhythm, that is, in poetry which corresponds exactly to the emotion or a shade of emotion to be expressed. A man’s rhythm must be interpretative, it will be, therefore, in the end, his own, uncounterfeiting, uncounterfeitable” [Ibid, p. 9]. “The emotion” or “a shade of emotion” is what distinguishes speech from language, and this is one of the main principles of novelty, which, as mentioned above, was insisted on by Pound.

But one can see how Imagism overcomes what it “appointed” as its main enemy – Romanticism, where image is based on what Barthes defines as a paradigmatic relation, a paradigmatic consciousness. The American researcher D. Perkins believes that in the poem “Autumn” Hulme deliberately argues with such a Romantic masterpiece as “To the Moon” by Percy Bysshe Shelley: “Whether or not Hulme recalled Shelley, his verses are anti-Romantic” [Perkins, 1976, p. 337]. Shelley asks if the moon is really pale – because it is tired of having to constantly go up in the sky and look at the earth; lonely – because the stars have a different origin; and fickle – as a joyless eye that finds no object worth looking at. The Romantic “lunar” paradigm of the epithets “pale – tired – lonely – fickle” cannot give anything to the Imagist poet:

*A touch of cold in the Autumn night –  
I walked abroad,  
And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge  
Like a red-faced farmer.  
I did not stop to speak, but nodded,  
And round about were the wistful stars  
With white faces like town children* [Hulme, 1991, p. 267].

So, it is easy to see how far Hulme is from the “lunar paradigm” that is present in the poetry of the great Romantics. Roland Barthes says about the paradigmatic relation, the paradigmatic consciousness of the sign: “...thus the dynamics attached to this vision is that of a summons: the sign is chosen from a finite organized reservoir, and this summons is the sovereign act of signification...” [Barthes, 1972, p. 210]. The Imagists do not want to “ask” from the closed, largely exhausted Romantic paradigm, they have to create an image that is new in essence, which would go beyond the “established set” that have already once denoted the moon, the sky, or a ship, images that have been a component of the paradigm of their signifiers. This, in our opinion, gives a more thorough answer to what Pound’s “make it new” means.

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<sup>2</sup> As for the important connection between the new poetry and music. In the January (1913) issue of “Poetry” (where Imagists’ verses were published), there was also a poem “General William Booth Enters into Heaven” by the American poet Vachel Lindsay. In the margins of it were the instructions of the author (who was declaiming his works in the streets of big cities and on the roads of American outback, everywhere trading poems for food) concerning its performance under certain musical accompaniment: “Bass drum, slower and softer” and “Grand chorus – tambourines – all instruments in full blast” [Cheney, 2014, p. 42–43].

More than that. This is a fundamental denial of the existence of any paradigm of images-signifiers. After all, both the “philosophy” and the “technique” of Imagism are based on this idea of the urgency of image singularity, which appeals to the idea of the limitation of human perception of the world in its ontological and aesthetic hypostases. Emphasizing that “human nature” is not an inexhaustible “well” in its depth, but a limited “bucket”, not Hugo’s “constant flight over the abyss” [Hulme, 2004], Hulme says that the new poetry of “hard dry images” should fill the idea of beauty for a modern man through its localization in the concrete experience of the artist – reader as opposed to the unbounded immensity of the Romantic imagination. One of the important features of the new poetry lies in the poet’s sense of connection with one’s own “earthly” experience, being in consonance with the same modern experience of the reader: “He always remembers that he is connected with the earth. He may jump, but he always comes back”; “...he never flies away into the circumambient gas” [Ibid]. This is how the “earthly” image of the moon is born, in which the paradigm of Romantic personification gives way to a syntagma, which is formed by a new type of image. Syntagmatic imagination, according to Barthes, is a functional imagination that no longer sees the sign in its perspective, but instead foresees its development – its previous and subsequent connections, the bridges that it throws over to other signs. Barthes speaks of a “stem imagination” that resembles a chain or grid. It is also important that the dynamics of this image presupposes the installation of movable interchangeable parts, namely their combination and produces content or any new object in general [Barthes, 1972, p. 211].

The classic realization of the syntagmatic imagination of the Imagist can be seen in William Carlos Williams’ poem “*The Red Wheelbarrow*” (1923):

*so much depends  
upon*

*a red wheel  
barrow*

*glazed with rain  
water*

*beside the white  
chickens* [Ellmann, O’Clair, 1973, p. 318–319].

The poet gives the hint for its reading: “*The rhythm, though no more than a fragment, denotes a certain unquenchable exultation*” [Ellmann, O’Clair, 1973, p. 318].

The sixteen words of this poem are just as famous and almost as much commented on as the fourteen words of Pound’s “*In the Station of Metro*”. It is also one sentence, and its rhythm is provided by pauses of different length: long (graphically separated pairs of verses seem to form stanzas) and short (“totally” applied enjambment). Hugh Kenner, artificially transforming the poem into a sentence, says that it is banal, that it is impossible to imagine its addressee, nor to understand its purpose: “*But hammered on the typewriter into a thing made, ‘...’ the sixteen words exist in a different zone altogether, a zone remote from the world of sayers and sayings*” [Kenner, 1951].

So, what did Williams want to say with this minimalist picture of farm life, in which “*so much depends upon a red wheelbarrow*”? In my opinion, the combination of bright colors (*red – white*), the shine of raindrops is that joy (“*unquenchable exultation*”) from the beauty of simple things, which remains unnoticed due to daily hard work on land. Williams decomposes everyday life into “atomic components”, and this is done even visually, through spelling, because, after all, both “*wheelbarrow*” and “*rainwater*” should be written together, but parts of these complex words are even placed on an independent line, and, as such, are underlined, emphasized.

As an important feature of Williams’s form, “*artificial in the best sense of the word*”, Henry Sayre notes its connection with the visual arts: “*an orderly stanzaic arrangement, which possesses no particular thematic, grammatical, or oral logic and which is wholly visual*”. The researcher

compares Williams's *"The Red Wheelbarrow"* with Marcel Duchamp's *"Fountain"*, emphasizing the alleged common intention of the two artists – to take an ordinary object beyond utilitarian limits, turning it into an art object: *"It is crucial that Williams's material is banal, trivial: by placing this material in the poem, Williams underscores the distance the material has traveled, and the poem defines a radical split between the world of art and the world of barnyards, between a world which crystallizes the imagination and a world which is a mere exposition of the facts"* [Sayre, 1983, p. 74, 79].

That is, in the words of Roland Barthes, the subject in the centre of Williams's poem or in Duchamp's ready-made is "crossed out" from the utilitarian paradigm (agricultural tool or a sanitary-technical device), passing into the artistic paradigm. But, as Eliot would later write in *"Tradition and the Individual Talent"*, a modern poet should take into consideration that *"the difference between art and the event is always absolute <...>"* [Eliot, 1997, p. 46].

So is the idea of the Imagistic image-complex. The "event" should definitely include modality and intonation (after all, this is poetry). And it is it here, the intonation of *"unquenchable exultation"* "fertilizes" the minimalism of artistic means eliminating apparent banality, thereby revealing the main intention of the poet – to create the real image-complex with the help of minimal artistic means. Behind Pound's *"In the Metro Station"* and Williams's *"The Red Wheelbarrow"*, this event transformed into art complex is palpable, and therefore the comparison with Duchamp's static *"Fountain"* seems to be incorrect: the poet and the reader in their imagination have to go through a much more difficult path in searching and finding a complex to the given "objective correlative" than in the case of Duchamp's *"Fountain"*.

An "event" should definitely include modality and intonation (after all, this is poetry). And it is it, the intonation of *"unquenchable exultation"*, that "fertilizes" the minimalism of artistic means, leveling out the apparent banality, thus revealing the main intention of the poet – to create the same real image-complex with the help of minimal artistic means. As it is clearly seen in Williams's verse, speaking about an image that *"presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time"* [Pound, 1954, p. 4], Pound proves that the first ("intellectual") stage is finding those equations, patterns, or superpositions mentioned above. Emotion comes next, it is important, but only the second stage in the creation of an image-complex.<sup>3</sup>

After all, starting the poem with a statement about the significance of the object, Williams forms a new syntagma, encouraging the search for a connection between image and reality, image and place, image and feeling, individual close-up and macrocosm. As it seems, Williams is talking about a new, *modern pastoralism* here, which becomes obvious and powerful precisely in the focus of the one and only image, around which it is concentrated (after all, the poem is built precisely on the description of the subject – both the rain and the chickens are only its reflection companions).

As Williams argues, *"make it new"* does not at all mean a mandatory intention to transform the object into non-recognizability (albeit functional). In Duchamp's case, "novelty" is not created by transforming a familiar object into an image by turning it ninety degrees (that alone would not work), but by direct renaming, changing the signifier. The Imagist Williams, on the contrary, does not miss the opportunity to use the known to create a new syntagma that conveys *"unquenchable exultation"* in everyday life. After all, as the young Williams liked to repeat, *"no ideas but in things"*, but they exist; actually, these ideas *are* objects, and it is they who stand behind an Imagistic syntagma.

It is appropriate to compare *"The Red Wheelbarrow"* with the poem *"Tall Nettles"* where there is also such a single image. It is similar in theme, close in time, and written by Edward Thomas who is referred to as a "non-Modernist modern" in present-day criticism:

*Tall nettles cover up, as they have done  
These many springs, the rusty harrow, the plough  
Long worn out, and the roller made of stone:  
Only the elm butt tops the nettles now.*

<sup>3</sup> "It is the presentation of such a 'complex' instantaneously which gives the 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" [Pound, 1954, p. 4].



*This corner of the farmyard I like most:  
As well as any bloom upon the flower  
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost  
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower* [Sacks, 2003, p. 145].

The similar village yard, working tools, and rain are also allegedly seen in two stanzas with the help of one cross-cutting image – nettles. And although two quatrains of iambic pentameters with almost exact cross-rhyme are also marked by two enjambments, the difference between the “pastoral etudes” of Williams and Thomas is striking.

Thomas’s pastoral is autologous (no epithets or colors); it is not functional (an old and useless tool). And yet “so much depends on the nettles”: it becomes a reflection of internal clutter, “dustiness”, fatalism of the persona, a feeling of total hopelessness, when any blessed rain will still be only a temporary relief. Thus, Thomas’s “nettles” is a universal image-pattern that speaks to any reader of Romantic (or post-Romantic) poetry, because it is just a powerful, but also limited, marker of the inner state of persona, the “tool”, making the individual world of the lyric subject visible and accessible.

Thomas’s nettle does not form a new syntagma: conceptually and intonationally, it still draws from the “well” of the Romantic paradigm, although it is noticeably coloured by the catastrophic attitude of the end of the century. And so, paradoxically, the maximum degree of introspection of the carefully constructed pastoral of Edward Thomas converts it to almost an anti-pastoral, being compared to the apparently more “local” and less universal “The Red Wheelbarrow” of Williams.

So, from the Imagist’s point of view, much less depends on the “nettle” of Thomas than on the “red wheelbarrow” of Williams. Everything – both internal and external – depends on one cross-cutting image of an Imagist, and Thomas, the famous poetry critic, though far from sharing the Imagists’ ideas, understood it with the insight of a poet. And it was he, Edward Thomas, the poet, who saw this as a “defect” in Pound’s poems, writing in his review of Pound’s collection “Personae” for the literary column of “The Daily Chronicle”: “Of course, this is due partly to his faults and his pride in revolt, to his lack of all mere amiability, to his austerity, to his abruptness as of a swift beetle that suddenly strikes your cheek and falls stunned with its own force” [Davis, 1987, p. 107–108]. As we can see, Thomas immediately saw the total dependence of the new poetry on one external image (“bite”), which defines and forms a new syntagma each time. In this, as Barthes believes, “there is probably a genuine imagination of the sign; the sign is not only the object of a particular knowledge but also the object of a vision <...>, the sign is <...> the sensuous idea (une idée sensible)” [Barthes, 1972, p. 209].

That is, we deal here with a purely situational, each time new, line of meanings, horizontal series of impressions, a new modality of lyrical expression (“a re-faced moon” or “face-petals”; “triumph of a red wheelbarrow”): when in the well-known definition of the image given above, it is characterized as a complex, it means that the image (meaning) is not “firmly attached” to the word, like a symbol, but exists and “works” only at a certain time, in a certain place, with a certain reader. Like, for example, “wave-pine” in “Oread” by H.D. – this is the same connection-complex that creates a new syntagma: water – from the land, waves – from the lace of pine needles, the color of the sea – from the green of the forest. Or as in her poem “Hermes of the Ways”, that Pound considered the perfect example of Imagism poetry: sand is water, water is sand; dunes are waves, waves are dunes; grass is algae, and it is probably also salty:

*Hermes, Hermes,  
the great sea foamed,  
gnashed its teeth about me;  
but you have waited,  
where sea-grass tangles with  
shore-grass* [H.D., 1983, p. 39].

When an Imagist poet claims that there are no ideas – only in things, this does not mean using things for ideas, but recognizing their self-sufficiency, without which such an equation is

not possible. As Roland Barthes infers, the syntagmatic imagination of the sign, with its montage of discrete and mobile elements, is characteristic of poetry as a form of creativity [Barthes, 1972, p. 12]. It is Imagism with its “equation”, “pattern” and juxtaposition of images that is one of the brightest examples of such montage in the history of European poetry. On the other hand, it should be noted that “montage” is one of the important artistic techniques of Modernist poetics, which is used not only in poetry, but also in Modernist prose, for example, in Joyce’s “*Ulysses*” or H.D.’s “*Bid Me to Live*”. As we can see now, this is not a mechanically borrowed cinema technique, as it is commonly viewed, but a deeper, “syntagmatic” similarity. A new “current” syntagma is created exclusively by one impression of the poet and the reader, becomes a unique image of a single poem and excludes its further “universal” application in any “systemic” paradigm. Examples of similar syntagmas can be seen in the poetry of metaphysicians (for example, John Donne’s “stiff twin compasses” as a manifestation of the powerful connection of lovers), and further – in the poetry of their Modernist appreciators. It is the persistent search and creation of more and more new syntagmatic relations in the image – with one’s own self, with the rest of the world, with others, with life, and after all, that constitutes the essence of poetry. This is precisely the great influence of “small” Imagism on the further development of the poetry of the twentieth century.

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## THE ESSENCE OF AN IMAGE IN ENGLISH-AMERICAN IMAGISM: SINGULAR VERSUS UNIVERSAL

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**Key words:** *paradigm, syntagma, symbol, Roland Barthes, Romanticism, Symbolism, Imagism, T.E. Hulme, E. Pound, W. Carlos Williams, H.D., Edward Thomas.*

The paper is aimed at filling the gap in learning the formative image peculiarities of the English and American Imagistic poetry by analyzing the correspondence of the internal and the external and their correlation. This is where the answer lies, why T.S. Eliot called Imagism “an opening salvo” of English/American Modernist poetry. It also explains the reason for a long-term effect of this short-term “school” in the English poetry of the twentieth century.

Imagism hasn't left any extended or profound theory as far as the criteria for producing “hard, dry images” (T.E.Hulme) are concerned. Since then the problem has been under-studied and calls for more in-depth analysis. The modern theoretical background of the paper includes the ideas of S. Averintsev and M. Gasparov, Paul Ricoeur and Gaston Bachelard; the criticism of the Imagism founders (T.E. Hulme and E. Pound) as well as its present-day English and American researchers. The major theoretical points highlight the important features of image transformation in Imagism: the dual (semantic and psychological) nature of an image (P. Ricoeur); loss of its axiological constituent thus forfeiting its wholeness (M. Girshman); its non-permanent essence (G. Bachelard). All these “new” sides underlie too general and vague definition of an image as “an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time” given by Ezra Pound, his definitive denial of using images as “ornaments” and the emphasis on the image affiliation with speech, not language. The fight doesn't have to be limited only to opposing Romanticism (as in Hulme's “Romanticism and Classicism”). Equally significant and far more sophisticated is the distinction between Symbolic and Imagistic essence of an image (Pound's “Retrospect” and “Gaudier Brzeska”). For Pound, the main criterion is the receptive potential of an image, its semantic openness which offsets its meaning as finally fixed in some symbol.

The paper examines the possibility to apply Roland Barthes's idea (“L'imagination du signe”, 1962) of the crucial influence of the interior (symbolic) relationship and two exterior (paradigmatic and syntagmatic) relationships on the formation of both single image and the total imagery of a certain type of art conscience – consequently, of Symbolism, Romanticism and Imagism. In the early period of Imagism development (the poetry of F. Flint, E. Storer, to a lesser extent, of T.E. Hulme) the images still preserve the inner affinity with the signified objects (concepts) as seen in Romantic and Symbolic image “patterns”. And throughout Imagism development, this inner affinity is being weakened until a distant outer resemblance is left. It is clearly seen in Hulme's “Autumn”, Pound's “In a Station of the Metro”, H.D.'s “Oread”, “Hermes of the Ways” et al.

The close reading of the W.C. Williams's poem “The Red Wheelbarrow” is carried out in front of the “Tall Nettles” by Edward Thomas (1878–1917), his contemporary, who is now considered to be one of the “non-Modernist modern” poets. It is stated that the central image of the red wheelbarrow in its every detail constitutes a modern pastoral while Thomas's nettles stand for psychological matrix of personal melancholy and despair.

Syntagmatic relations also involve the further interaction of signs in the form of “superposition”, forming montage as one of the important Modernist techniques not only in poetry, but also in Modernist prose. And it becomes evident that it is not a mechanically borrowed cinema technique, as it is commonly viewed, but a deeper, “syntagmatic” similarity.

The result of the research, based on the analysis undertaken, seems to prove its initial point: the poems of T.E. Hulme, Ezra Pound, W. Carlos Williams, Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) taken as models, manifest that the image in Imagism is every time constructed as a new actual syntagma of the common imagination of a poet and a reader to become the unique image for every single poem without its further “universal” use in any virtual paradigm.

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