CHAPTER - 4

THE IMPACT OF T.E. HULME

T.S. ELIOT

The impact of T.E. Hulme cannot be ignored when we consider the thoughts and ideas of poets and critics who have cast an influence on the theory and practice of literature since the second decade of the 20th century and continued to do so till the 1960's. The influence of Hulme was cast in varying degrees; in some cases it was direct and perceptible, in the other, it was oblique though substantial. The importance of his beliefs can be judged in this context because they would not have been carried forward had they not been relevant to the sustained growth and interest of literature. Hulme's enterprise remained incomplete but even in that state it had succeeded in creating an influence and thus survived the skepticism that accompanied reviews of his work.

It is commonly accepted that T.S. Eliot embodied the spirit of Hulme's anti-humanistic, anti-romantic, religious conservatism in the critical outlook on life. Eliot was a mature writer and thinker who was widely believed to be the single most influential mind of the modern period of English literature. A critic of the stature of F.R. Leavis had said that a proper understanding of English literature in the first half of the twentieth century must be based on an understanding of the genius of T.S. Eliot. Indeed Eliot commands such respect and awe even today that we are forced to realize the difficulty of the task of placing T.E. Hulme near him. However, while tracing the influence of Hulme
on the thought and art of Eliot, we can quote Eliot's tribute to Hulme in *The Criterion*, 1924:

> When Hulme was killed in Flanders in 1917, he was known to a few people as a brilliant talker, a brilliant amateur of metaphysics, and the author of two or three of the most beautiful short poems in the language. In this volume he appears to be a forerunner of a new attitude of mind, which should be the 20th century mind, if the 20th century is to have a mind of its own. Hulme is classical, reactionary and revolutionary; the antipodes of the eclectic, tolerant and democratic mind of the end of the last century. And his writing, his fragmentary notes and his outlines, is the writing of an individual who wished to satisfy himself before he cared to enchant a cultivated public.²

The influence of T.E. Hulme on Eliot has been discussed by critics.³ The theory of impersonality, the writing of poetry in free-verse, the theory of classical restraint, the doctrine of anti-humanism and anti-romanticism: all stress the fact that Hulme exerted tremendous influence on T.S. Eliot.

The influence of Hulme on T.S. Eliot can be discussed in the following:

a) the anti-romantic, anti-humanistic philosophy.

b) the aesthetic and literary principles.

First of all Eliot agreed with Hulme's notion of humanism. Hulme believed that absolute values would ensure a corresponding attitude.
strongly recommended the religious attitude as a satisfactory critique of enquiry and as a principle administering the creative and receptive impulse. Without this solid base, creativity would become nothing less than anarchy. Hulme detected a direct connection between the humanistic philosophy and art forms since the Renaissance. Humanism, he felt, attained its highest glory in romanticism. The essence of romanticism was 'placing of Perfection in humanity.' Hulme's anti-humanistic stand was a firm belief in the subordination of man to absolute values. Hulme read a change in the critical attitude and interest in his time. He therefore remarked:

This constancy of man thus provides perhaps the greatest hope of the possibility of radical transformation of society.4

Disagreeing with Irving Babbitt's conception of humanism, T.S. Eliot preferred associating with the view of T.E. Hulme. He wrote to the editor of the

Bookman:

My chief apprehension about humanism has been lest the teaching of Mr. Babbitt should be transformed by a host of zealous disciples, into the hard and fast dogma of a new ethical church or something in between a church and a political party... Hulme's use of the term is traditional and just and if our new humanists mean something entirely then they, should call it by some other name.5

The term 'humanist,' as understood by Eliot comes close to the meaning in which it was used by Hulme:
I agree with what Hulme says, and I am afraid that many modern Humanists are explicitly or implicitly committed to the view which Hulme denounces; and that they are, in consequence, men of the Renaissance, rather than the men of our time. I cannot help feeling that Mr. Foerster and Mr. Babbitt are nearer to the view of Rousseau than they are to the religious in view... It is to the immense credit of Hulme that he found for himself an ‘absolute’ to which Man can never attain.6

Daiches also felt that ‘Hulme’s views on classicism, on religion, on liberalism, are constantly repeated by Eliot in his later critical writing... Both writers attack romantic individualism, liberalism, and to a certain extent, democracy.7

As a thinker, Hulme had considerable impact on Eliot. The Speculations was published in 1924 and Eliot discussed the book in the ‘Commentary’ in The Criterion. Eliot expressed his doubts as to how the book would be received by the reading public. Eliot, himself, appeared to accept Hulme as a serious thinker of the twentieth century. He wrote thus:

With its peculiar merits, this book is most unlikely to meet with the slightest comprehension from the usual reviewer. With all its defects – it is an outline of work to be done, and not an accomplished philosophy – it is a work of very great significance...8
While there have been critics like Roberts, Daiches, Wimsatt and Brooks who saw similarities between the ideas of Hulme and Eliot but were unable to set a definite date of their relationship; there has been others who are willing to take their knowledge to another date before the publication of *Speculations*. They are, Victor Brombert, who without supplying any evidence, said that Eliot could have met Hulme in London between 1915-1916.9 Sean Lucy in *T.S. Eliot and the Idea of Tradition*, 1960, maintained that Eliot had been familiar with the ideas of Hulme right from the days of the Imagist movement.

It is a well-known fact that Eliot had to cut short his stay at Marburg, Germany in 1914 due to the outbreak of World War I and come to London. By that time Hulme had joined the Honourable Artillery Company. He was wounded in April 1915 and returned to London. Herbert Read, in his introduction to *Speculations*, writes that 'upon recovery he was gazetted to the Royal Marine Artillery and returned to the front late in 1915.'10 There seems to be disagreement regarding Read’s opinion. Ronald Schuchard maintains that:

Hulme moved back to his renowned 67 Frith Street salon, the Tuesday evening center of London literary activity from 1912 till the outbreak of war, and lived there until March 1916. It was during this ten-month period that Eliot may well have been introduced to Hulme by any one of their mutual friends, especially Pound, who was introducing Eliot to as many as many literary friends as possible.11
Besides Pound, who could have been instrumental in introducing Hulme to Eliot; Orage, the editor of *The New Age* and Bertrand Russell could also have played a role in bringing the two men together. This has been correctly adjudged by Schuchard, because Orage often met Hulme and Pound in the Café Royal at Piccadilly as they were not only contributors to the weekly review but Orage himself had a keen sense of critical judgment. Bertrand Russell had the occasion of exchanging views with T.E. Hulme through *The New Age* where Hulme debated with the former's view on Weltanschauung as discussed in 'A Free Man’s Worship.' Later, when Hulme joined the war, he regularly wrote for *The New Age* in support of a military solution and against the pacifist stand of Russell. It may be mentioned here that Eliot knew Russell very well. Therefore, there could have been an indirect acquaintance with Hulme through Bertrand Russell between 1914-1915.

Eliot must have been familiar with Hulme's poetry, as they were published under the title 'The Complete Poetical Works of T.E. Hulme' in *The New Age*, 23 January, 1912 and repeated as an appendix to Ezra Pound's *Ripostes*, 1913, with a prefatory note by Pound. Again, Pound had included 'Trenches,' a poem abbreviated from the conversation of 'Mr. T.E.H.' in the *Catholic Anthology 1914-1915*, which Eliot edited. Thus, these facts point towards Eliot's knowledge, understanding and absorption of Hulme's poetry and also explained his remark that 'the poems of T.E. Hulme only needed to be read aloud to have immediate effect.' In the same essay, Eliot recollects his experience of 'Extension' lecturing. He wrote:
I have found only two ways of leading any pupil to like anything with the right liking: to present them with a selection of the simpler facts about a work—its conditions, its setting, its genesis—or else to spring the work on them in such a way that they were not prepared to be prejudiced against it.\(^{16}\)

Schuchard gives valuable information while trying to establish that Eliot knew about Hulme before 1917 and had adopted his poem 'The Embankment' to be recited in his extension lectures.\(^{17}\) The extension lectures themselves reveal, according to Ronald Schuchard, Eliot's interest in and familiarity with Hulme's philosophy:

The 'Syllabus of Course of Six Lectures on Modern French Literature, T. Stearns Eliot, M.A. (Harvard),' published by Oxford in September 1916, shows Eliot's first course to be partly a synthesis of the dominant ideas embodied in the neoclassicism of Babbitt, the royalist—Catholic authoritarianism of Maurras and the Christian humanism of Hulme... In the final lecture, 'Before and after the War: Questions for the Future,' he discusses the philosophy and influence of Bergson... Interestingly enough, for his text of Bergson's \textit{Introduction to Metaphysics} Eliot uses Hulme's translation.\(^{18}\)

T.E. Hulme had defined poetry as 'life seen in a mirror, it must be absolutely removed from reality, never to be attained.'\(^{19}\) Hulme developed the
concept of the image as a complex intellectual and aesthetic equivalent to thought, experience and sensation. The image was closest to a ‘physical and visual scene.’ Hulme emphasized the need for concrete expression and he considered language to be inadequate in the attempt towards concrete effect. He knew that the difficulty lay in representing accurately through a ‘communal’ medium. Poetry was distinguished from prose on the ground that it was not a counter language but a ‘visual concrete one.’ This property implied that poetry was not an unconscious or vague art. Image transferred exactness and concreteness to poetry. Hulme was also aware that ‘vividness and actuality of feeling’ could not be aesthetically satisfying if it dwelt on the personal. He stated:

Each of us has his own way of feeling, liking and disliking.

But language denotes these states by the same word in every case, so that it is only able to fix the objective and impersonal aspect of the emotion which we feel.

Hulme understood that description of emotion was simply an inadequate method, one had to objectify it to bring about the individuality it possessed. Therefore, Hulme’s poetic theory was the combination of aesthetic and ethical principles. He had also stated that ‘the dry hard, classical verse’ which he foresaw as the dominant type of poetry, would be ‘classical’ in the sense that it would be an honest representation of the possible. The poet, Hulme thought, would avoid the infinite and concentrate on ‘the light of ordinary day, never the light that never was on land or sea.’
Literary standards ultimately meant moral standards to Eliot; both were inseparable. This combination gave rise to tenets that have come to identify Eliot as critic and poet, counted as the greatest among the moderns. Like Hulme, Eliot did not want to keep the religious framework as a form of didactic bearing upon the poems. Hulme's classicism which admitted the fixed nature of man and regarded progress merely as material and physical entity and not as an intellectual property was extended to poetry and this can be cited as the theory of the 'impersonal' that Eliot effectively upheld through criticism and poetry.

The above views of Hulme on poetic theory were enlarged by Eliot under different terms which eventually came to be associated with him. In 'The Metaphysical Poets,' Eliot displayed a keen understanding behind the images of Donne, throwing light upon the poet's ability to hold on to thought and experience simultaneously. The image or metaphor was in Eliot's view, a whorl that balanced the intellectual perception of experience and poetic expression. The same principle, i.e., the transfer of feeling into art was highlighted in 'Hamlet and his Problems.'

Eliot here coined the term 'objective correlative' which can be taken as a medium (metaphor) through which emotion or feeling can be displayed.

The theory of impersonality was not only an aesthetic principle, it carried ethical dimensions too. Just as Hulme considered the dogma of original sin as an intellectual concept that determined the attitude of literature and art, Eliot too, thought that the moral and ethical dimensions of literature can never be ignored. The exclusion of the personal element and direct reference to
feeling gave rise to the governing principles of 'impersonality' in art. This, then is the classicism of both Hulme and Eliot.

Classicism in verse, to Hulme, was the restraint, the holding back from succumbing to the personal response. He objected to romanticism because it encouraged the intervention of the poet's personality on the art. The business of the poet was not personal expression but craft. Eliot reiterated this position in 'Tradition and Individual Talent' -

The poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways.26

Behind the 'classical restraint,' there lay a deeper social and ethical dimension. Hulme's classicism was based on the understanding that man was 'incapable of attaining any kind of perfection, because, either nature, as a result of original sin, or the result of evolution, he encloses within him certain anti-nomies... The best results of a certain discipline which introduces order into this internal anarchy.'27 Eliot wrote in 'Poetry and Propaganda,'28 that in the end, the aim was at a 'theory of life.' The enjoyment of art could not be without a philosophy, particularly religious philosophy. Poetry was, Eliot said, a fusion of the personal 'in the impersonal and general, not extinguished, but enriched, expanded, developed and more itself by becoming something not itself.'29

The romantic conception of man, Hulme thought, would destroy 'tradition' and 'organisation'30 of society. In this respect, he added that the
romantic poets could be classified into two categories. The category in which they 'resemble all the great poets'\textsuperscript{31} was acceptable to him, and the category in which they revealed their characteristic romanticism, was rejected. Eliot too, refers to order and authority as mechanism of social organisation. Poetry, thought Eliot, was concerned with the 'historical sense.'\textsuperscript{32} This 'sense' made the poet a part of the past as well of the future. An absorption of this sense was a definite step in discipline and order. Poetry was, no doubt, an expression of ideas but the idea of the poet could not have an upper hand over art.

His argument is rather that only those philosophies which are traditional and accepted can be put to use by the poet. At this stage, the question of the truth of a poet's philosophy, is, for Eliot, entirely beside the point. Only the effect of ideas upon the poetic form is of any relevance to the problems of the poet.\textsuperscript{33}

Eliot's understanding of Hulme is further amplified in \textit{The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism} (1933) where he quotes a passage from \textit{Speculations}. In it, he outlines the importance of having a purpose in criticism and poetry. In both cases the writer can transcend the confines of language by discovering a latent import and at the same time registering its legitimate place in the passage of tradition. The interplay of word and image becomes a tool and enlarges the scope of language at the same time.

Lyndall Gordon thought that Hulme's 'Conversion' was the basis of Eliot's 'The Death of Saint Narcissus.'\textsuperscript{34} In this poem Eliot was able (like
Hulme) to surrender his private restless search for religious identity beneath the character in the poem.

Both Hulme and Eliot understood that the use of poetry and criticism was principally a social act and they had a reciprocal relation with the reading public. It is worth mentioning that Hulme had tried to reform taste, revolutionized ideas and gave voice to the ethos of his age and Eliot had succeeded concretely in his lifetime in a similar pursuit. The subject of poetry could even be the ‘unpoetic;’ Hulme had stated that it hardly mattered whether the subject of poetry was a pair of ‘shoes’ or the dress of a lady. Eliot also believed that any experience could be the staple of poetry provided that while escaping from personality, the poet transferred the whole complex in a valid manner. Eliot’s own poetry reflected the effacement of personality and communication through an intricately woven structure of solid images to reach the ‘exact curve’ of the desired feeling.

‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’ illustrates the poetic doctrine of Hulme effectively. The whole poem passes from image to image signifying the state of indecision, juxtaposing the central character’s shift from pompous self evaluation to a realization of his own impotency. Eliot builds the poem through images of a sterile evening when Prufrock contemplates ‘an overwhelming question.’ The images complement Prufock’s state of mind. ‘The poem continues in this way, following a dream labyrinth of smoke-filled streets, stairways, rooms, which lead only back into the uncertain mind which created the labyrinth as an image of its own vain endeavour to find itself.’ The poem creates disparate images, for e.g. ‘In the room the women come and go /
Talking of Michelangelo. 'My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin / My necktie rich and modest, but asserted a simple pin - / [They will say: 'But how his arms and legs are thin!']; 'I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;' 'When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall;' the allusion to 'Prince Hamlet' is placed alongside the confession that he is 'Full of high sentence, but a little obtuse/... Almost, at times, the Fool.' The purpose cannot be missed here. The aim of such an arrangement is to achieve two things. One is to contrast Prufrock with Hamlet, socially and the other is to draw a parallel with him. The condition of Prufock and Hamlet are akin in the their indecisive character. They are also alike for both of them contemplate an important question' but subsequently fail to carry it out. The helpless, impotent realization does not ease the sterile and immobile condition of Prufock and Hamlet. Thus, the 'piling up of images succeeds in demonstrating the oscillating mind of Prufock and reaches the closest in defining his feelings. This poem exemplifies that discourse can be replaced by 'dry, hard' images.

Daiches says, 'In so far as Hulme was an imagist and provided the movement with a philosophy, and as Eliot was an imagist in some of his early poems, imagism has affinities with the intellectual position of both writers.' Despite Eliot's admission in *To Criticize the Critic* that the French symbolists like Laforgue, Baudelaire and Mallarme had cast a deep influence on him, traces of Hulme's 'A Lecture on Modern Poetry' can be discerned. The irregular verse pattern replaced the old metres; the new poetry was now written in free verse though the word 'free' was misleading in the sense that it required the poet to continuously retreat from a metrical composition and yet indicate a close
suggestion of traditional iambic metre. In this context Eliot mentions *The Embankment* as one of the exquisite examples of ‘freedom’ in verse working against a background of limitation.

Graham Hough in *Image and Experience* summarized that Eliot’s understanding of free verse was based on two rules. The first was, the starting with a conventional pattern and continually receding from it. The second stipulated that the poet started without any pattern and continuously approached a conventional one.

Hough located the iambic decasyllables in ‘The Love Song of Alfred Prufrock’

Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels

And sawdust restaurants with oyster shells:

Streets that follow like a tedious argument

Of insidious intent

.... Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,

And seeing that it was a soft October night,

Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

Interspersed within the lines, Hough found the black verse:

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes,

The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window panes.

Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening.41
Free verse, as Eliot practised, was closer to Hulme than to Pound’s. Pound’s free verse, Hough said, was more or less prose language. The intense craftsmanship of adopting rare and uncommon verse pattern (Hough found the trochaic dactylic in ‘Homage to Sextus Propertius’) was Pound’s personal creation and one of the most ‘difficult to sustain.’ A comparison of Hulme’s ‘The Embankment’ and Eliot’s ‘Preludes’ reveal the iambic metre lurking behind them. Both poets distorted the traditional rhythm and also adhered to it in order to give an impression of irregularity.

The Embankment

Once, in finesse of fiddles found I ecstasy,
In a flash of gold heels on the hard pavement.

Now see I
That warmth’s the very stuff of poesy.

Oh, God make small
The old star-eaten blanket of the sky,
That I may fold it round me and in comfort lie.

Preludes

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways
Six O’clock
The burnt-out ends of smoky days
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about our feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

Eliot had remarked that 'The Embankment' hovered over the iambic metre, much like his own verse and that is why he thought that free verse was not the 'control' over language but 'mastery' over it. A consideration of Hulme's 'A Lecture on Modern Poetry' and Eliot's introduction to 'Anabase' will show how close they were in their aim of achieving a general effect in poetry. Hulme had said that the time has come to give up the constraints of metre and measured syllables. Syntax and exactness of feeling cannot go together; the need was to break up the regular metre and form a verse style that would match the sensation and its representation. Eliot wrote in the introduction:

The reader has to allow the images to fall into his memory successively without questioning the reasonableness of each at the moment; so that, in the end, the total effect is produced. Such selection of a sequence of images and ideas has nothing to do with it. There is a logic of the imagination as well as a logic of concepts.
Hulme had said in the ‘Notes on Language and Style,’ that ‘The object must cause the emotion before the poem can be written.’ Art creates, it does not copy beauty. Therefore creation rests on the first sensation. In both ways the sensation must be powerful enough to evoke a suitable response; the response, likewise, must keep close to the sensation aroused. Hulme’s belief in the objectification of emotion in art is reflected in the doctrine of ‘objective correlative’ formulated by Eliot in the essay ‘Hamlet and his Problems.’ The notion of objective correlative, impersonality in poetry are all intertwined with the primary object viz., the poem itself. Both Hulme and Eliot used the image or metaphor as the supreme agent of conveying experience. The organic quality of the poetic image replaced discursive language. It checked the infiltration of the personal; it hardened the sensation felt, objectifying it instead of the ‘moaning and whining’ that Hulme was thoroughly impatient with. The image performed dual functions. It was not only an equation for human emotion or experience, it was by itself an aesthetic object with an organic function in a poem. In ‘The Wasteland,’ the images are ‘piled’ up exhibiting their functional character in building up a total effect. The simultaneous movement of images, of course, called for deft handling in the expression of a complex emotion, yet Eliot successfully accomplished it using known metaphors to combine with new ones. The allusions set in context and time shift spatially and in fragments finally rest on an integrated scale. The irregular moves of ‘The Wasteland’s’ sequential plane reach a composite form. The effect is the same as the feeling that remains after dwelling on a piece of sculpture that is made up of different planes resembling the conceptualization of a special perspective of the
sculptor. Poetry, thought Hulme, was the involvement with craft, not personal expression. The main strand running through 'The Wasteland' is of spiritual death. The squalor and depravity is communicated with the aid of 'a heap of broken images.'

A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.  
(Lines 62 and 63)
The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Glowed on the marble,  
(Lines 77 and 78)
OOOO that Shakespearian Rag –
Its so elegant
So intelligent
‘What shall I do now? What shall I do now?’  
(Lines 128 – 131).
I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives,
Old man with wrinkled woman breasts, can see
At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.  
(Lines 218 – 223)
He who was living is now dead
We who were living are now dying
With a little patience.  
(Lines 328 – 330)
What is the city over the mountains
Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
Falling towers
Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal.

(Lines 371 – 376).

In this decayed hole among the mountains
In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
There is an empty chapel, only the winds home.
It has no windows, and the door swings,
Dry bones can harm no one.

(Lines 385 – 390).

These continuous images that move in the past and the present reflect the unsystematic design of ‘The Wasteland’ which was necessary to bring emphasis upon the development in the structure of the poem itself. At the same time, the disordered structure helped in bringing out the dramatic impact. Language and action were acting together in effecting an internal encounter within the poem. In Hulme’s and Eliot’s case, the dramatic encounter is that of man’s fixed, unchanging status. The moral stagnation is brought forth along with a parallel focus on the craft of poetry. The dramatic essence is carried out by the verse pattern, the deliberate informal relocating of verbs and adjectives:
Once, in finesse of fiddles found I ecstasy, in a flash of gold
heels on the hard pavement
Now see I
That warmth's the very stuff of poesy.

(The Embankment)

Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.
In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.
And indeed there will be time
To wonder, 'Do I dare?' and, 'Do I dare?'
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair -
(They will say: 'How his hair is growing thin!')

(The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock)

The 'spring' or movement of their poetry accomplishes a dramatic
purpose, chiefly due to the use of language and its devices. A reading of
Hulme's 'The Embankment' and Eliot's 'Prufock' helps in understanding the
issues and concerns confronting art and intellect. The individual necessity
arising out the consciousness of man's moral position is placed in contemporary
scale within the form of poetry. The escape of the personal is evident and
equally so is the approach near the universal in the personal.
Hulme had tried to erect a legitimate position for the religious outlook and it's bearing upon the art of an age. By the religious outlook he had ruled out projection of religious emotion. The religious outlook represented control and discipline to remain within the possible and not to dwell in the realm of dreams. In order to attain abstraction in verse, analogy and metaphor were the twin instruments to facilitate it. 'Fancy is not mere decoration added to plain speech... It is only by new metaphors, that is, by fancy, that it can be made precise,' Hulme asserted in 'Romanticism and Classicism.' The operation of fancy picked up 'vague phrases containing ideas.' These underwent a change 'according to the purpose of the poem' and finally the choice of form was 'as important as the individual pieces and scraps of emotion of which the poem is made up.' Here, the moral and aesthetic position of the poet are one and the craft of poetry was to arrange both positions within the structure. In 'Journey of the Magi' dry and hard images are included in an anti-romantic vein.

'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter'

...There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night — fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
And a hard time we had of it.

We can see how well the 'scraps of emotion' have been woven together. The modern day images blend into the journey of the wise men who are themselves on the surface uninspired by their journey. The last paragraph reveals a determination:

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This : were we led all that way for
Birth or Death?

The poem has given rise to abstraction of idea, the arrival of a new order and like all things that are new, the birth is painful. The progress of the Magi is the journey of every individual in search of knowledge and enlightenment and confronting it is a disturbing experience. However the truly sincere follower would seek the journey again inspite the trouble.
Notes:


2. The Criterion, 2: 231-232, 7th April, 1924.


Hulme’s influence on the Imagists was superficial, however, compared to that which his view of poetry, culture and tradition and relation between the three had on a group of critics and poets – particularly on Eliot. Indeed Hulme’s views on classicism, on revision, on liberalism, are constantly repeated by Eliot in his later critical writing.

Michael Roberts in his ‘Introduction,’ T.E. Hulme, v, 1982 observed that:

The most important single recipient of Hulme’s influence is undoubtedly T.S. Eliot. It is clearly enough acknowledged in Eliot’s famous self classification of ‘Classicist in Literature, Royalist in Politics, Anglo Catholic in Religion.’ Eliot takes over directly from Hulme both the rejection of humanism, understood in Hulme’s way as liberal – romantic optimism, and the connected idea that the tenacity of its assumptions is much increased by the way in which they saturate the language we use, from which they can be squeezed out only by the most unrelenting vigilance and effort. The ‘Wasteland,’ ‘Alfred Prufrock’ as affinities with the imagism Hulme practised and defended.

However, Roberts was also of the view that ‘in recent years Hulme’s theory has helped to prevent critics from condemning swans because they were not geese, but his influence must not be exaggerated... T.S. Eliot knew very little of Hulme directly until the Speculations were published in 1924’ (208).

Wimsatt and Brooks, Literary Criticism: A Short History, 660, they thought:

Much of his influence upon his contemporaries has therefore to be referred to his lectures and conversations. (He and Eliot, by the way, had no personal contact.) It has been argued that Hulme’s actual
influence upon his immediate generation was much slighter than our present day reading of Speculations would suggest. Yet the parallels between his position and Eliot’s are striking.


7. Daiches, David. 91.

8. The Criterion, 2: April, 1924.

Eliot is said to have regretted the omission of T.E. Hulme in E.B. Osborn’s The New Elizabethans: A First Selection of the Lives of Young Men who have fallen in the Great War. He wrote in the review: ‘Mr. Osborn has omitted one soldier who was a real poet – T.E. Hulme’ – Athenaeum, 4640: 134, 4th April, 1919.

Eliot was dismayed in 1920: ‘Let the public ... ask itself why it has never heard of the poems of T.E. Hulme,’ – Chapbook, 2, 2nd March.


10. Speculations, p. x.


13. Hulme wrote under the pseudonym ‘North-Staff’ and titled his papers as ‘War Notes,’ printed in Further Speculations as: ‘The Kind of Rubbish We Oppose,’ ‘Why We are in Favour of this War,’ ‘North Staff Resents Mr. Russell’s Rejoinder,’ and ‘North Staff Continues where He Left Off.’
14. Russell narrates that he had lent Eliot and his wife a room in his flat, in his
Autobiography, Allen and Unwin, 1968. This has also been pointed out in
Schuchard's account.


17. ‘Eliot and Hulme in 1916: Toward a Revaluation of Eliot’s Critical and


1925.


22. ‘Bergson’s Theory of Art,’ Speculations, 165.

23. Speculations, 133.


29. Kojecky, Roger. T.S. Eliot’s Social Criticism, London, Faber and Faber, 99,
1971.


31. Speculations, 124.

1934.


35. ‘Romanticism and Classicism,’ *Speculations*, 137.

36. ‘Romanticism and Classicism,’ *Speculations*, 133.


42. Hough, 100.


46. *Speculations*, 118.

47. *Further Speculations*, 73.

48. ‘The Wasteland.’

49. ‘Notes on Language and Style,’ 496.
At Grass

The eye can hardly pick them out
From the cold shade the shelter in
Till wind distresses tail and mane;
Then one crops grass, and moves about
-The other seeming to look on –
And stands anonymous again.

Yet fifteen years ago, perhaps
Two dozen distances sufficed
To fable them; faint afternoons
Of cups and Stakes and Handicaps,
Whereby their names were artificed
To inlay faded, classic Junes –

Silks at the start; against the sky
Numbers and parasols; outside,
Squadrons of empty cars, and heat,
And littered grass; then the long cry
Hanging unhushed till it subside
To stop-press columns on the street.

Do memories plague their ears like flies?
They shake their heads. Dusk brims the shadows.
Summer by summer all stole away,
The starting-gates, the crowds and cries-
All but the unmolesting meadows.
Almanacked, their names live; they

Have slipped their names, and stand at ease,
Or gallop at what must be joy,
And not a field glass sees them home,
Or curious stop-watch prophecies;
Only the groom, and the groom’s boy,
With bridles in the evening come.

Philip Larkin was associated with ‘The Movement’ along with Kinsley Amis and Thom Gunn in the 1950’s. ‘The Movement’ was engaged in undoing the poetic tradition laid by Eliot and Dylan Thomas. Philip Larkin was a new generation poet responding to a new literary scene. His view of life and experience and literary form manifesting experience was widely diverse from the modern movement initiated by Hulme. Larkin did not like the intellectual framework of modern poetry. He did not want to address any profound question on experience and sensibility. His theory was rather simple, to keep poetry close to common experience, to ordinary life. In circumstances such as these, Philip Larkin seems to be unsuitable to project the influence of Hulme.
However, there is ample scope for drawing the influence of Hulme upon Larkin’s poetry. The belief in straightforward depiction carried with it Hulme’s emphasis on exactness and concrete depiction. Through his poetry, Larkin had showed the common man’s mundane aspects of existence. Hulme’s innovative use of language can be seen reflected in Larkin’s verse. Though Hulme’s poetry was ‘Imagist’, the resemblance with Larkin can be observed in matter of simplicity of treatment and combined with it, the element of surprise.

In ‘At Grass,’ key words like – ‘cups,’ ‘stakes,’ ‘numbers and parasols,’ ‘the starting gates,’ ‘the crowds and cries’ bring about a juxtaposition in the situation of the race horses and their past glory. Larkin had aimed at precise description, keeping close to the actual. He has used unassuming language to provide an imagery that spreads time from the past to the present life of inactivity. Larkin’s imagery is subtle in effect; it combines a feeling of compassion though not overt and a feeling of muted sadness. ‘Larkin thinks himself not as a gifted seer, but as a man speaking to men. In his view, the poet’s uniqueness lies mainly in his technical ability, his power to compose sequences of words that express fully and adequately the human situation.’

Above The Dock

Above the quiet dock in midnight,

Tangled in the tall mast’s corded height,

Hangs the moon. What seemed so far away

Is but a child’s balloon, forgotten after play.
This poem by Hulme is a contemplation of the 'moon' suspended in the sky. The surprise follows with the comparison with 'a child's balloon' that looks forlorn in its abandoned state. Moreover, there is a distinct rhyming pattern a a b b. Hulme had said that he did not want the new poetry to be the 'same as vers libre.' The aim of poetry, Hulme had continued, was the production of a unified impression and 'this of course takes away the predominance of metre and a regular number of syllables as the element of perfection in words.' The three guidelines of Imagist principles outlined by Pound has the third rule addressing the question of rhythm. Pound wrote, 'As regarding rhythm to compose in the sequence of musical phrase, not in the sequence of a metronome.'

Philip Larkin, keeping within the mode of 'The Movement' wrote using rhythm as one of the salient features of his poetry. Recollecting his meeting with Vernon Watkins in Required Writing, he agreed with Watkin's stress on form and rhythm. Watkins had said that D.H. Lawrence had shaped a poem through words whereas Yeats shaped his poems like an instrument on which the poem could be played. Larkin responded by 'asking him if he thought form so important.' Watkins replied 'Poetry rhymes all along the lines not only at the ends.'

Thus, Larkin focused on syntactical aspects of the poem, particularly the rhythm. Though his poems do not convey a complex structure on the surface, they give the impression of informal yet strict rhyming. 'Deceptions' can be used as an illustration to demonstrate the closeness as well as the distinction with Hulme's theory of rhythm.
Even so distant, I can taste the grief,
Bitter and sharp with stalks, he made you gulp.
The sun’s occasional print, the brisk brief
Worry of wheels along the street outside.
Where bridal London bows the other way,
And light, unanswerable and tall and wide,
Forbids the scar to heal, and drives
Shame out of hiding. All the unhurried day
Your mind lay open like a drawer of knives.

Slums, years, have buried you. I would not dare
Console you if I could. What can be said,
Except that suffering is exact, but where
Desire takes charge, readings will grow erratic?
For you would hardly care
That you were less deceived, out on that bed,
Than he was, stumbling up the breathless stair
To burst into fulfilment’s desolate attic.

The iambic metre is present no doubt, but it does not appear to weigh upon the poem. It rather moves like the inner speech of the girl. ‘Above the Dock’ by Hulme, previously referred, also follows an iambic metre at least in the first line, subtly hidden by the number of syllables:

Above | the quiet | dock | in mid | night
The second line does not begin with the expected unstressed syllable but as it continues, it picks up the iambic metre once again. The crux of the matter is that Hulme did recognize the importance of rhythm but did not want to consider it as a strait jacket to fit poetry into. Larkin demonstrates a simplicity and ease through the rhythmic movement of his poems.

‘The form is not a discipline but a constraint, not a means of heightening language but a means of repressing it....’ Though Larkin did not want poetry to be highly intellectual, he incorporated everyday images into the poem. In ‘Deceptions,’ he brings in concrete images to convey the pain and suffering of the raped girl: ‘Bitter and sharp with stalks, he made you gulp.’ In the same poem, the last line conveys the contrast in the feelings of the man who comes to meet the girl. ‘That you were less deceived, out on that bed, | Than he was, stumbling up the breathless stair | To burst into fulfillment’s desolate attic.’ Here the images are strong in their harshness of experience. In Larkin we find the rhythm and syntax arising out of ordinary speech narrative. The iambic pentametre has been camouflaged behind the rhythm of the speech, suggesting a closeness with free verse, though actually it is not.

Considering Hulme and Larkin as technicians of language, they give the illustration of a distinction as well as of similarity. The clarity of effect, the solid images, the feeling muted and distanced, all these point towards their mastery over language. At the same time, the treatment of their subject differed. Hulme wanted to ‘fix an impression.’ Whereas Larkin wanted to move through rounded homely metaphors.
Hulme had argued in favour of 'dry, hard, classical verse' as a way to replace the romantic verse that rested primarily on emotion. Larkin effectively distances emotion by deliberately underplaying himself and his emotional involvement. In 'Church Going' he deals with religion, but avoids dealing with it directly and obviously. He transports his own confusion and indeterminate views on the Church in the poem.

Another church: matting, seats, and stone
And little books; sprawling of flowers, cut
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff
Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,
Brewed God knows how long.

For, though I've no idea
What this accoutred frowsty barn is worth
It pleases me to stand in silence here;
A serious house on serious earth it is,
In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
Are recognised, and robed as destinies.

The matter of fact description: 'matting, seats, and stone | And little books: sprawling of flowers, cut | For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff' serves as a foil to confront the actual issue of faith. Larkin deftly handles the irresolute by conjuring up all the images of the church. He toys with their significance wondering what the church will eventually mean to people. His
own realization descends bit by bit. However he comes to a simple conclusion that 'It pleases me to stand in silence here.' This is also a form of impersonality: the self-conscious avoidance of encountering serious issues. The second line in the second stanza above, is a break from the conversational tone of the first line. The harsh 'accoutred' and 'frowsty' divides the indeterminate feeling from the admission in the third line. The attraction of the church exists inspite of the poet's initial resistance. The syntactical arrangement is intricately woven with the rhyming scheme. The reality of the church's physical and emotional environment described in a kind of flat manner records the scene that meets the port's eye when he awkwardly stands hat in hand in the Church.

Hulme's poetry can be cited as the most representative of the period spanning the first two decades of the 20th century and Larkin's as the most representative of the reaction to modernism. Both were great experimenters of form and language in their own ways. Both their loyalties lay in achieving simple, direct impression. Further, they both believed in keeping the personality from intruding upon the effect of a poem. While naming some early influences, Larkin mentioned Auden, Dylan Thomas and Hardy. The reason was, Larkin said, he learnt the ‘management of lines’ and the ‘formal distancing of emotion’ from Auden and Yeats. He admitted that Hardy had influenced him in his ability to consider the ‘obvious’.

In the same interview, Larkin echoed Hulme in putting the urge to preservation lying at the bottom of all art. This observation certainly points to the fact that Larkin's art was to depict what really confronted the eye. It was simple, straightforward consideration of the actual. Larkin's art was the
immediate impression of the concrete and untampered. Larkin for all his insistence that he ‘never had ideas about poetry’ stated in clear terms:

I write poems to preserve things I have seen | thought | felt both for myself and for others, though I feel that my prime responsibility is the experience itself, which I am trying to keep from oblivion for its own sake. ⁹

To Larkin, poetry was a ‘verbal device’ to preserve an experience. ¹⁰ It reflects how Hulme’s dictum that the poet had to undergo a terrific struggle with language to achieve the exactness, worked and developed through Larkin’s poetry. Larkin does not reveal the tension, the friction or suddenness of language. His hold over the language provided a smooth and comfortable movement.

The poem ‘Mr Bleaney’ can be cited here to exemplify this point:

This was Mr. Bleaney’s room. He stayed
The whole time he was at the Bodies, till
They moved him. Flowered curtain thin and frayed,
Fall to within five inches of the sill,
Whose windows show a strip of building land
Tussocky, littered. ‘Mr Bleaney took
My bit of garden properly in hand.’
Bed, upright chair, sixty-watt bulb, no hook.
Larkin introduces Mr. Bleaney through plain description, telling us to have a look at the room he stayed in till he died. The description is like the details caught in a photograph: 'Behind the door, no room for books or bags - 'I'll take it.' So it happens that I die | where Mr Bleaney lay, and stub my fags | On the same saucer souvenir, and try.' It is the visible remains that make the traces of Mr. Bleaney available to the new tenant. They reveal a boring, dull, unsensational man, drab and organized. It is the physical element present in the room that recreates the personality of Mr Bleaney. Hulme would have said that Larkin was in the presence of a physically felt sensation and that accounted for the concrete effect built up gradually through the details.

Larkin’s view of life is the capture of visually real things that develops into a contemplation of life. In ‘The Whitsun Wedding’ he describes the scene of marriage as excerpts that appear sporadically along the train journey. The description of the bride, maids, the father ‘with broad belts under their suits | And seamy foreheads, mothers loud and fat | And uncle shouting smut’ offer an actual picture developed into a comic presentation with the help of language. The observation is objective, it relies on the ‘things as they really are.’ Larkin changes the scene and refrains from viewing any opinion. He remains allied to the physical actualities.

At first, I did not notice what a noise
The weddings made
Each station that we stopped at: sun destroys
The interest of what’s happening in the shade,
And down the cool platforms whoops and skirls
I look for porters larking with the mails,
And went on reading. Once we started, though
We passed them, grinning and pomaded, girls
In parodies of fashion, heels and veils,
All passed irresolutely, watching us go.

This description perhaps leans towards natural presentation which Hulme had distinguished from accurate presentation in 'Romanticism and Classicism.' It aided in his 'demystification' of poetry. Larkin's poetry could be termed 'sincere' in Hulmian context because of their proximity to physical and concrete reality. The language of Larkin's poetry does not overstep from the concrete realities available to the poet. This sincerity projected in Larkin confirms another principle approved by Hulme: that, when poetry is close to the actual, the real, the need for 'infinity' and 'seriousness' no longer arises. The faithfulness to the visual images provides the poem with necessary impetus.

'Like the Trains Beat' also takes a direct narrative on the visual reality.

Like the trains beat
Swift language flutters the lips
Of the Polish air girl in the corner
The swinging and narrowing sun
Lights her eyelashes, shapes
Her sharp vivacity of bone
Hair, wild and controlled, runs back:
And gesture like these English oaks
Flash past the windows of her foreign talk.
The metaphor in the ‘And gestures... her foreign talk’ is obvious. The visible
details are interspersed with metaphors that have been picked from the scene
also present within the frame of the Polish girl seated at her corner seat.

Larkin felt that poetry ought to give pleasure. Poetry, according to him
was the outcome of ‘What he (the poet) non-verbally feels and what can be got
over in common word usage to someone who hadn’t had his experience or
education or travel grant, and once the other end of the rope is dropped what
results will not be so much obscure or piffing as an unrealized undramatized
slackness, because he will have lost the habit of testing what he writes by this
particular standard. Hence no pleasure. Hence, no poetry.’

So, Larkin adjudged poetry by the effect of pleasure kindled in the
reader. This being his bottom line, his choice of regular rhythm and metre can
be considered complementary to the purpose. At the same time he was against
giving readings of his own poetry. The cause was revealed in an interview with
Paris Review. Larkin said that a poem was essentially a verbal device and it had
to be read not chanted. So, this implies that words were considered central to the
poem; language had to convey and communicate the experience of the author to
the poet, instead of having a musical appeal. The need and aim for the concrete
seems evident in Larkin’s opinion on poetry. In the same interview, Larkin
defines content as the experience the poem preserves and transfers to the reader.
The preservation of the experience had to be done cleverly through usual and
common word structure. At the same time the usual and common phrases and
idioms had to be fitted into ‘the artificialities of rhyme and metre.’ Larkin had a
rule: 'never split an adjective and its noun.' These premises could be seen working in 'Toads' where Larkin has not subordinated form to rhyme:

Why should I let the toad work
Squat on my life?
Can’t I use my wit as a pitchfork
And drive the brute off?
Six days of the week it soils
With its sickening poison
Just for paying a few bills!
That’s out of proportion.

The language of Hulme and Larkin are widely different, yet the proximity to actual sensation is obvious. And above all, Larkin did not hold rigid opinions regarding any aspect of poetry except that the correspondence between experience and effect was of primary importance. In such a way, Larkin develops in his own style. Hulme’s concept of restraint. Hulme was against the subordination of form to phrases that appeal to the poet. Hulme had said, ‘The form of poem is shaped by intention.’ To Larkin, intention was the experience and everything else fell into place after it.

Larkin presented fine balance between observation and reflection. The observation of physical details quietly touches reflective moods, there is a holding back from explicit subjective expression. The precise nature of words used in the description helps in giving effect to the midway feeling and repressed sensibility. In a way, Larkin’s art illustrates a new dimension to the
principle of restraint in verse and the use of everyday, familiar expression achieving it. What more can be more appropriate than the observation in ‘Deceptions’:

All the unhurried day

Your mind lay open like a drawer of knives

The shame and grief of the girl has been recorded in the stark imagery of the ‘drawer of knives’.

The deft handling of language, the vivid metaphorical reference to locate the exactness of not only the physically available details but the suggestive sensation and experience had been noted by T.S. Eliot.¹⁵

The placidity of Larkin style uses good matured irony. The restraint evident in his art show that deflation as a practice can arrive at the exactness of indeterminate emotion. The minutae of observed details, the ordinary experience and its communication through easy and traditional order in verse pattern and language demonstrate the possibilities of the range of standards laid down by T.E. Hulme. The plainness of Larkin’s poetic diction may not have the excited imaginative power to observe nature as the Imagists had, or the profound moral questions and enquiry as exemplified by Eliot, but the very nature of his subject matter which are mostly from the provincial suburban life with staid values reveal the affinity of style with intent. The scrutiny of life and its transportation in words can be read in the light of Hulme’s theory of poetic practice.
Ted Hughes presents a case that has some aspects in common with T.E. Hulme. Ted Hughes wrote in free verse not in ‘vers libre’ just as Hulme had envisaged that the new verse would be somewhat different than ‘Vers libre.’ Hulme had advocated sincerity to the impression, experience, in poetry. Metre, words and rhythm were subject to the sincerity in its transmission. The imagist verse marks a shift that is closer to common experience and the subject treated in a conversational tone. Ted Hughes’s poetry is vivid in their pictorial presentation and resembled the object as it really was. Hulme did not want content to determine the verse pattern. Instead the pattern should move through each line towards a unified effect. This kind of a versification is also found in Ted Hughes. This can be illustrated by the ‘Fern’ taken from Wodwo.

Fern

Here is the fern’s frond, unfurling a gesture
Like a conductor whose music will now be pause
And the note of silence
To which the whole earth dances gravely.

The mouse’s ear unfurls its trust
The spider takes up her bequest,
And the retina
Reins the creation with a bridle of water

And among them, the fern
Dances gravely, like the plume
Of warrior returning, under the low hills,
Into his own kingdom.

The development of the central idea, the fern, continues through the lines, images have been used to interlink the fern's presence in staid dignity among the spider's movement of ensnaring its prey. The verse pattern is free verse and it serves as a convenient framework to fit in language and allusions. The language itself is conversational which in itself conforms to Hulme's doctrine that language in poetry can not appear artificial by being restricted in too many polished phrases. The vigour of poetry had to be achieved through the use of language that establishes the concrete experience. Hughes's poetry is language that is carefully used to give effect to concrete experience depicted in the poem. In 'Otter,' language matches the jerky, scampering gait of the animal. The otter lies in wait and springs to activity, the urgency of its movement obvious in the poet's choice of words. The use of image reveals the stealth of the otter and it's success in achieving its purpose:

The heart beats thick,
Big trout muscle out of the dead cold;
Blood is the belly of logic; he will lick
The fishbone bare. And take stolen hold
On a bitch otter in a field full
Of nervous horses, but linger nowhere.

Hulme had said that poetry should give the impression of being in the presence of a physical reality. He had advocated concreteness in poetry. The language of
poetry was 'not a counter language, but a visual concrete one... It always endeavours to arrest you, and make you continuously see a physical thing.' The poetry of Ted Hughes affirms Hulme's idea of poetry. As in the 'Otter,' the physical reality of the animal is a concrete display. The animal's power and stealth comes to the fore through the choice of words: 'Big trout muscle,' 'he will lick the fishbone bare,' 'stolen hold.' Language has been 'bent' to the context of the poem, much like what Hulme had said: 'To bend language to get the exact curve of the object or an idea in the mind.'

In *Poetry in the Making*, Ted Hughes deals with the issue of words or language. In *Speculations*, Hulme had stated that the aim of poetry was to give an 'accurate, precise and definite description.' But, language being an arbitrary medium, the accuracy or exactness of depiction was a difficult task. Language, thought Hulme, was a 'communal thing; that is, it expresses never the exact thing but a compromise – that which is common to you, me and everybody.' In order to break through this rigid association of language, Hulme had urged for the presentation of a visual and physical perception of the object. The poet could never be satisfied with the effect of approximation but exactness. Ted Hughes also confronted this particular dilemma of having to use a medium (language) that was already heavily loaded with meanings. He said,

> Words are tools, learned late and laboriously and easily forgotten, with which we try to give some part of our experience a more or less permanent shape outside ourselves. They are unnatural, in a way, and far from being ideal for
their job. For one thing, a word has its own definite meanings.

A word has its own little solar system of meanings.19

Therefore, the difficulty presented by language was encountered by both Hulme and Hughes. Poetry as a form of art had to give an account of experience, sensations, sensibilities etc. and it was no mean task to achieve these through language. Hulme weighed upon this particular aspect. The special nature of language with its 'own conventions and communal ideas'20 and came to the conclusion that keeping close of the physical exactness was the only way out to make use of an arbitrary tool such as language. His intensely realistic depiction has been commented upon particularly in reference to his early poems in the Wodwo.21 Ted Hughes thought that poetry is the capture in words of the deep complexity of experience. Though he did not arrive at a specific formula or theory of achieving the concrete in poetry, his own poems demonstrate that he kept close to the physical reality of objects. This directly points towards the influence of Hulme. Keith Sagar has also commented on this feature in The Art of Ted Hughes.22 The faithfulness to facts, the physical available impressions, the description through bald and harsh language, as in the 'Otter,' certainly reflects that Hulme’s concept of language had influenced Ted Hughes. Hughes admitted that he banked on the vividness of impression to reach an account of a thing. Words, to Hughes, were only indicators and as such inadequate in capturing the exact sensation like 'there are no words to capture the infinite depth of crowiness in the crow's flight (as it flys beneath the aeroplane).’23 The simple experience of seeing a crow’s flight presents a tough job when it comes to describing it. Hughes, therefore, adopts a method that is much like Hulme’s:
to keep close to the physical detail, sincerely. In doing so, the poet did not have to fear inexactness of description. The physical reality kept in the mind thwarted any wayward representation. 'The Thought Fox' captures the snow-covered woodland in which the fox appears silently in the dark:

Something more near

Though deeper within darkness

Is entering the loneliness:

Cold, delicately as the dark snow

A fox's nose touches twig, leaf;

Two eyes serve a movement, that now

And again now, and no, and now.

The description given above is vivid because Hughes has kept himself attached to the physical and concrete reality. A consideration of the flitting appearance conveyed by 'And again now, and no, and now' depicts the use of living speech and its effective evocation of the physical actuality. In 'The Casualty' violent death that interrupts the ordinary day has been presented. The 'farmers in the fields, housewives behind steamed windows' and even the animals out in the fields watch the burning aircraft smashing into the fields. The inertia is obvious in the beginning because of the unexpected suddenness of the burning aircraft. While the human help is extended, the animals scatter away immediately with the impact of the crash. The starkness, the barrenness of effect is achieved through direct, matter of fact description.
Now that he has
No spine, against heaped sheaves they prop him up,
Arrange his limbs in order, open his eye,
Then stand, helpless as ghosts.

The vividity of the above passage depends on short phrases such as 'no spine,' 'open his eye,' 'then stand, helpless as ghosts.' The harshness of the tone reveals the harsh reality of death. The power of Hughes’s poetry arose from the effect, the presentation of direct visual detail. Therefore, the visual aspect of Hulme’s concept of the image can be seen in operation in the poetry of Ted Hughes. ‘The poem’s concreteness and sharpness comes from visual clarity, compression, intensity of tone, and from the remarkable vigour of vocabulary and syntax.’

Such an observation reveals the poetic standards upheld by Hulme working amongst the practitioners of modern poetry. The physical effect can be considered as the truth of poetry. Hulme had believed that the physical and visual enables us to 'continuously see a physical thing.' This experience of being in the presence of a solid sensation is a way of attaining the integrity of experience and literary imagination. The energy of Hughes’s poetry works on the principle of fancy, as postulated by Hulme. The available visual detail could gain significance only through association. In ‘The Casualty’ the falling aircraft generates as much curiosity and interest as a fight between a firefly and a spider. This association juxtaposes the gravity of a plane in flames and the sedate outlook of ‘farmers’ and their ‘housewives.’ ‘The crash of aircraft, the suddenness of its impact on earth is brought out vividly and dramatically
through the 'twitch of suddenly smashed stems,' the 'hop' of the hare that
strains to catch the cause of the sound and then 'tears madly away.' The use of
language in associating abstract sensation to concrete symbols can be seen in:

Sympathies

Fasten to the blood like flies.

In an instant, Hughes has transformed the condition of the airman and the
response he evokes into something complex and difficult to explain. The crowd
watches the acuteness of death; their sympathies are as insubstantial as can be
under the circumstances. At the same time, their curiosity is like the
participation of flies on the spoils of dead carcass. The horror of death is
overtaken by the desire to record every moment as the airman nears the end.
Fancy is not mere decoration; the similes and associations that strikes the
contrasts in attitude, response and condition advances towards observations on
the truth of existence.\textsuperscript{25}

In 'Romanticism and Classicism,' Hulme had stated that poetry should
concentrate on the definite and the earthly. He had, of course, been guided by
the principle, of man's subordination to absolute values. Ted Hughes, on the
contrary, does not explicitly follow an ethical principle. But, he keeps his poetry
confined to the real things. The reality of his poetry is determined by the
definite subject and its treatment. He projected animals and their behaviour by
strictly adhering to description. There can be no element of vagueness in the
event of definite description. Hughes's poetry conforms the theory of poetry of
T.E. Hulme. It imprints boldly and strongly an impression in the mind of the
reader. Hulme had stated that modern poetry would be engaged in fixing an impression. Hulme had written poems like ‘Above the Dock,’ ‘Autumn’ to capture the visual details of the ‘moon.’ Through the visual detail Hulme had managed a unique impression. Hughes manages the same by treating subjects such as the crow, the otter and others in their primitive behaviour. He fixes the impression of the animals through words that depicts the picture in the poet’s mind that keeps a firm grasp on the actual. In *Poetry in the Making*, Hughes’s observed that words ‘displace’ our experience and as such they should match and correspond to it.

Ted Hughes leads excursion into our senses by his sure touch of capturing impressions. Language is harnessed to the objective of giving a brief and sharp impression of a scene. The bald physical reality of Hughes’s descriptions springs from the use of imagery from nature and the arrangement of lines in deference to grammatical order. Words appear to be living as it were in the poetry of Hughes, the motion and the stillness equally depicted through the use of rhythmic forms which lie beneath the surface of the poem.

**November**

The month of the drowned dog. After long rain the land

Was sodden as the bed of an ancient lake,

Treed with iron and birdless. In the sunk lane

The ditch – a seep silent all summer –

Made brown foam with a big voice : that, and my boots.

On the lanes scrubbed stones, in the gulleyed leaves,
Against the hills hanging silence;
Mist silvering the droplets on the bare thorns
Slower than the change of daylight.
In a let of the ditch a tramp was bundled asleep:
Face tucked down into beard, drawn in
Under its hair like a hedgehog's. I took him for dead.
But his stillness separated from the death
Of the rotting grass and the ground. A wind chilled,
And a fresh comfort tightened through him,
Each hand stuffed deeper into the other sleeve.
His ankles, bound with sacking and hairy band,
Rubbed each other, resettling. The wind hardened;
A puff shook a glittering from the thorns,
And again the rains' dragging grey columns
Smudged the farms. In a moment,
The fields were jumping and smoking; the thorns
Quivered, riddled with the glassy verticals.
I stayed on under the welding cold.

The alliterative 'drowned dog,' 'a seep silent all summer,' 'scrubbed stones'
'gulleyed leaves' along with directness of 'slower than the change of daylight,'
'face tucked down into beard,' 'each hand stuffed deeper into the other sleeve,'
'I took him for dead,' 'smudged the farms' infuses a rhythmic movement into
the poem. Scenes of the countryside in wet November and the tramp's
description conjures up an instant clear picture. The language of Hughes' poetry
though direct and detailed is not plain. It escapes plain-ness precisely because of the use of analogy and allusion that immediately fixes onto something solid. Distinguishing poetic and prose language Hulme had observed:

In prose as in algebra concrete things are embodied in signs or counters which are moved according to rules, without being visualized at all in the process. There are in prose certain type situations and arrangement of works, which move as automatically into certain other arrangements as do functions in algebra... Poetry in one aspect at any rate may be considered as an effort to avoid this characteristic of prose.²⁶

The principles of Hulme's poetic theory can thus be considered in the context of their execution in the poetry of Ted Hughes, writing in the mid-fifties. The relevance and substance of the poetic technique and experiment with form, narrative style, verse pattern and contemporary imaginative subjects reflect that the engagement is built upon opening new and divergent possibilities. It reaffirms the enlargement of poetic craft and vision, an exercise undertaken decades ago by T.E. Hulme. The exercise ultimately had a great bearing upon the attitude towards experience and situation along with the enrichment of the creative instinct and the all encompassing context of human existence.
Notes:


2. *Further Speculations*, 70.


7. *Speculations*, 133.


15. On a similar point made by Charles Monteith on *The Less Deceived*, T.S. Eliot wrote in *Publishing Larkin, Larkin at Sixty*, ed. Anthony Thwaite: 'Yes, he often makes words do what he wants.'


21. 'He seems to have abandoned his early faith in intensely realistic description as a means of evoking the spirit world in favour of surrealist imagery.... Some simple pieces from *Crow* like Theology, Logos, Reveille have the directness of prose, regular rhythmic stresses and alliteration carry the sense.'


22. 'It is a language which matches T.E. Hulme's definition of the language of poetry.'


25. Some critics like A.D. Moody has expressed reservations against Hughes's use of associations and allusions. According to him, 'Some of the associations derive from acute visual impressions, but their effect is just as fanciful as seeing moss-covered stones as sheep. Hughes often gives a vivid sensation of something seen, but never any real knowledge of it... He does not let the eye rest upon its object and enter into it, but flicks away, carrying off just the first sharp impression upon the sense; and then he works up the mere sensation by process of association into some likeness of the object.'

   'Telling it like it's Not: Ted Hughes and Craig Raine,' *The Year Book of English Studies*, 17(British Poetry since 1945, Special No.): 175.

The involvement of I.A. Richards with the use of language in poetry reflects the same, though a little diverse in approach, issues that occupied the attention of T.E. Hulme. Richards identifies his own differences with the theory of metaphor of Hulme in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Basing his differences on whether language substitutes real experience or experience/metaphor gains significance through the use of language, Richards finds that he cannot agree with Hulme's concept of the metaphor. The gist of the matter is that the argument is against the visual property of metaphor that Hulme believed in, as crucial to concrete expression. There seems to be a division between the concept of the metaphor of Hulme and Richards. The latter insisted that metaphor is not visual but a function of language, the former extended the visual thought into solid expression through the medium of language. It cannot be denied that metaphor in poetry was essentially an exercise in the deft handling of experience/thought/sensation through words. The argument with Hulme proves that Richards was working on the principles that determine the art of writing and these principles were the ones initiated by Hulme. The greatest apprehension that Hulme had was about the disparity between thought and the communication of the thought. He could never accept the loose and listless expression in poetry. He was also aware of the power of association accompanying every word and thus reserving the potential of completely upsetting the intention of the writer. The *Speculations* bears out Hulme's
doctrine of fancy, which he maintained to be the essential ingredient for true expression and sincerity to the creative impulse. The fundamental aim was the same in the case of Hulme and Richards and it was their recognition of the multi-layered meaning of words that could be exploited in poetry. The resources of language were there for both the critics, though Hulme believed that there was a crisis in language.

Hulme brought the language of poetry and its operation to proper scrutiny of his generation. His influence made I.A. Richards develop his own views on language. While Hulme focused on the sign or the image, Richards extended his theory to the form. In any case it brought around a fresh insight into poetry and the use of language. Practical criticism practised by Richards proved that there were several types of meaning and extreme caution had to be exercised while reading a text. The text was the crucial thing under consideration and this was one of the pre-requisite approved by Hulme. Poetry was a serious affair, a proportionate representation of the artist's intention. Richards was preoccupied with meaning and he realized that one of the properties of language was losing meaning or gaining it in the context of meaning intended by the speaker upon the hearer. In *The Meaning of Meaning* he stated that 'A language transaction or a communication may be defined as a use of symbols in such a way that acts of reference occur in a hearer which are similar in all relevant respects to those which are symbolized by them in the speaker.' Thus the meaning designed by the speaker or writer could not be lost or misinterpreted by the hearer or reader. The distinction between Richards and Hulme was that while Richards regarded language itself to be symbolic and
loaded with suggestions, Hulme wanted language to create a symbol, a tool of exact communication. And since he regarded language to be an inadequate medium of transaction, Hulme thought that metaphor would provide for the inadequacy. It should be remembered that his doctrine of classicism also determined communication in poetry. The metaphor, to Hulme, was a complex combination of the classicist restrain and reaching the ‘exact curve’ of the thing intended. Besides, this, Hulme had to shake off the burden of romantic orientation of the preceding generation and correct the critical response of his time. The unified effect of the metaphor that Richards favoured could not have come in conflict with Hulme’s theory because it would defeat the purpose of his views.

I.A. Richards had objected to the singular movement of Hulme’s doctrine of metaphor. In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* he expresses his reservations on the simple imitation of life:

...over careful attempts to copy perception will only result in distortion.²

Hulme’s theory of metaphor was not a simple imitation of life or objects. It prescribed a complex formula of allusion through abstraction. This exerted a responsibility upon the reader to extricate through an exercise of following the manoeuvres of the artist. The idea behind a poem can scarcely have any significance unless it is presented in effective form in art. As Herbert Read mentioned in his editorial note to the ‘Notes on Language and Style’ that Hulme had never wanted to ‘prejudge the sphere of poetry.’³ Therefore Hulme’s
insistence on the visual in poetry was not a closed theory making no allowance
to accommodate further observations. In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Richards
maintains that some metaphors may be visual, while others may not be so. This
did not denote that the seriousness of expression fell short of concreteness. He
did not support the picture through language as the only means to arrive at
accurate presentation. He concentrated on the play of words in a work of
literature.

'Language brings in the meaning which the image and its original
perception lack,' Richards stated in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Placed against
Hulme's contention that: 'thought was prior to its expression in language, being
the simultaneous presentation to the mind of two different images, thought was
the recognition of their analogy. The poet is he who can awaken the awareness
of this analogy in the mind of the reader,' it may appear that Richards and
Hulme are taking completely contrasting stands. But, we may contemplate the
opposing positions as the two ends supporting a common thrust towards exact
and honest representation in poetry. The subordination of linguistic properties to
the visual in Hulme was never a definite and fixed limitation imposed upon
poetry. As was analyzed by the follower of Richards, Empson showed that
ambiguity enhanced the inherent capacity of a poem or any other form. So too,
the visual comprehension improved the sharp effect of a poem. Revitalization of
language could take place through any agency; be it tenor and vehicle, the two
parts of a metaphor or through linguistic ingenuity. Ultimately, it was art that
gained through the various modes of adding value to it. The entry points of
Richards and Hulme differed, but both shared similar goals viz., to reach
beyond distortion of meaning and the need to stay close to accurate impression. Richards entered linguistic principles to reveal the multiplicity of meaning and Hulme held on to visual concreteness to arrive at exact appropriation of meaning. While Hulme identified a crisis in the 'communal apparatus of language' and wanted to avoid the discursive, Richards identified a positive element in the difference of meaning under different contexts.

After taking note of the apparent dissimilarities in approach between I.A. Richards and T.E. Hulme, a striking point of convergence comes to the fore in Chris Baldick's *The Social Mission of English Criticism*. Hulme confesses his reservations against the romantic orientation of the literary world in *Speculations*. He viewed literature as a response to the world, as a complex of attitude. By the same account, Richards points to 'the dangers and threats lurking in the state of contemporary culture'. In the aftermath of the World War I, Richards wrote in *Science and Poetry* (1926) that there was an imperative need for moral order; to check the deceit in information and commercialization of art. Richards regarded poetry, as Hulme did, as a medium that could play a definitive role in ushering in order of sensibility and attitude in the world. This engagement in redefining taste and attitude can be seen as a location where the interests of Hulme and Richards meet. In the 'Notes on Language and Style,' Hulme had asserted that, 'poetry was the advance guard in language.' The progress of language meant a step forward in cultural discipline. Hulme worked at a theory of poetic practice from two aspects. One was the artistic classical restraint and the other was to redefine the critical outlook needed to appreciate the new type of poetry. This would certainly lend a clear
view of the path to follow in the assessment of modern poetry and the cultural milieu. Baldick states that, 'the practical aim of Richard’s cultural mission is therefore to correct the taste of the masses while leaving commercial institutions unchallenged.' Though Richards initiated a practical approach towards poetry, Baldick provides arguments that emphasize the philosophical, moral and ethical dimensions of poetry. A poet is not a mere technician but a person with heightened responsibility towards a uniform, conciliatory social order. The self-complete whole of the artist’s personality is shaped by divergent impulses and factors that are accommodated into one. The moral implication cannot be missed here, since poetry cannot exist without a reading public. In the *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924), Richards stated that ‘the arts are our storehouse of recorded values.’ Art is something into which exceptional people have vested their sincerity and belief, values of experience and judgements and therefore it would create an equivalent impact in the minds of the reading public. Poetry was the embodiment of sincerity and would work in two ways. Firstly, it would acquaint the reader with the values and secondly it would reveal to him, his own prejudices. Thus poetry was a reservoir of adjustment and correction of attitudes. A point worth noting here is that Richards, like Hulme, desired social order through poetry. But, Hulme thought of poetry to be divorced from the wants and demands of a large public readership. He felt he had to attempt to train a minority readership who would be familiar to modern theoretical system and arguments about poetry. Richards, however, undertook an exercise as evident from *Practical Criticism* (1929) that aimed at tutoring a wider public response to poetry. Baldick remarks:
What (Richards) left behind was for others to develop into ‘Cambridge English’ was a conception of the study of literature as an indispensable agent of social cohesion, combined with a teaching and examining method – ‘practical criticism’ – which could at last establish this conception in institutional form.9

Richards was a teacher and he took his agenda forward by applying it to students. They were asked to submit their thoughts on poems that carried no reference to the writer, theme, belief or social context. The aim was to demonstrate the discriminating minds of the reader and to draw attention to the objective nature of the poem itself. Hulme’s notion of anti romanticism which was basically a negation of the self from art was advanced further by the exercises undertaken by Richards, as recorded in *Practical Criticism*. Hulme had given comparatively more weight on the artist’s performance whereas Richards had crossed to the opposite side to educate the reader; to discriminate between words and their import. The centrality of the text remained the prime concern for Hulme and for Richards.

In the essay ‘Romanticism and Classicism,’ Hulme asserts that fancy will be the tool of the classical period and the particular verse of this period would be ‘cheerful, dry and sophisticated.’ He further adds:

Subject doesn’t matter; the quality in it is same as you get in the more romantic people. It isn’t the scale or kind of emotion produced that decides, but this one fact: Is there any real zest
in it? Did the poet have an actually realized visual object before him in which he delighted? It doesn’t matter if it were a lady’s shoe or the starry heavens.  

The above passage can be taken as reference to understand the principle that great poetry need not be of high seriousness. The classical virtues of irony and humour can be taken as enriching elements that finally crafts a poem.

Though Hulme gave priority to concreteness, he also took the concept of irony into his discussion. He had of course been inspired by his notion of classicism or anti-romanticism, which, when reflected in verse gave accurate, hard description. This manifestation could also be considered as the ironical use of words which had a more sharper effect than the ‘extravagant’ utterances of romanticism. The use of the devices of ‘concrete’ expression and ‘irony’ used by Hulme and Richards respectively, stress on the truth of poetry. The truth of poetry was nothing but the exactness of communication and representation for both critics.

The distinction between Hulme and Richards was that the former was guided by philosophical, ethical principles; the latter by the psychological urge in creating and evoking response. Hulme’s poetic theory was influenced by the metaphysical concept of ‘Intensive Manifold.’

The disparate images were part of the pattern of merging of contexts which was in turn within the inward movement of the intensive manifold. The case with Richards was that he thought in psychological terms, analyzing the possible thought process of creativity and response. Richards himself did not
mention irony as an objective feature. He used it simply as a necessary device to reach poetic truth resembling a life-like situation.

‘Richards’ view of language is diametrically opposed to Hulme’s. Although they are alike in seeing the language of poetry as the opposite extreme from the abstract counters of the scientist,’ remarks Phyllis Rackin in ‘Hulme, Richards, and the Development of Contextualist Poetic Theory.’ Even though, Hulme and Richards differed on the issue of the movement of language (Hulme wanted the poet to forcibly make words shake off the fixed and associated meaning, Richards took the same quality as a positive tendency towards multiplying meaning), Rackin identifies a common link between them. She says:

What Richards did in effect was to take what had been separate requirements in Hulme and bring them together in such a way that they were now able to provide the basis for a unified aesthetic theory.

In the Principles of Literary Criticism, Richards stated that there were ‘two totally distinct uses of language’ and they were the scientific use and the emotive use of language. Poetry was the ‘supreme form of emotive language.’ Poetry, in other words, had the power to evoke attitudes, Richards believed. The truth of a poetic statement lies in the effect it evoked. Richards says that ‘for emotive language the widest differences in reference are of no importance if the further effects in attitudes and emotion are of the required kind.’ The mental process behind the two use of language, Richards considered distinct from one
another. When we consider the case of emotive use of language as a feature of poetry, we find that the sense and emotion implicit in poetry requires that it reaches an equivalent effect. The meaning of emotive use of language would be lost if the effect does not manage to reach the required level. Thus, we may infer, that the language of poetry loses its objective unless the effect evoked is consumerate with its use. Richards was involved in distinguishing the psychological process behind the scientific use and the emotive use of language. But his discussion of the emotive use of language, identifying its distinguishing marks in 'effect' allows us to see the importance of effect in his discussion on the theory of language, which no less occupied the attention of T.E. Hulme.

According to Hulme, language was of supreme importance in poetry. It ensured that the desired 'effect' had been achieved. The loss of concrete, hard effect implied that the language used in poetry had been inefficient in grasping the context or in communicating it. The realization of truth in the emotional use of language, was not the truth of reference, but the truth of effect in which the conviction of the poet is transferred as a conviction in poetry.

Critics like Hulme and Richards inevitably had to discuss the theory of language; Hulme never lost sight of the hardness and the concrete perception while Richards settled on the study of the behaviour of words in poetry. The latter found that words work in a simultaneous fashion, intertwining with other words and associated meanings, rhythm to build up a multilayered complex of meaning. Since Hulme's aim was a steadfast focus on 'accurate, precise and definite description,' language posed as a substantially difficult medium of communication. 'Language is by its very nature a communal thing,' Hulme
wrote in 'Romanticism and Classicism' ‘it is only by new metaphors,’ that is, by fancy, that it can be made precise.\textsuperscript{16}

Hulme’s fancy was not mere decoration, much like Richards’ metaphor which was ‘the supreme agent by which disparate and hitherto unconnected things are brought together in poetry.’\textsuperscript{17} The need to weave meaning together was a feature in their theory of language. Hulme elaborated his theory on the requirement of metaphor in achieving precision. He said, ‘where the analogy is every bit of it necessary for accurate description in the sense of the word accurate I have previously described, and your only objection to this kind of fancy is that it is not serious in the effect it produces, then I think the objection to be entirely invalid. If it is sincere in the accurate sense, when the whole of the analogy is necessary to get out the exact curve of the feeling or thing you want to express – there you seem to me to have the highest verse, even though the subject be trivial and the emotions of the infinite far away.’\textsuperscript{18} The complexity of contexts merging and emerging, where metaphor helps in establishing a relationship between them interested both Hulme and Richards. Hulme thought that ‘a powerfully imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant all the important ideas of a poem or picture, and while it works with one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relation to it and never losing sight of them bearing on each other.’\textsuperscript{19}

In the ‘Notes on Language and Style,’ Hulme built on the contextualist meaning in poetry. According to him, ‘thought is prior to language and consist in the simultaneously presentation to the mind of two different images.’ Though language was a feeble medium, ‘all the connections are in language and this
term includes not only prepositions but all phrases (ready made) which only indicates precise relations or attitude of politeness between the two simultaneously presented image.  

Hulme said, 'Think of sitting at that window in Chelsea and seeing the chimneys and the light in the dusk. And then imagine that by contemplation this will transfer itself bodily on to paper. But literature was not the consideration of 'contemplation.' It had to rely on solid objects. The directness of presentation was the only way to ensure truth in depiction. It involved 'a deliberate choosing and working up of analogies' to obtain 'the continued close, compressed effort.'

Richards considered the metaphoric function of words. The metaphor was not, as Richards said 'shifting and displacement of words,' it was primarily 'a borrowing between and intercourse of thoughts, a transaction between contexts.' Richards believed that words interact with one another and they are further qualified by the context in which they are placed. The 'closed compressed effect' that Hulme urged for can be seen reflected in the views of Richards. Words cannot be fixed in their meaning, they spill beyond themselves, getting merged with other emerging meaning. Richards believed that meaning gets denser and richer as 'they are resultants which are arrived at only through the interplay of the interpretative possibilities of the whole utterance.'

The aspects of language, viz., the verbal analysis or the open endedness of meaning derived from the confrontation of words with words and their
contexts interested Richards. He objected to Hulme's theory of image as a way to establish concrete particularity. However, whether it was the case of interplay of words or images, a common feature projects out and that is: the juxtaposition of contexts to arrive at concrete and complete meaning. The rules of modern verse as laid down by Hulme in 'A Lecture on Modern Poetry' specifies that the selection of images from the mind has to be arranged through 'piling up and juxtaposition of distinct images in different lines.' The psychological juxtaposition of images advocated by T.E. Hulme has been echoed in Richards' notion that the poet goes through a psychological process of gaining stimulation from experiences that are disparate and apparently has nothing to do with one another. Wimsatt and Brooks have remarked that where Hulme was excited by the vivid impact of concrete images, Richards without having countenanced it, has concentrated on a different aspect by pointing to the importance of heterogeneity and its effect on the impact.

William Empson, under the direct influence of I.A. Richards' analysis of verbal complexity, developed the theory of 'ambiguity.' Ambiguity or unsettled meaning was seen as an attribute of language that enhanced the meaning of poetry. Words and their relation to one another, their capacity to act upon one another, their extended meaning through association etc. have had a great impact upon the theory of language of Empson. Empson takes ambiguity to be a poetic device that splits into multiple meaning depending on the context of use. Discussing Shakespeare's use of language, Empson points to his ability to use the full force and shades of language. A reading of Shakespeare's poetry, Empson said, would leave a residue of thought in the reader. Meaning would be
added with each reading, thereby revealing immense possibility within language to develop meaning.

A word may have several distinct meaning, several meaning connected without another, several meaning which need one another to complete their meaning; or several meanings which unite together so that the word means one relation or one process. Ambiguity itself can mean an indecision as to what you mean, an intention to mean several things, a probability that one or other or both of two things has been meant, and the fact that a statement has several meanings.\textsuperscript{26}

Empson had analysed intensively the different possibilities of meaning a word had on its own placed in a particular context. He also showed how the situation could cast influence on the words and enhance the dramatic quality. Empson illustrates from Macbeth, saying that the conflict in Macbeth's mind is extended to the surroundings, just before the assassination of Duncan. He feels that ambiguity 'though common enough in poetry cannot be brought to this pitch without chaos, and must in general be used to produce a different effect.'\textsuperscript{27}

Empson's display of the several layers of meaning of a word also took the context into account for it could not be viewed in isolation; meaning was complex as different encounters took place within the text. The amazing analysis of Empson could be considered in the light of Hulme's thesis that clichéd language could be avoided through the means of contradictions placed in lines progressively. Poetry, according to Hulme, 'chooses fresh epithets and fresh metaphors not so much because they are new, and we are tired of the old,
but because the old cease to convey a physical thing and become abstract counters.... Freshness convinces you, you feel at once that the artist was in an actual physical state. You feel that for a minute. Real communication is very rare, for plain speech is unconvincing. It is in this rare fact of communication that you get the root of aesthetic pleasure.²⁸

In both cases of Empson and Hulme, we discern the desire to search for alternative means of communication through the fundamental rhetorical device, language. The enrichment of language could be initiated through the medium of poetry as it was connected to response, stimuli and experience. The common character of the word placed a difficult proposition to Hulme, who thought that it could not be independent of the sense it was used by the general population. As such, poetry lost much of its sharpness. Poetry was a compressed and strong means of communication. It conveyed without obscuring the meaning intended. Empson recognized the multiple possibilities that a word possessed, beginning from the intention of the poet and ending with the response kindled in the reader. In this respect, both critics can be distinguished. Hulme did not want poetry to resemble prose, for he thought:

In prose, as in algebra concrete things are combined in signs or counters which are moved about according to rules without being visualized at all in the process. There are in prose certain type situations and arrangements of words, which move as automatically into certain other arrangements as do functions in algebra... Poetry, in one aspect at any rate may
be considered as an effort to avoid this characteristic of prose.

It is not a counter language, but a visual concrete one.  

Empson, on the other hand did not distinguish poetry and prose; his focus was on the analysis of meaning that the word or words represented. But, both critics definitely devoted their thoughts to a theory of language, realizing that it was important to formulate an opinion on it: the meaning that finally emerged from communicating through language. The multiplicity of meaning or ambiguity as Empson used the term was worked upon by Hulme through a different device, viz., the metaphor. The metaphor was essentially a representation of new and unexplored connection between experience and the word. The number of sensations prompted the poet to exert a grip on all of them and transferring them to poetry through the 'bowl' of metaphor. The meaning of the experience could not be lost in the process of creating the response to the experience undergone.

Christopher Norris had remarked on the recognition of continuity between two types of writing, poetry and prose. Empson, Norris thought, linked both genres for it was not 'the kind of specialized rhetoric theory which sets poetry apart from the normal process of reason.' Empson found little separation between the objective of poetry and common standards of language, though Hulme wanted poetry to occupy a separate, distinct realm, removed from the public experience. Perhaps, Empson relied on the people to understand the heightened sensation and meaning of poetry, whereas Hulme was doubtful that communal language would perform the task of conveying exact sensation.
In *The Structure of Complex Words* Empson concentrates upon the effect of words. He had tried to show that meaning of words could not be put down in a definitive theoretical framework. The meanings of words increase and spread out within the context of their location and usage. Empson was completely occupied with the linguistic structure. His contention was that concrete meaning was possible in different cases and contexts. For Hulme, juxtaposition of contexts in a poem built up the dense effect. The same, though treated in a different manner, comes through in Empson's criticism, particularly in *The Structure of Complex Words*. Contexts influenced meaning, sustaining as well as exploring newer ones. The interaction of words and contexts, their individual and functional meaning gained within the contexts enhanced the total effect of a literary form.

Empson investigated and probed the movement of language in *The Structure of Complex Words*. He pronounced that there may be a difference between the intention of a word and its impact. He said:

....when you come down to detail, and find a case where there are alternative ways of interpreting a word's action, of which one can plausibly be called Cognitive and the other Emotive, it is the Cognitive one which is likely to have important effects on sentiment or character, and in general it does not depend on accepting false beliefs.31

According to Empson, a poem can be read as an intellectual experience and also as an emotional experience. A poem may be impressive with inputs of verbal
functions and at the same time may be completely false when taken out of the particular context. Empson talks of ‘Moods’ and he describes it as a sentence of the speaker’s personal judgement. It includes both the written quotation marks as well as the spoken one. The latter may be illustrated by the use of a pause or emphasis on a particular word. The moral implications are also contained within it and it is used irrespective of the sense. For e.g., words like ‘fool,’ ‘miser’ and ‘cad.’ The different implications involved in language, as Empson had shown in *The Structure of Complex Words* are an exploration of the potentialities of language. His interest demonstrates that a discussion of language initiated by Hulme could reach the analytical levels. Both of them were deeply involved with the issue of expression. They realized that a representation carried so many implications, it contained known, unknown, apparent and hidden meaning. Hulme’s contention that the attitude of the times influence the literary expression was also, in a way, the beginning of the discussion on sense and emotive use of language. Hulme had arrived at the view that ‘language has its own special nature, its own conventions and communal ideas. It is only by a concentrated effort of the mind that you can hold it fixed to your own purpose.’ Empson advanced the same concern, but through analysis of texts, without debating on the critical attitude of the author. Hulme was of course, involved in correcting the creative impulse.

Empson’s excursion into the meaning of language took him to study the word ‘fool’ in Lear which he found, had been used ‘forty-seven times’ in the play. Each use brought out different aspects of the word; their meaning and import demonstrated the power and resource hidden within the word. The
primary element that stands out in Empson’s study is that he does not close the possibilities in meaning. He keeps all options open, allowing an infinite scope for reinterpretations of the word and its impact on the context. In this connection mention may be made of Empson’s comments in Some Versions of The Pastoral regarding irony which serves to achieve ambiguity:

The supreme case of dramatic ambiguity is Verall’s interpretation of Enripedes; the plays were to dramatise sacred myths for a popular religious festival, yet for some members of the audience they were to suggest criticism of the gods, for others to convey complete disbelief and actually rationalize the myths before their eyes. The whole point was to play off one part of the audience against the other, and yet this made a superb ‘complete play’ for the critic who felt what was being felt in the whole audience.36

Empson continues:

Poetical ambiguity depends on the reader’s weighting the possible meanings according to their probability, while a dramatic ambiguity depends on the audiences’ have the possible reactions in the right proportions, but the distinction is only a practical one.37

Semantic analysis – the subtle and elaborate examination of verbal complexities was initiated by T.E. Hulme in the sense that his rules of modern poetry uphold new arrangements of words in a sentence, sometimes relinquishing grammatical
propriety or syntax. In dismissing visual projection, Empson had not summarily rejected the poetic theory of Hulme. With the aim of concrete representation, Hulme called for the production of a general effect. This could be achieved only in the event of taking away the 'predominance of metre and a regular number of syllables as the element of perfection in words.'\textsuperscript{38} Writing poetry according to the rules spelt by Hulme, one had to overthrow established rules of syntax, thereby adopting 'free-verse' which necessitated great control and discipline over the material (also over metaphoric reference) on the part of the artist. While Hulme was listing what the artist ought to do, Empson was concerned about revealing what the artist had done to give rise to a wealth of meaning.

The autonomy of the text remained at the center of Empson criticism as it had been in Hulme's case. In the essay, 'Romanticism and Classicism,' Hulme vehemently objected to the inclusion of the personal in poetry:

\begin{quote}
I object to the sloppiness which doesn't consider that a poem is a poem unless it is moaning or whining about something or other.\textsuperscript{39}
\end{quote}

Hulme called for poetry that was 'dry' and 'hard,' assembling all the properties of classical restraint instead of being guided by a rational philosophy that considered man to be a reservoir of great possibilities. In urging a new kind of poetry, Hulme had wished to exclude all elements of personal reference, hence, the concentration exclusively on the text. The approach certainly did not make Empson an obvious follower of Hulme but ensured the development of the stand taken by Hulme that only poetry mattered. Christopher Norris says that
New Criticism which was evidently influenced by Empson saw poetry as 'a model example of its own, critically sanctioned, unique status; its formal autonomy, inviolable resistance to paraphrase and above all its removal from contingent sphere of intention and biography.'  

William Empson further elaborated and analysed the behaviour of words in poetry. The semantic multiplicity of meaning was accepted by Empson as a positive and desired quality of poetry. Language, Empson felt, had a plurality of meaning and the consequent array of interpretations added to the richness of meaning. Perhaps, one can venture to say that Empson was a critic who systematically and painstakingly laid bare the rhetorical devices that a poem contained, enhancing the powers of rhetoric discussed by Hulme. Hulme saw poetry as an abstraction of intellectual complexity; a certain psychologism that Empson only related to the sementical flavour of a poem. The poem, according to Empson, carried through quirks of language 'the author's unconscious motivations, his private beliefs, his sense of what kinds of rhetorical tricks he could play upon his audience; sometimes, in terms of audience response, examining the ideas that the particular audience had inherited, the literary conventions to which it had been conditioned, its sensitivity or its stupidity.'  

Empson regarded poetry 'as a species of argument with the responsibility of truth-telling prose.' At the same time, he pointed to the artistic manoeuvres of a poem. It is true that certain elements, for example, ambiguity does not require only poetry to be put in operation. However, argument in poetry cannot be utilized to establish truth in the scientific sense. The truth of poetry, as Hulme felt was based on the notion of discontinuity
between the different kinds of reality and truth. The truth of poetry is promoted by the abstraction of philosophical ideas. Norris records John Crowe Ransom's similar point of view:

Ransom shares Hulme's anxiety that poetry should not trespass upon serious grounds of moral or religious argument. His case against Empson encapsulates the means by which formalist criticism avoids such blasphemous implications. Poetry in Ransom's account translates the 'profoundest passing' into 'crisp, objective constructs.' Its seriousness of purpose is thus transformed into a non-committal, self-absorbed play of ideas.43

In so far as Empson was working towards establishing poetry on equal footing with prose as a genre open to public debate and common sense reasoning, there seems no argument with Hulme, for he had specified the theoretical feature of modern poetry as a form that took familiar association of words and phrases and put them in unique relation to one another, constructing in the process, a vivid representation of the sensation or experience of the author. The sensation prompted in a poem could be easily recognized as common; the realization dawning upon the reader slowly, gradually as the poem moved towards a finale of unified effect. The removal of 'common-ness' was aided, in Hulme's thought by the ingenious arrangement of words in a sentence and in the succeeding sentences of a poem. Again, one may draw attention, after Norris, that Empson in The Structure of Complex Words, had explored the social and ethical dimension of words like honest, fool, dog. Effect, termed by
Empson, could be validated only in the context of the response aroused in the reader. Effect, according to Hulme was legitimate as long as it adhere to the exact and accurate depiction. In *The Structure of Complex Words*, Empson sidesteps the philosophical questions and says:

Good effects are the same when I am there as when I am not, like the rest of the external world.... Hence it is good for me to produce good effects in you.\(^4^4\)

Hulme had concentrated on the complex of the metaphor to consolidate meaning. Empson identified several complexes working simultaneously to give rise to multilayered meaning. The history of modern criticism may have begun with T.E. Hulme's exploration of contemporary scenario and subsequent theories of poetic impulse that were formulated on the basis of current compulsions. William Empson developed the ideas further by excavating additional features of linguistic philosophy. It is a common case with Hulme, Richards and Empson that they wished to rally the public into a reading, responsible public conscious of moral, social, ethical perspectives of literature. Drawing inspiration from Hulme's anti-romantic principles and devotion to concreteness, Richards and William Empson provided additional direction to the theory of language.
Notes:


5. ‘Notes on language and style,’ *The Criterion* 3: 487.


12. Rackin, 423.


15. Richards, I. A. ‘The Two Uses of Language,’ *Principles of Literary Criticism*, 211.


23. 'The Interanimation of Words,' *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 55.


27. *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 50.


32. Empson. 17.

33. Empson. 18 and 19.

34. 'Romanticism and Classicism,' *Speculations*, 132.

35. Empson. 'Fool in Lear,' *The Structure of Complex Words*, 125.


42. Norris, Christopher. 7.

43. Norris, Christopher. 8.

Hulme had stated ‘solidity : a pleasure’ while discussing the priority of poetry in the Notes in Language and style. In other words, he had wanted an objective standard in poetry. In ‘Romanticism and Classicism,’ Hulme had taken cognizance of the fact that language presents a special difficulty while being moulded into poetry. He realized that language was a social tool, a social medium and the job of the poet was to divest it of its ‘communal’ nature to reach the ‘exact curve.’ Hulme considered the poet as a man who was not satisfied with approximation and had an irresistible urge towards accurate presentation. Distinguishing natural presentation and accurate presentation, Hulme had in the same essay, spelt two important things. ‘First the particular faculty of the mind to see things as they really are, and apart from the conventional ways in which you have been trained to see them.’ Secondly, Hulme maintained that the artist had to hold on to what he visualized and transfer the impression ‘through infinite detail and trouble’ rather than taking refuge in ‘conventional curves of ingrained technique.’ These premises, according to Hulme, would lead to concrete expression, or in other words concretize the experience behind the expression. Hulme termed this allegiance as sincerity and more importantly, he stated that such proximity to the physical actuality negated the necessity of inducting the ‘infinite or serious’ in poetry. Hulme’s view of the metaphor was that of a precise medium to circumvent the discursive element in poetry. His rebellion against romanticism in poetry was because of the excess of emotion. Emotion depicted in verse obstructed the truly artistic sensibility and sincerity from gaining a grasp over expression. The
excesses made poetry appear listless. The new verse and the new technique initiated by Hulme went a long way in influencing F.R. Leavis in his critical assessment of English poetry. In *Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry*, Leavis reexamined the merits of Keats as a poet. He said, while discussing the Ode to a Nightingale, that it is 'not merely a superiority of details over Shelleys 'To a Skylark. The rich local concreteness is the local manifestation of a inclusive sureness of grasp in the whole. What the details exhibits is not merely an extraordinary intensity of realization but also an extraordinary rightness and delicacy of touch, a sureness of touch that is the working of a fine organization.' The 'concreteness' and 'sureness of touch' that Leavis speaks of can be read in the light of Hulme's comments on an alternative technique of capturing the exactness of things as they really are. The romantic excess of emotion displayed in poetry was considered as one of the aspects of poetry that needed correction, according to Hulme. He had been dismissive about poetry as well as the general outlook that did not regard a poem as a poem unless it was an outpouring of emotion. Leavis draws attention to the ability of Keats to subdue personal strife and present an impersonal art. The image that he drew, Levis thought, lifted the personal and transformed it into an 'impersonalized' art.

The very fact that Leavis refers to Keats' ability to transform personal suffering into 'the informing spirit, of the profoundest kind of impersonality,' with no element of 'self-pity' or 'self regarding' reflects the working of Hulme's classicism in a new and unique angle. The escape from overt personal revelation underlined the classical restraint in Hulme's theory of poetry. He
believed that through the play of fancy or metaphor; the poet could reach a deeper insight into the actual. Distancing the personal and approaching the actual were the twin prescribed laws in Hulme’s poetic theory. In fact in Bergson’s ‘Theory of Art,’ Hulme remarked that Keats’ ‘Pot of Basil’ would not have conveyed the ‘actual vividness and the actuality of feeling’ had he used ‘sky’ as an expression instead of ‘blue.’ It is quite remarkable that Hulme recognised what Leavis would also do:

The essence of poetry to most people is that it must lead them to a beyond of some kind. Verse strictly confined to the earthly and the definite (Keats is full of it) might seem to them to be excellent writing, excellent craftsmanship, but not poetry.

While Leavis quoting from the ‘Ode to Melancholy’: Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose/ ... Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows... stated that:

The tactful effects are notoriously characteristic of Keats, and they express, not only the voluptuary’s itch to be fingering but the strong grasp upon actualities – upon things out side himself – that firm sense of the solid world, which makes Keats so different from Shelley.

The concretization of experience through expression that Hulme constantly emphasized can be deduced in Leavis’s appreciation of Keats. To Leavis, the image meant concrete vigour. Language played a pivotal role, as it was the medium through which the concrete vitality of the actual world would be
evoked. Thus, Hulme’s conception that sincerity in poetry, consisted holding on
to impression and resisting habitual and automatic urge towards description;
thereby arriving at the precise words that would correspond to the concrete in
absolute terms. In the same context, Leavis found Milton’s quest for epic
grandeur, a failure. The ‘communal’ nature of language that Hulme referred to
in ‘Romanticism and Classicism,’ was in Leavis’s assessment, the cause for
Milton’s failure to attain a corresponding level with that of his aim in poetry.
According to Leavis, Milton did not explore the potential of language, he was
complacent about the ‘social contextual use of language during the 18th century
in public institutions.’ Though, Hulme considered language to be an
exhaustive medium, he was aware that the poet had to use the same medium,
deftly. The apparent contradiction between resources available and at the
disposal of artist and resources harnessed in the cause of poetry, presented a
difficult proposition to the poet. Hulme, in ‘Romanticism and Classicism’
referred to fancy, which was a faculty of apprehending finite objects through
‘metaphor’ or ‘analogy’ as the ‘necessary weapon of the classical school.’
Poetry was a complex medium of excluding the poet’s personality and using his
quality of grasping the real through ‘metaphor’ or ‘analogy.’ Fancy, metaphor
and analogy are taken to mean the same in Hulme’s lexicon. Though the
structure of language was social and pre-determined within the context of its
usage, Hulme’s contention was that the poet’s supreme art was the bending of
language to achieve the exact curve of the thing and the meaning to be
transmitted. As already mentioned, the alternative technique and the use of
fancy ushered in the metaphor for Hulme. The metaphor, though visual, was
nevertheless a linguistic exercise, exploiting the resources at the disposal of the poet and ultimately gaining in resources discovered and harnessed. When Hulme had said that the consciousness of the exhaustive nature of language would arouse a keen-ness on the part of the poet to search for new analogies to lend credibility to the concrete impression, he was implying that language was also an elastic medium and sincerity in poetry comprised of ceaseless search for ‘freshness.’ The freshness here can be replaced by the image. The image allowed Hulme to reach precision and accuracy for ‘plain speech is unconvincing.’ Thus the image served as a tool that stretched the frontiers of language. The evolving power of language, the organic growth of language was recognized by Hulme and by Leavis. The term ‘exploratory creative’ used by Leavis in the context of Eliot’s Marina echoes the basic idea behind Hulme search for ‘freshness’ and ‘analogy.’ The resources of language were not only visual and metaphorical, as Hulme understood; it was also aural, as Leavis believed. He refers to the use of the non visual Keatsian image in ‘Ode to Autumn’ as enactment in words: the concreteness of the description sufficing not only on the visual but the masterly use of consonants, positioned side by side. In the New Bearings in English Poetry Leavis develops the Hulmian attention to the reserve of language. He throws new light upon Gerard Manley Hopkins; whom he credits to be an experimenter with words. The coherence of his poetry emerged, Leavis said, through the arrangement of words that primarily appealed to the aural senses. In doing so, Hopkins had increased the potential of language. The unique rhythm of Hopkins’s verse did not adhere to a
conventional use of syntactic form. Thus, Leavis's appreciation of the unusual use of rhythm to achieve poetical effect does develop from Hulme's:

We shall not get any new efflorescence of verse until we get a new technique, a new convention, to turn ourselves loose in.\textsuperscript{18}

The dual yet actually single relation between language and image had been the concern of Hulme and Leavis. Hulme had said that a poem was the act of seeing something concretely, visually\textsuperscript{19} because the visual promised solid perception instead of a vague, infinite one. In this light, Leavis's remark that 'the ripeness with which Keats is concerned is the physical ripeness of autumn and his genius manifests itself in the sensuous richness with which he renders this in poetry without the least touch of artistic over-ripeness,'\textsuperscript{20} can be understood and surmised as directly advancing from Hulme's conception of the image. When Leavis said that Eliot strove to achieve concrete effect and for the purpose he did whatever was necessary,\textsuperscript{21} we are reminded of Hulme's similar view expressed simplistically as 'the great aim is accurate, precise and definite description.'\textsuperscript{22} Though Hulme had wanted to avoid the serious and the infinite, which may at a level, be contradictory to Leavis's assessment of Eliot's poetry as a medium that conveys the poet's profound thoughts and experience. However, Hulme's deliberate removal of the serious, at least, arose from a fear that the poet would not be able to handle 'seriousness' and the effect of the poem would suffer from verbosity and overt personal references. 'Images in verse are not mere decoration but the very essence of an intuitive language,' Hulme said in 'Romanticism and Classicism.' This clearly leads us to understand that the visual quality of the image was not merely an end in itself or
restricted within its own limit, it also carried the intuitive moment or reflected the management, the grasp over actual impact. The image did not entirely rest on the visual, though Hulme stated so. He also mentioned the ‘piling’23 up of images or simultaneous infusion of images aimed at building up a complex structure of general effect. The psychological moment of the poet’s experience could be transmitted through merging of contexts through the image or metaphor. Therefore, the visual restriction was not actually so pronounced as observed.24 If, as Hulme said, the poem is a negotiation between heterogeneous images, then surely, the visual impact is but only a part of the overall impression of the poem. Leavis recognised ‘The Four Quartets’ as a great example of giving effect to the poet’s mind ‘through a cluster of images, concrete, word play.’25 The image, according to Leavis, is ‘consummate energy aimed at managing the visual moment.’26 Therefore, image was not an end in itself, it was integral to the total effect of the poem and the total effect was about firmness of grasp and presentation. The image, to both Hulme and Leavis, was not simply artistic brilliance, it was not an ornament ‘like that of plums to cake,’27 it was a complex of art of thought through language. The image’s close contact with reality appealed to Hulme and for want of a more appropriate ‘illustration,’ he ‘exaggerates the place of imagery.’28

While conveying the concrete and the actual, the poet was simultaneously developing the reservoir of language, Leavis felt. This relation between poetry and the critical outlook was considered by Hulme as a fundamental issue. The arts or poetry were strongly connected to the general intellectual environment. That is why Hulme had remarked, while commenting
on the possible emergence of classical verse that ‘if good classical verse were to be written tomorrow very few people would be able to understand it.’ Any form or style of art and literature sprang from an attitude towards the world. Hulme was not only impatient with the creative impulse that was romantically oriented, but also with the receptive attitude. He objected to the idea that poetry would satisfy emotional needs by being emotional itself. Rejuvenation of society could take place only with the overhauling of the creative as well as the critical outlook. Hulme had rejected romanticism on the ground that, depiction of direct personal involvement and experience reduced the ability of the poet to objectify experience. A particular type of art, like geometric art or vital art could be distinguished by their correspondence to the general outlook.

The relationship between literature and consciousness of experience runs deep and firm. Hulme believed that the touch with the actual would definitely manifest in ‘dry, hard, classical verse,’ which he saw as an inevitable development. The arts, whether literary or visual, were connected to the critical attitude of any particular age. The humanist sensibility, Hulme thought, would have an impact on the creative output and would reach its logical height in the ethics of Rousseau and the art of Renaissance naturalism. The anti-humanist reaction would equally, reflect itself in classical art and verse. Hulme, as a staunch supporter of classicism wanted the creative artist to believe in the anti-humanist standards. Though Leavis does not get drawn into an argument about humanism and anti-humanism, his concern for a thriving relation between the experience of living and its realization in literature is no less than that of Hulme. He comments:
Without a sustained, tense and living relation with the concrete, with the particular of experience, the intellectual respectability and the erudition are barren.\textsuperscript{31}

Hulme discusses the heightened awareness of the poet in ‘Bergson’s Theory of Art.’ The poet has access to experience and their expression in a special way. The psychology of creative process begins with a vividly felt experience. The poet has to retain the same sharp individual character of the experience. In order to do so, he should tighten his grasp of the felt experience firmly. The holding on to experience would ensure that the communication was an honest representation. The ‘intellectual respectability’ that Leavis talks about depended on the degree of hold over the felt experience, in Hulmian terms. Thus, there was an awareness of the relation between literature and culture. Hulme and Leavis had held similar ideas on this particular aspect. Leavis stated:

The study of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century is the study of the modern world; it involves an approach to the characteristic problems of the modern world that answers admirably to our requirements ... it would involve a critical pondering of standards and key concepts – order, community, culture, civilization and so on.\textsuperscript{32}

The above statement may be viewed against Hulme’s discussion on the distinction between romanticism and classicism and how these concepts correspond to a general belief and attitude towards the world. Hulme was of the firm view that attitude shape as well as reveal the outlook of a particular age. In
his argument favouring classicism in verse and visual art, he felt the spirit of an age gets reflected in them. The classical attitude was not only rooted in a religious sensibility, it also moulded technique, treatment and taste in poetry and art. The split in attitude that Hulme saw from the romantic tradition of the Renaissance was mainly due to a change in outlook and an urge towards new and distinct expression.

The ethical issues are clearly available in the account of Hulme and Leavis. Literature was not something reflecting the outpouring of unsatisfied emotion. Its proximity to reality was unquestioned, at the same time the artist’s job was to convey the resemblance avoiding the habitual associations. Hulme had said, ‘You might say if you wished that the whole of the romantic attitude seems to crystallize in verse round metaphors of flight.’33 The import of these words signify how a whole structure of held beliefs regarding the cosmos, man’s relation to it, man’s self-estimate and the estimate of the outer-world gets reflected in verse. As Hulme understood, poetry was not merely a form of artistry but a representative character of the entire community. This same conviction is present in Leavis’s thoughts. To him the search for appropriate expression was a daunting task for it went beyond the individual, and the personal. The health of a community, a nation was reflected in the ‘linguistic health, the cleanliness of the very tools of thought.’34

In the essay ‘F.R. Leavis and English,’ Geoffrey Strickland has placed Leavis in a very interesting position. On one hand Leavis worked to establish English as an educational programme chiefly because of its role as a culture discipline. Yet he had reservations regarding the teaching of English and its
objectives. He saw, as Strickland points out and as his own books *Literature and the University* and *Education and the University* present:

‘English’ as playing a crucial role in the life of the university and the nation as a whole.... But he was clearly less inclined as the years went by to speak of the teaching of English as self-evidently beneficial.\(^{35}\)

The criticism of F.R. Leavis is an appreciation of poetry combined with the understanding of the sensibility, the impetus that works behind poetry. In his discussion of ‘Eliot’s Later Poetry’\(^{36}\) Leavis was against framing Eliot simplistically. He felt that Eliot’s extraordinary power as a poet lay in his ability to combine thought, experience and mastery over language together. Eliot had raised poetry to denote a general symbol of feeling and consciousness, removing the ‘I.’ In the context of the ‘Four Quartets,’ Leavis said that Eliot had seized through language ‘the unseizableness — the specific indeterminate status of the experience and the elusiveness of the meaning’\(^{37}\) in ‘Burnt Norton’ through the lines:

Footfalls echo in the memory

Down the passage which we did not take

Towards the door we never opened

Into the rose-garden.\(^{38}\)

The ‘Four Quartets,’ Leavis felt, had given concrete shape to a myriad of sensation through solid images of incomplete feeling mixed with images of broken houses, airfields and planes. Likewise, we find Hulme had been
concerned about the power of language. He quotes two lines from Fidele’s song from Cymbeline, Act IV, by Shakespeare:

Golden lads and girls all must,
Like chimney sweepers come to dust.\(^39\)

Hulme had of course voiced his opinion that the lines quoted, particularly the word ‘lad’ could not have been written by any ‘romantic.’ ‘He would have written golden youth, and take up the thing at least a couple of notes in pitch.’\(^40\)

Therefore he considered Shakespeare as a classical poet and called him ‘the classic of motion’ which Alun R. Jones had termed ‘strange.’\(^41\)

What actually Hulme wanted to convey was perhaps that Shakespeare was rooted in common life, the commonness of experience had been transformed through art. The individuality of literature does not operate as a social force, as Leavis and Hulme believed. It is the transfer of the personal to the common understanding that really matters. It works as a determining factor that reveals the common environment as well as the mastery over language. Both Hulme and Leavis can be considered in the same light, given their preference for technical innovation, fusion of modern experience and outlook, to control poetry through language closely linked to the actual world.

The route towards social organization and cohesion passed through language and expression. Hulme had directly advocated ‘accurate, precise and definite description’\(^42\) and at the same time realized that one had to go through a ‘terrific struggle with language.’\(^43\) It entailed great discipline of thought and expression on the part of the poet to use language which is inadequate in itself to manifest the complexity in the thought. Hulme said that accuracy and
exactness was 'no mere matter of carefulness.' The poet who breaks through the inadequate and special conventional and communal ideas attached to the body of language, performs no less in striving to bring about enrichment of experience through words. The classical poet, in Hulme's view has to be cautioned in his unique industry of bending language according to his purposes that the response to his poetry may be bewilderment and confusion. We can understand Hulme's cynicism that the romantic attitude of appreciation of only 'damp' poetry still exists because the equilibrium between verse and corresponding receptive verse is tilted in favour of the latter. Therefore Hulme felt a need to associate the critical attitude (along with the creative) to the dogma of Original Sin. It served to bring about a homogeneous relation between the two.

F.R. Leavis acknowledged (like Eliot) the contribution of Arnold, who in the backdrop of rising materialism and economic progress turned his attention upon moral issues. A poem or any other form, Leavis thought, should aim to establish something of value; by value, he meant, significance. A poem therefore would differ as a work of value from other poems – in so far as it establishes significance – a standard. This standard is the work or endeavour of the artist, himself. He supplies multiple possibilities through the poem.

The value that Leavis stressed upon can be seen as an extension of Hulme's concept of social organisation and increasing the resources of language through poetry. The ethical concerns, viz., absolute values of Hulme and significance of Leavis emphasizes a greater entity or 'truth' in so far removed from the personal, the individual. Leavis worked to establish English as an
educational programme chiefly because of its role as a culture discipline. He wrote that 'English literature, magnificent and matchless in diversity and range, and so full and profound in its registration of changing life, gives us a continuity that is not yet dead. There is no other; no other access to anything approaching a full continuity of mind, spirit and sensibility – which is what we desperately need.'

Leavis' writings: *English Literature in Our Times and The University* and *Education and The University* present a case for English as a subject that cultivated cultural and ethical consciousness. It was a discipline that imposed awareness on the part of the writer and the reader simultaneously. It was an organic subject in the sense that it grew and developed in the exploration of a sensibility that was anchored in the times and expressed itself through a process that remained dedicated to experience. He refers to Eliot as the young poet who had 'altered expression.' To Leavis, English was inseparable from poetry. It was an integrated study that left a profound impact on social behaviour and organisation of a nation.

If Leavis could pay tribute to Eliot for initiating new and significant debate on creative concerns, Hulme too could share the same for we have to admit the task he had done pointing out the primary concerns of expression and technical indirectness. Hulme's concept of restraint in poetry was uniquely placed on the dogma of original sin. From the same he drew a connection to ethical moorings. Leavis believed in a cultural consciousness and advocated a standard in literature. This can be seen as a trace of Hulme's thoughts on the social and moral relevance of literature and art.
Notes:


17. In ‘Mr. Eliot and Milton,’ *The Common Pursuit*, Leavis speaks of the ‘strength’ of Keats, who on the basis of his concrete words could be distinguished from Tennyson, Keats had effectively made use of the ‘body’ and ‘action’ of the English language; 16–17.


19. In ‘Notes on Language and Style,’ *The Criterion*, 3: 1925, Hulme arrives at the visual as the surest means of solid expression.


22. *Speculations*, 132. The 'serious' for Hulme did not consist of a solemn subject matter dealt in a sombre way. The serious was that of craft, of technique. The correspondence between feeling and representation constituted the serious goal of poetry, according to Hulme. The seriousness of poetry could even emerge from the small, finite things.

23. *Further Speculations*, 73.

24. Roberts, Mr. *T.E. Hulme*. Michael Roberts objected to the visuality of the image and read a contradiction between this particular aspect and Hulme's insistence on handling over sensations physically, Manchester, Carcanet New Press, 228, 1982.

25. *Education and the University*, 95.

26. *Education and the University*, 100.


30. *Speculations*, 78.


33. *Speculations*, 120.


36. *Education and the University*, 104.

37. 'T.S. Eliot's Later Poetry,' *Education and the University*, 95-96.

38. 'T.S. Eliot's Later Poetry,' *Education and the University*, 95-96


40. *Speculations*, 121.
41. Jones, Alun R. *The Life and Opinions of T.E. Hulme*. Jones thought T.E. Hulme's poetic theory rested on the distinction between restraint and exuberance. Shakespeare and Racine had been called classical poets, based on this distinction. The establishment of Shakespeare as 'the classic of motion,' Jones found, was rather a hurried conclusion which was reached at without sufficient argument. However, one sees the point Hulme was trying to make, that Shakespeare's use of language was inspired by an approach to actual life. He never used language as a method of conveying vague meaning.


42. *Speculations*, 132.

43. *Speculations*, 132.

44. *Speculations*, 132.

45. *Speculations*, 127.


47. *English Literature in Our Times and The University*, 80.
The main tenets of New Criticism may be summed up as follows:

- A poem is to be held as an autonomous object.
- The text or the poem had to be read closely, i.e., the reader's attention is to direct only at the poem and give it keen consideration.
- The guiding principle of New Criticism is verbal. Literature was, according to the New Critics, a verbal art, it was a cluster of meanings between the various aspects of language.
- The New Critics apply the norms of language to the different variety of writings, e.g., drama, fiction etc.

The text, when taken to be the only object of consideration, naturally implied that there would be a gradual weight towards particularity. Particularity or concrete rendering thus may be counted as poetic property and as such may be distinguished from scientific and discursive principles. The truth of poetry was not based on the rational understanding. It utilized a concrete medium, language, to aim at a discussion of the world of ideas and knowledge. Poetry was a verbal device, through which, the new critics believed a complete absolute world could be presented.

Allen Tate in ‘Three Types of Poetry’ classifies three types of poetry corresponding to three types of attitudes. They are (a) poetry of the practical will which leans either upon allegory or abstract ideas, (b) the poetry which
emerged as a revolt against the domination of science, and in poetry it has given us the emotion known as romantic irony and (c) poetry that is of the creative spirit and consequently a thing in itself. Here Tate’s idea appears to be the inverse of Richard’s theory of pseudo statements arriving at general truth. The New Critics believed that poetic truth was the aesthetic entity itself. The task of poetry is not to offer an explanation of the world or an interpretation to it. Poetry and truth are conjoined by the consideration of the absolute: the absolute only in aesthetic terms. Absolute ensures that the objective of poetry is serious and responsible. Tate is of the opinion that ‘on the one hand, we assume that all experience can be ordered scientifically, an assumption that we are almost ready to confess has intensified if it has not actually created our distress; but on the other hand, this assumption has logically reduced the spiritual realm to irresponsible feeling, it is irrelevant because it cannot be reduced to the terms of positivistic procedure. It is my contention here that the high forms of literature offer us the only complete and thus the most responsible, versions of our experience. The point of view of this essay, then, is influenced by the late, neglected T.E. Hulme. It is the belief, philosophical tenable, in a radical discontinuity between the physical and the spiritual realms.\textsuperscript{1} Tate further adds that literature is formed of man’s knowledge of the world and it also provides knowledge of the world. As is evident in Tate’s statement. Hulme’s separation of the spheres of religion and matter was based on the use of the mechanisms in the two spheres. It was his belief that the tools of both could not be interchanged or substituted by one another. The validity of their truth cannot be judged from the other’s point of view. Poetry and truth like religion and truth were deeply
connected to the higher reaches of experience, something which scientific
generalization could never attain. It was the totality of experience and the
complete consciousness of such experience that put aside the positivist rational
approach. Poetry was, as Tate and Hulme believed, the complete apprehension
of experience giving way to knowledge in aesthetic terms.

The apprehension of experience and its realization in poetry is done
through the firm hold over the actual or the concrete. Allen Tate felt that ‘the
meaning of poetry is its tension, the full organized body of all its extension and
intention that we can find in it. The remotest figurative significance that we can
find does not invalidate the extension of literal statement... or we may begin by
literal statement and by stages develop the complications of metaphor, at every
stage we may pause to state the meaning so far apprehended, and at every stage
the meaning will be coherent.\(^2\)

Wimsatt in *The Verbal Icon* discussed poetry as a form of verbal
iconicity. ‘Poetry,’ he said, ‘is that type of verbal structure where truth or
reference or correspondence reaches a maximum degree of fusion with the truth
of coherence or where external and internal relation are intimately mutual
reflections.’\(^3\) In another essay, ‘Romantic Nature Imagery’ he stated that ‘poetic
structure is always on fusion of ideas with material, a statement in which the
solidity of symbol and the sensory verbal qualities are somehow not washed out
by abstraction. For this effect the iconic or directly imitative powers of language
are important and of these the well known onomatopoeia or imitation of sound
is only one and one of the simplest.’\(^4\)
Poetry or art allows us to obtain our aesthetic experience. It is basically the recovery of the actual, though it is far removed from the meaning in which science or history understands it. While discussing the brilliance of Metaphysical poetry and the devices used in it, John C. Ransom distinguishes the 17th and the 19th centuries, based on the efficiency of the metaphor. He thought, 'Figures of speech twist accidence away from the straight course, as if to intimate astonishing lapses of rationality beneath the smooth surface of discourse, inviting perceptual attention, and weakening the tyranny of science over the senses.' He continued further to conclude that poetry, particularly Metaphysical poetry 'suggests to us that the object is perceptually or physically remarkable, and we had better attend to it.'

The emphasis upon the concrete is predominantly found amongst the New Critics. Wimsatt in *The Verbal Icon* understands the concrete as the 'substantive.' He classified the 'substantive level' into three verbal styles, viz., the abstract or less than specific substantive, the minimum concrete or substantive style and the extra-concrete or more than specific style. While there is no doubt that Wimsatt analyses Romantic poetry sympathetically in 'Romantic Nature Imagery,' he locates a quality that is removed from concreteness and hardness which language endows a poem. The Romantic poet looked for something in the object or nature that was not obvious or not a physical and actual property of the thing. They transferred the 'extra' into the object, turning it into something transcendental. Though Wimsatt does not pronounce it as wrong, he argues that Romantic poetry in spite of all sincere efforts fell short of the concreteness or verbal iconicity as it took recourse to
imitating nature or the object, directly. It lost, in the process, the hardness that language alone could construct. Wimsatt believed that Romantic poetry could have used the iconic quality of language to render the imitation of nature into poetry. Modern poetry, on the other hand drew heavily on verbal iconicity and began from the obvious, the actual to offer greater insights into experience. The development of the concept of verbal iconicity indicates a line of thought after Hulme, who spelt out the agenda of poetry as the capturing of the solid and the concrete through language.

Tate comments on the power of the concrete in 'The Symbolic Imagination':

Catholic poets have lost, along with their heretical friends, the power to start with the 'common thing': they have lost the gift for concrete experience. Nature offers to the symbolic poet clearly denotable object in depth and in the round, which yield the analogies to the higher synthesis. The modern poet rejects the higher synthesis or tosses it in the vacuum of abstraction. If he looks at nature he spreads the clear visual image in a complex of metaphor, from on Katachresis to another through Aristotle’s permutations of genus and species. He cannot sustain the prolonged analogy, the second and superior kind of figure that Aristotle doubtless had in mind when he spoke of metaphor as the key to the resemblances of things, and the mark of genius.6
While Hulme had predicted that modern poetry would preoccupy itself with precise expression through the vehicle of fancy or metaphor, Cleanth Brooks begins by stating that ‘one can sum up modern poetic technique by calling it the rediscovery of metaphor and the full commitment to metaphor.’

Brooks’ view that the parts or elements of a poem are related to each other in an organic sense can be read as a continuation of Hulme’s theory of poetry. He thought the aim of poetry was towards the building up of the general effects. The juxtaposition of images in succeeding lines that Hulme speaks of in ‘A Lecture on Modern Poetry’ in *Further Speculations* implied the compact nature of poetry. It was a tight medium of communicating an idea; all components positioned crucially to lend to the general effect. The wholesome effect, therefore, arose not only from a forward movement but also from the simultaneous suggestion of an opposite movement. The poetic effort consisted of attaining the mastery over the properties of language. Language, in Hulme’s opinion, was never available as poetic. It was a common medium which had to be moulded to suit the purpose of communication. The contemplation of the object was in a linguistic form. The verbal equivalent of the object proceeds towards the idea and while doing so merges into contexts. Metaphor, rhythm, sound, words and phrases work within a design that can be distorted by the weakening of any of the components. Hulme said that ‘a powerfully imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant all the important ideas of its poem or pictures and while it works with one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relation to it and never losing sight of their bearings on each other as the motion of a snake’s body goes through all parts at
once and its volition acts at the same instant in coils which goes contrary ways.°

This standard has been grasped by Wimsatt in ‘Verbal Style’ as the ‘reference to some verbal quality which is somehow structurally united to or fused with what is being said by words, but is also distinguished from what is being said.’ The qualities of denotation and connotation of language was an area of interest for New Critics. They realized as Hulme had, that a word and its connection as well as its intrinsic value adds up to a whole new perception in terms of meaning. The encounter of meaning with meaning through the aegis of the word has been considered as ‘tension’ in poetry by Allen Tate. The ‘intention’ and ‘extension’ (Tension in Poetry) discussed by him is an enlargement of the scope of Hulme’s notion of language. In ‘Bergson’s Theory of Art,’ Hulme identified the artist’s difficulty in employing the medium of his art. It was only by a degree of tension that the poet would be able to ‘force the mechanism of expression out of the way in which it tends to go and into the way he wants.’ In the same essay, he observed that language by itself is an unreliable medium for it fails to convey the exact nature of experience. The communication of exactness had to done through the metaphorical or the ‘extension’ quality of language. The literal or straightforward sense remains hovering over the suggestive sense to bring forth a totality of experience.

Wimsatt felt that the metaphor was a ‘structure most characteristic of concentrated poetry.’ Illustrating this point he mentions ‘On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer.’ He appreciates that Keats could convey the thrill of discovery with the help of two metaphors: the astronomer discovering a new
planets and Cortez discovering the Pacific. Both the examples convey the feeling of understanding Homer. The realization of the experience has been concretely communicated by Keats. As Tate has observed in ‘The Symbolic Imagination’ that the modern poet preferred to ‘spread the clear visual image.’\(^\text{12}\)

The power of the concrete display lies in the grasp of the common. Poetry was therefore an absolute aesthetic form presenting a experience. Hulme had advocated the recovery of the ‘exact curve’ of the thing under description. The reliance on the concrete power of allusion was a development contrary to what the romantics had pursued. Wimsatt recalled that ‘recent critical history has reinvited attention to the romantic theory of imagination and especially to the version of that theory which Coleridge derived from the German metaphysicians...’\(^\text{13}\) His theory of verbal style shows how both the senses (logical and counter logical) worked together. Both were solid in their references and enhanced the verbal style.

Cleanth Brooks maintained that logic in poetry was different from logical coherence. The logic of poetry did not lie in the neat rational layout of meaning. Poetry was a ‘pattern of resolved stresses.’\(^\text{14}\) Thus, paraphrasing a poem may lead to distortion of meaning. A word was to be taken ‘not as a discrete participle of meaning but as a potential of meaning, a nexus or cluster of meaning.... Indeed, whatever the statement, it will always show itself as deflected away from a positive straightforward formulation.’\(^\text{15}\) We may as well say that the energy of a poem rests on the pull between the literal and the suggestive or between the logical and counter logical. The structure of poetry was so dense that paraphrase would only distort it. Logical coherence, Brooks
thought, was irrelevant. He felt 'we fail frequently to see imaginative coherence on levels where they are highly relevant.'

Brooks echoes Hulme's 'A Lecture on Modern Poetry' where the tightly fused intercontextual arrangement of images was aimed at achieving a integrated effect.

Tate refers to 'the vision of the whole' in 'The Three Types of Poetry.' He thought poetry was a creation of the totality of experience and thus 'it cannot be logically demonstrated – an it has no useful relation to the ordinary forms of action.'

Importance of language, the ability of language to spring into action, the context within as the subject are some of the concerns of New Criticism. The truth of poetry is within the structure, it is left unsaid and it had to be surmised through the devices of metaphor and paradox. As such there could not be any paraphrasing – the context was so tightly wound together, that paraphrasing would only succeed in distorting the totality of effect.

It transpires that the New Critics built upon the theory of language and metaphor of T.E. Hulme. Hulme thought the linguistic health of an age reflected the spirit of the times. He propelled attention on the text. His classicist stand considered all things irrelevant; the text was autonomous. According to him, criticism should involve itself with the poem and nothing else. This singular focus naturally implied consideration of the linguistic features of the poem. Sound, rhythm, paradox, irony, metaphor: these were crucial in the understanding of poetry and its communication. The classical revival that
Hulme believed was inevitable, was fundamentally a movement towards ‘accurate, precise and definite expression.’ But he also confronted the difficulty of employing the basic medium of poetry. As he remarked:

The great difficulty in any talk of art lies in the extreme indefiniteness of the vocabulary you are obliged to employ.19

Language, Hulme realized, was suitable only for common description. The vividness, striking or arresting nature of experience could not be communicated through language. If it did so, the experience would appear dull and unconvincing. Metaphor conveyed the required emotion for it had the capacity to reach the exact and the accurate.

Here, it is worth mentioning that Hulme was apprehensive about the life of the metaphor. He felt that with use the ‘freshness’ would diminish. The poet ought to be engaged in a constant struggle in search of images and metaphors because of this tendency. Hulme pointed to the aesthetic pleasure derived from Keats’ ‘Pot of Basil.’ He felt that the word ‘blue’ meaning sky, ushered in a wealth of meaning. It generated a pleasure, an aesthetic pleasure, through such use. ‘Blue’ gained an intensity through its interaction with other words in the line. The ‘emancipation’ of the poet that Hulme advocated was the sincere involvement with language and its appropriate contextual use resulting in its enrichment and development.

Paradox, essentially a resource of language was effectively used by Shakespeare in ‘Macbeth.’ Brooks studied the symbols used by Shakespeare and the meanings they acquired because of the contextual use in the play. For
example, 'clothes' assumed an enlarged meaning as it penetrated deep into the character and the action of the play. Macbeth says: 'The Thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me | In borrow'd robes?' Through these words, we get an insight into the truth of Macbeth.20

It is in this light of expansion that we view the work of the New Critics. Blackmur considered 'gesture' as a 'native' property of language.21 Inherent in the term 'gesture' is action and movement. Blackmur's view was that gesture came in when words failed and gesture was made-up of words. He said 'Gesture, in language, is the outward and dramatic play of inward and imaged meaning. It is the play of meaningfulness among words which cannot be defined in the formulas in the dictionary, but which is defined in their use together, gesture is the meaningfulness which is moving, in what moves us.'22 Again he remarks that 'Gesture are the first step toward the making if symbols, and those symbols which endure are the residuary legatees of the meanings earned through gesture.... A symbol, I take it, is what we use to express meaningfulness in a permanent way which cannot be expressed in direct words or formulas of words with any completeness...23

Blackmur is talking about those elements which have been dealt with in a different perspective and terminology by Hulme. Hulme wanted to skirt the use of discursive language and aimed for accurate presentation. Hulme and the New Critics realized that they had to employ certain verbal substances in order to check the listless approach to approximate rendering. The apprehension of
the experience depicted in a poem and its full realization was the main objective of T.E. Hulme and the New Critics as well.

Cleanth Brooks has shown in the essay ‘The Language of Paradox’ that meaning is enhanced by the situation and the employment of language in ‘Upon Westminster’s Bridge’ by Wordsworth. Likewise in ‘Keats’ Sylvan Historian: History Without Footnotes,’ Brooks had provided fresh insight into the text. The logical development in the ‘Ode’ is quite the work of precision by Keats; managing to place the urn as a historian and as an artefact of history, nurtured by ‘slow time’ and ‘quietness.’ The central paradox also weaves together the dramatic element inherent in the scenes depicted on the urn. Blackmur’s contention that language also behaves as gesture can be discerned in the ‘Ode to a Grecian Urn.’ Cleanth Brooks had developed the concept of paradox as a property of language which can be considered in the light of Hulme’s remark that elements in a poem work in fusion much as they work in contradiction to each other, never ‘losing sight their bearing on each other.’ Therefore the structure of a poem cannot be distinguished from the content, as one segment automatically has a connection to the rest and represent a tightly knit formation.

Phyllis Rackin studied the development of contextualist poetic theory and found that T.E. Hulme’s Speculations contained ‘New Critical attitude of anti-romanticisms, traditionalism, and devotion to concreteness as the basis of poetic excellence.’ Rackin also identified the fundamental position of Hulme and the New Critics. Hulme had aimed for concreteness which he thought to be an anti-romantic manifestation. The New Critics defined irony and paradox as primary features of poetry. Rackin’s thesis is that Hulme was guided by
philosophical interests whereas the New Critics were steered by the dynamics of opposing principles. They were largely influenced by, Rackin says, by Richards' belief that 'irony is a necessary and universal principle of all good art rather than a mere feature of some classical poetry' and it reminded one of poetry of the 'highest order.'

Irony may not have enjoyed a separate treatment and formulation by T.E. Hulme, nevertheless, it was discussed within the context of exact representation that Hulme came to consider. It points to the possibilities of enlargement which were carried out by Richards and the New Critics.

T.E. Hulme had deplored the tendency of influencing the poetic impulse with the 'personality.' Poetry was not a medium of expressing the poet's personality. Poetry was the objective presentation of experience and sensation; criticism of poetry was about understanding the realization of the experience and sensation within the context of the poem itself. In the essay 'History and Criticism,' Wimsatt considered the text as the 'basis of all criticism' and literary criticism was but a study of the text. The term 'intentional fallacy' used by Wimsatt judged a work by its own merit. The work is only a verbal structure and as such the intention is the context. The text is what is in it and not what was intended. Since poetry is a verbal construct – the meaning is what is projected. The ontology of the poem speaks for itself, the details about the author's intentions are irrelevant to the poem.

Tate placed Emily Dickinson in the historical-cultural milieu of New England; her absorption of theocratic doctrines, the moral emphasis and the
conflict with nature helped and shaped her poetic expression and sensibility. In the essay on Emily Dickinson, Tate deplored the interest in biographical history and the attempt of critics to find a relation between the personal life and poetry. ‘Personality is a legitimate interest because it is an incurable interest, but legitimate as a personal interest only; it will never give up the key to anyone’s verse. Used to that end, the interest is false,’ Tate observed. Tate considered poetry to be knowledge, that which informed us of the experience and Emily Dickinson balanced the abstraction and sensation remarkably through concrete experience in her poetry as in ‘Because I could not stop for Death.’ The poem itself allows material for thought and poetic skill in representing a difficult experience and the reference to Dickinson’s personal life has hardly any relevant bearing upon her art. Hulme rejected the ‘sloppiness’ in poetry, calling for restraint and ‘holding back’ in communicating experience.

Poetic expression was the exploitation of the resources of language. Hulme addressed the issue of language in its total and comprehensive effect over people. The New Critics analysed the various aspects of language and their potential in enlarging the meaning of poetry. Hulme pioneered the concentration on the text; through his classicism he also studied the impact of verbal properties upon the unified effect. The New Critics worked and gave additional direction to the Hulmian concepts to find richer variations.
Notes:


2. 'Tension in Poetry,' Essays of Four Decades, 63.


6. Essays of Four Decades, 430.


8. 'Romanticism and Classicisms,' Speculations, 140.


10. Speculations, 160.

11. Wimsatt. 79.

12. Essays of Four Decades, 430.

13. Wimsatt. 79.


17. Tate. 196.


19. Speculations, 143.


23. Blackmur. 16.
24. Speculations, 140.


27. Wimsatt. 259.

28. Essays of Four Decades, 286.

29. Speculations, 120 and 126.