A COMPANION TO

MODERNIST POETRY

EDITED BY
DAVID E. CHINITZ
AND **GAIL McDONALD**

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A Companion to Modernist Poetry

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Introduction

David E. Chinitz and Gail McDonald

Companions, introductions, anthologies, and other aids to the study of modernism necessarily begin with definitions of the term "modernism" itself, and, in the last fifteen years or so, these definitions have become increasingly qualified and uncertain, even dithering, in tone. Periodization has become a particularly thorny problem, with modernism's start date and, especially, its end date – if any – a source of apprehension and not infrequent debate. Some conceptions focusing on what may be summed up quickly as "difficult style" find much in contemporary literature that continues to qualify as modernist. A different, recently influential understanding locates modernism wherever and whenever the rapid and pervasive social changes associated with modernity are ongoing. By this definition, too, modernism cannot be assigned to a historical period.

In contrast, we conceive of modernism in historical terms as the response in expressive culture to a particular global modernity – one associated with, for example, the final phase of Western imperialism, first-wave feminism, the political and ideological developments surrounding the two world wars, and the advent of technologies of mass culture. The art that succeeded it emerged in a drastically altered landscape shaped politically by decolonization and by the Cold War – a landscape over which the possibility of nuclear annihilation loomed, and in which the Holocaust had been perpetrated. It is not that Auschwitz or the bomb suddenly ended modernism, but, rather, that the social conditions that had nurtured modernism rapidly gave way to others. While acknowledging that any periodization is bound to be approximate and to be strained by limit cases, we see our historical circumscription of modernism as expedient for purposes of both selection and analysis.

An immediate consequence of our definition is a decentering of *style* as a criterion for inclusion, a move that may seem anomalous to those for whom particular forms of

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experimentalism are a sine qua non of modernist art. The presence in this volume of such poets as Claude McKay, Robert Frost, and Edna St. Vincent Millay – perhaps even William Butler Yeats – will be unexpected, at the least, to such readers. But there is, it seems to us, more than one way to give poetic expression to the historical modernity we associate with modernism, and we see such techniques as fragmentation, collage, and free verse as characteristic but not indispensable features of modernist poetry.

In applying our understanding of modernism we have preferred to be flexible rather than doctrinaire. Strictly speaking, our definition ought to apply to individual works and not to writers. The output of many of the poets considered in this book extends beyond the late-1940s endpoint we have adopted conceptually, and since that work naturally reflects and often explicitly addresses changed historical circumstances, it would best be seen as postmodernist regardless of the identity of its author or the technical devices it employs. Rather than break off the story of W. H. Auden or the Objectivists midstream, however, we have avoided "calling time" on our poets. Nor have we attempted to impose our understanding of modernism on our contributors, whose views at times diverge somewhat from our own. We are not uncomfortable with the presence of a diversity of opinion within this volume. Indeed, in this period of critical eclecticism, it is inevitable and even healthy.

In part, today's critical diversity is an effect of time. In the early years of a movement, what artists themselves have to say about their work is influential, and modernist poetry was a cultural phenomenon accompanied by plenteous explanation and apologia: manifestos, essays in little magazines, reviews of one poet's work by another poet, the naming of schools and "isms." Modernists' advertisements for themselves, while still influential and useful, no longer hold critics and scholars in thrall, as they did when the New Critics placed Eliot's pronouncements at the center of their program, a program that dominated the teaching of poetry in the mid-century years. Indeed, as certain modernist poets became part of the institutional furniture in universities, a backlash developed. By the late 1960s, poststructuralist and other critical approaches made the New Critical treatment of a text as an autonomous object a highly dubious proposition. The turn toward contexts – history, gender, economics, sociology, biography – meant that features of canonical modernism previously occluded were brought into the light. The shifts in critical methodology have had the salubrious effect of creating modes of scholarship more willing to question not just what modernism was but how it may be approached less programmatically, with more questions about its meanings and effects, more awareness of its own ambivalent values and equivocations. The emphasis on context has made it possible to acknowledge and evaluate the work of poets who were not "men of 1914," or who chose to write in the sonnet form, or who embraced popular culture, or who were not intent on history. In short, the last half-century of scholarship and criticism has caused us to see modernist poetry as wilder than tame institutional categories can entirely compass.

Reflecting the multiplicity of (Anglophone) modernist poetry, this volume has been designed to achieve several aims. An opening chapter on "Rhythm, Form, and Diction

in Modernist Poetry" spotlights prosodic and formal considerations. The section that follows, on "Influences and Institutions," reflects the attention to context that has been especially fruitful in the last two decades. The contexts treated here include some that have been long recognized as important contributors to modernist poetics – modern painting, psychology, and urbanism, for example – as well as several that have until recently received scant attention, such as popular culture and print culture.

The volume's second section, which focuses on various movements and groupings of poets, provides a means of placing particular writers in literary history and of understanding the various currents and countercurrents whose interaction generated the category of modernism. Some chapters treat groups of consciously allied poets, such as the Fugitives and the Objectivists, while others consider the work of writers – women poets, for example, or the heirs of modernism – whose association is visible only in historical retrospect. The section's first and last chapters push past the early and late borders of modernism without expanding the category beyond usefulness, while the chapter on "World Modernist Poetry in English" extends the volume's reach in space as well as time.

In the third section, the editors have selected twenty-one poets to receive individual attention. These poets were chosen not only for the frequency with which they are taught or for their status as highly influential figures but also to give some sense of the range of accomplishment in the writing of verse and the range of voices and feelings expressed in poetry in the first five decades of the twentieth century. These chapters are not biographies. Rather, they trace the arc of each poet's career, illustrated by readings of key works – works that are both representative and commonly taught – to help students understand the development and the achievement of the poet. The volume closes with an examination of the conflicting methodologies that mark contemporary criticism of modernist poetry.

The *Companion* thus offers breadth in its presentation of historical and literary contexts and depth in its attention to individual writers; it brings recent scholarship to bear on the subject of modernist poetry while also providing guidance on poets who are historically important and who are likely to appear on syllabi and to attract critical interest for many years to come. Because the phenomena of modernity continue to shape the environments in which we live, the poetry of the first half of the twentieth century will remain of value to readers in the twenty-first.

1
Rhythm, Form, and Diction in Modernist Poetry

Michael H. Whitworth

The term "form" was crucial to modernist poets' understanding of their enterprise, but the elusiveness of the concept designated by the word has in crucial respects inhibited critical exploration of modernist poetry; insofar as "form" replaced "genre," the elusiveness of the concept may, of course, have been part of its appeal. Moreover, its elusiveness is such that attempts at clarification lead away from close analysis of modernist verse rhythm and diction. The metaphors that modernist poets used to articulate ideas of form, though fascinating in their own right, were never intended as tools for the analysis of lines of poetry. The present chapter aims primarily to outline the formal options available to modernist poets, in terms of kinds of prosody and choices in relation to lexis, and only incidentally to place those options in relation to the larger ideas of form.

Breaking the Pentameter, and Other Myths

Modernist writers were self-mythologizing: much in their critical writings emphasizes their discontinuity with the immediate past and serves to obscure connections. The most extreme form of such self-mythologizing comes in the Italian Futurists' call to burn the museums (qtd. in Rainey 5), but even writers like T. S. Eliot, seemingly advancing a more subtle position than that of the Futurists and encouraging engagement with literary tradition (canonically in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" [1919]), nevertheless were selective in terms of what constituted that tradition: the Romantics were largely erased from the canon, and the Victorians seen as little more than late Romantics. Thus, in the field of prosody, a remark such as Ezra Pound's "To break the pentameter, that was the first heave," which appears parenthetically in Canto

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LXXXI (*Cantos* 532), gives the impression that the conventional metrical line of iambic pentameter had run unchallenged from Shakespeare to Wordsworth (and beyond) until modernist poets were brave enough to tackle it; it completely obscures the breadth of metrical theory and practice current in the late nineteenth century (for which, see Hall and Martin).

Similarly, the idea that modernist verse, having broken with the rigid pentameter, was *vers libre* or "free verse," and that modernist poems, having broken with the rigid forms of the nineteenth century, were "formless" or "open," serves to obscure the respects in which modernist poets took heed of the rules that had guided their predecessors, and also the respects in which they evolved rules and conventions of their own. It perpetuates modernist poets' definition of their work in terms of what it is not; removed from their original context, such negative definitions become doubly meaningless. Thus, a recent anthology of poetic forms, although it includes a section of "open forms," and contests the notion of a "great disjunction" between formalist and nonformalist work, cannot achieve the reassuring specificity that defines verse forms such as the villanelle and the sestina (Strand and Boland 259). "Open," we might ask, "to what?" Elsewhere, as Eleanor Berry notes, the lack of discrimination in terms like "free" and "open" plays into the hands of critics – largely neoformalists – who would prefer to see modernism as a wrong turn in the history of poetry, a cul-de-sac out of which poetry has reversed (874).

That the validity of the "freedom" of free verse was contested by Eliot and Pound has only served to complicate the picture. In "Reflections on *Vers Libre*" (1917) Eliot wrote that "the most interesting verse which has yet been written in our language has been done either by taking a very simple form, like the iambic pentameter, and constantly withdrawing from it, or taking no form at all, and constantly approximating to a very simple one." In the same essay he went on to write that "the ghost of some simple metre should lurk behind the arras in even the freest verse; to advance menacingly as we doze, and withdraw as we rouse"; "freedom," he explained, "is only freedom when it appears against the background of an artificial limitation" (*Selected Prose* 33, 34–35). The essay is relatively conservative in that it assumes that the only available forms of "artificial limitation" are traditional. Against Eliot's position, one might argue that, even if some sort of regularity will always emerge in verse, the regularity need not be an established one; it is possible for poets to invent new forms of regularity. Eliot's position grants only a limited validity to new forms of verse, in which they exist to supplement "simple" forms, extending the expressive range of conventional rhythms, but never having an independent existence.

The note of reaction in Eliot's 1917 essay was extended further in the immediately following years in the quatrain poems in Eliot's *Ara Vos Prec* (1920) and Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920). Pound later recalled that he and Eliot had felt in about 1919 that the "dilutation of *vers libre*" had "gone too far," reaching a state of "general floppiness." The prescribed remedy was the style of verse exemplified by Théophile Gautier's *Emaux et Camées* (1852) and the "Bay State Hymn Book," characterized by "Rhyme and regular strophes" ("Harold Monro" 590). That modernist poetry can

contain both the irregular rhythms of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and the emphatic rhythms of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* is only a paradox if one associates modernist poetry rigidly with one particular verse form.

Modern Metrical Practices

Despite the impression produced by Pound's phrase about breaking the pentameter, and Eliot's polarization of free verse against "simple" meters, most modernist poets would have been aware of a variety of verse practices, and, more subtly, of a variety of approaches to the analysis of the verse line. Given the prevalence and prestige of an education in classical languages, many would have been aware of classical quantitative meter, and of the possibility – but also the difficulty – of transposing it into English. Eliot, in a 1917 pamphlet on Pound's poetry, notes "a tendency towards quantitative measure" in Pound's more recent poems, and singles out "The Return" as "an important study in verse which is really quantitative" (*To Criticize* 174). It is to classical metrical analysis that English owes its conventional names for metrical feet. However, in classical analysis the iamb is a foot consisting of a short syllable followed by a long syllable; in analysis of English accentual verse the term has been adapted to indicate a disyllabic foot with the accent on the second syllable (di-dum). The classical trochee (long-short), anapaest (short-short-long), dactyl (long-short-short) have been similarly adapted with the classical long syllable being replaced by the emphasized syllable in English. The two systems are potentially in conflict: the word "bittern" is an iamb in quantitative meter but a trochee in accentual (Carne-Ross 223).

Eliot did not claim that Pound's experiments with quantitative meter were a novelty. Like many modernist poets, he would have known of the brief flourishing of attempts at quantitative meter in the late sixteenth century, in the works of Mary Herbert, Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and others (Attridge, *Well-Weighed*), and the further experiments in the second half of the nineteenth century, from Arthur Hugh Clough's controversial attempts at hexameter in *The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich* (1848), to Tennyson's and Swinburne's experiments with alcaics and sapphics (Tennyson's "The Daisy" and others, and Swinburne's "Sapphics"). Even if one accepts that modernist poets made a more concerted effort to "break the pentameter" than their predecessors, it must be conceded that they were building on many decades of questioning and experimentation.

While quantitative and accentual accounts of verse both count feet, another approach in English-language verse has been to concentrate on the number of stressed syllables in a line, and to treat the number of unstressed syllables as variable. The late nineteenth-century exemplar of this approach was Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89), the posthumous publication of whose poems (in 1918) came too late to influence the first generation of modernists, but provided a later generation with a precedent for experimentation, as did Hopkins's letters (published in 1935 and 1938), and notebooks (1937). Though he created an idiosyncratic terminology and way of mark-

ing-up a text, Hopkins's idea of "sprung rhythm" was simple. As he wrote in 1878, "it consists in scanning by accents or stresses alone, without any account of the number of syllables" (107). He illustrated it by analyzing a children's rhyme. (I have followed the simple convention of marking stressed syllables with a forward-slash [/] and unstressed syllables with an "x"; this convention cannot distinguish between the heavily and the lightly stressed, but is sufficient for present purposes.)

```
 /       /       /
Ding,   dong,   bell;

 /  x    /   x     /
Pussy's  in  the  well;

 /       /    x    /
Who   put   her   in?

 /  x    /  x      /
Little  Johnny  Thin.

 /       /      x     /
Who   pulled   her   out?

 /  x    /  x      /
Little  Johnny  Stout.[1]
```

Although the number of syllables in each line varies (3, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5), there is a regular number of stresses in each; or rather, it is possible to perform the poem in such a way that it is given a regular number of stresses. The principle is as musical as that of metrical feet –indeed, Hopkins emphasized its musical credentials – but allows considerably more flexibility.

One version of sprung rhythm that acquired particular cultural prestige in late nineteenth-century England was alliterative verse in models which are traceable to the ninth century and which continued into the fourteenth. The dominant model was a line of four stressed syllables in which the first three alliterated, and in which there was a significant break in the half line. It has been summarized in its crudest form as:

BANG . . . BANG : BANG . . . CRASH

But Anglo-Saxon practice allowed greater variation: the key stress was the first stress in the second half of the line; one of the stresses in the first half had to alliterate with it, leaving it optional for the other (Alexander 18). Pound's 1911 translation of the Anglo-Saxon poem "The Seafarer" brought the form to some prominence (*Poems* 236–38). Although Hopkins's own experiments with alliteration drew on a different tradition, the Welsh forms known as *cynghanedd* ("harmony") (108), the publication

of his poems brought further prominence to alliteration as a way of shaping a line. The influence of the alliterative line can be seen in Pound's first published versions of *The Cantos*, "Three Cantos of a Poem of Some Length":

> Sheep bore we aboard her, and our bodies also,
> Heavy with weeping; and winds from sternward
> Bore us out onward with bellying canvas,
> Circe's this craft, the trim-coifed goddess. (*Poems* 328)

Traces of the alliterative line can be seen in later Cantos, for example in Canto XI: "In the gloom, the gold gathers the light against it" (*Cantos* 51). This line does not strictly observe the Anglo-Saxon orthodoxies. Firstly, only with an effort can one read it with fewer than five stressed syllables. Secondly, if one takes the stressed syllables to be "gloom," "gold," "light," and "-gainst," then the most prominent alliterating sound, "g," does not follow the rule, though if we take "l" to be the alliterating consonant, we find it present in the first three of the emphasized words, in accordance with the convention. More importantly, of course, Pound employs the alliterating line only occasionally, so that rather than being a structuring principle of the entire long poem, it becomes a resource by which he produces local effects, and with which he is able to weave connections between lines far separated in the poem. (In this regard, form at the level of syllable and line is a resource that enables poets to shape form at a larger, structural level.)

Whereas quantitative, accentual, and alliterative verse differentiate syllables from each other (on the basis of length, emphasis, and alliteration), another significant modernist innovation, syllabic verse, does not; rather, it simply counts the number of syllables in each line. Its appearance may have been influenced by a growing interest in Japanese verse forms such as the haiku, which has three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables respectively; the *Oxford English Dictionary* first records "haiku" being used in English in 1899. Robert Bridges, an English poet not usually seen as a modernist, began to experiment with syllabic verse in 1913, having experimented with sprung rhythm and quantitative measures in the 1870s and 1880s (Phillips). Independently, around the same time, the American Marianne Moore began to experiment with syllabics; some of her earliest poems in this form appeared in *The Egoist* in 1915, notably "The Steam Roller." The English modernist Herbert Read, who was an occasional contributor to and reader of *The Egoist*, adopted a syllabic form for his poem "Monologue Addressed to a Wondering Tyro" (later retitled "Beata l'Alma") (1923). Eliot commended Moore as "one of the few who have discovered an original *rhythm* – in an age when the defect of rhythm is the most eminent failure of verse both English and American. She has found a new verse-rhythm of the spoken phrase" ("Commentary" 343).

Syllabics were and remain controversial, because they seem to remove poetry from the inherent qualities of spoken English, in which there is always emphasis: the standard argument against the form is that native speakers have no intuitive feeling

for the number of syllables in a line. Against this, it has been asserted that one can learn to hear syllables; moreover it might be argued that poetry is always artificial, and that to impose a rule upon it which does not derive naturally from the language is to create the sort of artificial constraint that is necessary to art. One might also argue that syllabics create their own distinctive atmosphere, a subdued, reflective speech that would be much harder to achieve in even the most flexibly employed iambic pentameter.

Reading Modern Rhythms

T. E. Hulme's "The Embankment," a poem which Eliot presented as exemplary in his 1917 article, may be used to demonstrate both Eliot's account and its limitations:

```
  /     x    x  /    x    /  x      /     x   /  x x
Once,  in  finesse  of  fiddles  found  I  ecstasy,

 x    x      /     x     /       /     x    x      /        /  x
In  the  flash  of  gold  heels  on  the  hard  pavement.

  /     x    /
Now  see  I

  x          /          x    /  x     /     x    / x x
That  warmth's  the  very  stuff  of  poesy.

 x       /         x        /
Oh,  God,  make  small

 x      /      /   / x      /  x     x     x      /
The  old  star-eaten  blanket  of  the  sky,

  x     /     x      /     x      /      x     /     x     /  x        /
That  I  may  fold  it  round  me  and  in  comfort  lie. (3)
```

The opening line comes very close to being a line of iambic hexameter: if the reader chooses to give an artificial stress to the final syllable of "ecstasy," it gains the extra stress; the inversion of the opening foot is a long-established device in the opening lines of iambic pentameter poems. The second line, the least regular in the poem, may be read with five stresses as marked above, and thus maintains continuity with the poem's other five-stress lines; but it is also possible to rush over "gold," and thus give it four main stresses. In the first published text of the poem, the last two words had been "pavement grey," a grammatical inversion that echoes W. B. Yeats's "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," and created a more regular rhythm; the phrase was altered to

"pavement hard" in a later version; only in the version printed in Ezra Pound's *Ripostes* (1912) did the rhythmically irregular form seen above make its appearance (Hulme 457).

After the uncomplicated third line, the fourth line presents the reader with a choice in the pronunciation of "poesy" that is largely determined by what was done with "ecstasy" in the first line; the words have the potential to rhyme. The fifth line reasserts a regular iambic rhythm, and the sixth again poses problems: I have suggested that "star" and "eat-" are both given strong emphasis, but it would be possible to read "star-eaten" as a dactyl (stress-unstress-unstress): like other lines, this one permits both a four-stress and a five-stress reading. The final line is the most regular in the poem, though there is a degree of choice about how heavily "and" should be stressed. Assuming that it is stressed, we have a regular iambic hexameter line, and, if one subscribes to a conservative position about "simple" meters, the "comfort" described – albeit ironically – in the line is reinforced by the comforting return to metrical familiarity.

However, there is more to the poem than the idea of deviations from a metrical norm will really allow for. It is notable that, if we exclude the initial stress on "Once," the first line is an alliterative verse line: "fin-," "fid-," "found," "ec-." The normal emphasis in "finesse" falls on the second syllable, so the effect is slightly muted, but it is still audible. The possibility that "Once" is somehow an appendage to the line is borne out by the following lines: indeed, the rhythmic structure of the poem consists of short phrases ("Once," "Now see I," "Oh, God, make small") interspersed with longer ones of four or five stresses.

In making my analysis of "The Embankment," it has been necessary to indicate points where the reader – meaning "the reader-out-loud" – is faced with a choice about what to emphasize, and so how to actualize the poem as sound. Poems do not "have" form; rather, as Derek Attridge has argued, they need to be understood as something "taking form, or forming, or even losing form" (*Singularity* 113). This does not mean that the reader can impose any form on a poem: the form that it takes derives from the particular sequence of words on the page; but the form is not rigidly determined by that sequence. Form comes in performance. This performative quality is by no means unique to modernist poems, but they present such choices more prominently than verse of earlier eras, no doubt because there had been such a ferment of speculation about poetic rhythm in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Pound influentially wrote that the Imagist poet should "compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome" (*Literary Essays* 3). The dictum not only rejects externally imposed measures of time, but suggests that the foot and the line are not the most important units of analysis: just as the musical phrase brings shape to a group of notes, so the prosodic phrase shapes words. D. S. Carne-Ross has suggested that Pound took from *Notes sur la technique poétique* (1910) by the French theorists Duhamel and Vildrac the idea that a "rhythmic constant" repeats itself from line to line (Carne-Ross 217–18; Duhamel and Vildrac 13–21). In the French exam-

ples, the rhythmic constant typically comprises between four and six syllables within lines of nine to twelve syllables. Its position within the line may change from line to line, so that in one line it forms the opening words, but in the next the closing phrase, while in another – though this is less common – it might be located in the middle of the line. In Pound's "The Return," Carne-Ross identifies a six-syllable unit – for example "These were the Wing'd-with-Awe" – with three stresses in it (221). While the rhythmic constant may be described with conventional prosodic terminology, the idea implies that the lines that contain it may not be adequately described thus. A conventional description of them would, if nothing else, fail to capture the effect of the rhythmic constant pulsing through line after line. Carne-Ross also finds such units within Pound's "The Seafarer," a poem notionally structured as alliterative verse: "hardship endured oft," "many a care's hold," and "weathered the winter" (222): the principle of the rhythmic constant does not exclude all other principles and could serve to unite them. Donald Davie's reading of rhythmic units in Pound's *Cantos* has something in common with Carne-Ross's reading of Pound's lyrics (Davie 75–95). Hart Crane's "My Grandmother's Love Letters" (1920) has, similarly, in an often monosyllabic poem, a dactylic signature threading through: "Grandmother," "memory," "(E)lizabeth," "liable," and so on (Whitworth 130–33).

Carne-Ross's identification of the rhythmic constant as a form does not tell the whole story. The extent to which a poem's rhythmic constant is differentiated from its surroundings is left to the individual reader; moreover, the meaning that might be attributed to the repetitions will vary according to context. For Davie, the "large-scale rhythms" of *The Cantos* mirror "the rhythms of discovery, wastage, neglect and re-discovery, that the historical records give us notice of" (83). While a similar reading could be attributed to the rhythmic constant in Crane's "My Grandmother's Love Letters," concerned as it is with memory and forgetting, the scale of discovery and neglect that it embodies is smaller, familial, and more intimate. Moreover, while repetitions of rhythmic patterns contribute to the meaning of a poem, they do so in an elusive, teasing way that is rarely well served by attempts to encapsulate their meaning in a single phrase.

The inclusion of a regular rhythm in an irregular environment is a technique also seen in Eliot's "Ash-Wednesday" (1930) (for another analysis, see Shapiro 91–92). The third paragraph of the first poem runs thus:

> Because I know that time is always time
> And place is always and only place
> And what is actual is actual only for one time
> And only for one place
> I rejoice that things are as they are and
> I renounce the blessèd face
> And renounce the voice
> Because I cannot hope to turn again
> Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something
> Upon which to rejoice (*Collected Poems* 85)

The paragraph opens by reasserting the strong iambic rhythm that had been established in the opening lines of the poem. The next line begins by continuing that rhythm in its first four syllables, and the unstressed syllable at the end of "always" seems to promise a stressed syllable to follow. It seems that the phrase "And place is always place" will come, paralleling the phrase about time in the first line. However, the words "and only" appear and break the expected rhythm, inserting an additional unstressed syllable ("and") into the line; the proviso "and only" is given additional emphasis.

This disruption rehearses the larger disruption that occurs in the next line. Again, the first four syllables are regularly iambic, but beyond the "ac-" of the first "actual," the iambic rhythm is thoroughly disrupted:

x	/	x	/ x x	x	/ x x	/ x	x	/	/
And	what	is	actual	is	actual	only	for	one	time

The last four words of the line allow of multiple rhythmic interpretations. Firstly, an alternative and subtler reading would treat the final word, "time," as more weakly stressed than "one." Secondly, a reader with a preference for a strong iambic rhythm might try to end the line thus:

/ x	/	x	/
only	for	one	time

To my ear, to emphasize "for" is to favor regularity of rhythm over the sense of the line, and also to lose the effect of prose rhythms breaking through the surface of regular verse rhythms. However one scans the line, the two occurrences of "actual" break the texture of the established rhythm.

Because the fourth line of the paragraph revisits the "only for one" formula of the third, an additional rhythmic constant is established within the poem: the rhythmic form here is that of the repeated phrase, hinted at but interrupted in the first two lines – "time is always time," "place is always . . . place" – and here made good: "only for one time," "only for one place."

The fifth, sixth, and seventh lines mark a near-return to iambic regularity, except that each line has an additional unstressed initial syllable: "I rejoice . . .," "I renounce . . .," "And renounce. . . ." In addition, the fifth line of the paragraph has an additional trailing unstressed syllable, "and." I would suggest that by this point in the poem the reader has learned to recognize that such syllables do not form part of its rhythmic constant.

The eighth line of the paragraph revisits the poem's opening line ("Because I do not hope to turn again") and reestablishes its regular iambic rhythm. There then follows the paragraph's largest rhythmic surprise, though it should not be completely unexpected. The last two lines could be scanned with a kind of regularity, but I would suggest that the poem has trained us to do something more sophisticated. An almost-regular rhythm could be imposed thus: