

Form or Meaning: Stéphane Mallarmé's Quest for Oneness through Poetic Totalization

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1. The Mallarmean late poems and their titles

For his late poems, Stéphane Mallarmé frequently chose generic titles. All of them are “Plusieurs Sonnets”, “Hommage”, “Tombeau”, “Prose”, “Petit air”, and “Chansons Bas”. “Hommage” is a rewording of “ode”, a traditional genre of poetry, and “tombeau” is another name for “épitaphe/epitaph”.

The other ones, “Salut”, “Feuillet d’Album”, “Eventail”, “Autre Eventail”, “Toast funèbre”, and “Remémoration d’Amis belges”, are also general, if not “generic” in the sense of circumscribing a genre of literature.

The three specified exceptions, “Le Tombeau d’Edgar Poe”, “Le Tombeau de Charles Baudelaire”, and “Billet à Whistler”, have only slightly developed the generic designations.

The titles of the semantic broadness tend to be pushed into a dissipated absence: among Mallarmé’s 30 late poems in his second and last collection published in 1899, 9 pieces are without titles. Each of the pieces gathered under the umbrella labels, “Plusieurs Sonnets” and “Chansons Bas”, may be viewed as titleless. The exclusive individualization of the early titles, kept in “Le Pitre châtié”, “Les Fleurs”, and “L’Azur”, is consistently avoided in the poet’s late project. The collection as a whole is simply entitled *Les*

Poésies, thereby starting and concluding Mallarmé’s comprehensive oneness.¹

Mallarmé’s late phase began with the creation of his first abstract sonnet, entitled “Sonnet allégorique de lui-même”, in the summer of 1868. The sonnet corresponds to the preliminary version of sonnet 4 of “Plusieurs Sonnets”.

Without definite articles, the late covering titles designate the semantic potential of each poem, which is developed into a signifying cosmos, or “rêve”, the term cherished by the author.² The widest openness for the reader’s active interpretation is embodied by the self-sufficient but modest expression, “L’espace à soi pareil”, in the first poem of “Plusieurs Sonnets”. Concurrently with the space (“L’espace”) that expands itself at most (“à soi pareil”), the general titles restrain themselves from specifying the theme and imposing the tone of each piece. This is what Gardner Davies calls “une marge d’imprécision voulue par le poète” (an allowance for ambiguity intended by the poet).³ With meaningful emptiness, the titles supposedly offer a key for elucidating the poetics of Mallarmé’s esoteric late poetry.

The semantic width and depth of the generic titles appears to sweep the succeeding verses in the scrambled syntax, for instance, “Coure le froid avec ses silences de faulx” in “Mes bouquins refermés sur le nom de Paphos”, and “Comme

mourir pourpre la roue” in “‘M’ introduire dans ton histoire”. The self-sufficient titles say it all, appropriating the *raison d’être* of the succeeding texts. The degree of importance regarding the title and the text is subverted. In an ordinary case, it is natural that the short title as a para-text should be given less attention than the following longer text in juxtaposed verses seemingly with informational weight.⁴ Furthermore, the abstractness mystifying Mallarmé’s late poetry tends to dissipate the reader’s attention. In the surreal trilogy, i.e., the series of three numbered sonnets, which is popularized as “Triptyque”, an inanimate but erotic object, “Lace” (“Une dentelle”) “(that) destroys itself” (“(qui) s’abolit”), is engaging, but puzzling.

The generic title with traditional definitions and conventional images thereby subversively acts as the succeeding text. For advancing the interpretation of the difficult text, the reader should be pushed to refer to the meaningful starting point. Thanks to the covering title, s/he can picture, or, at least, outline a poetic universe such as a hell led down from “Tombeau (Tomb)”. In the reversal of the title and the text, the Mallarmean poems through the reader’s interpretive efforts describe circulations, the converging point of which corresponds to a semantic zero, i.e., the culminated abstractness, or “L’espace à soi pareil”.

The poems’ ambiguity represents both meaningfulness and incomprehensiveness, which eternally rejects, or rather accepts interpretation. The absurdity with potentiality is symbolized by the expression, “mon absent tombeau”, in sonnet 3 of “Plusieurs Sonnets”. The rebounding texts present the images of “plis”, which are foregrounded by the poet himself in the self-conscious expression, “pli selon pli” in “Remémoration d’Amis belges”. The semantic difficulty fundamentally describes circulation in the reader’s endless interpretation. Mallarmé’s generic titles reinforce each text’s basic circularity to make the text a dynamic recurrence. It is inevitable that the recursive unity should

render the differentiating title unnecessary.

The generic titles have conventionally fixed but extensible images in the accumulation of countless examples. For instance, the popular label, “sonnet”, has been a synonym of shortness (Moncond’huy 190). In the expansion beyond Europe, no other restriction than the fixed line number, 14, is imposed. It is attested by Japanese sonnets without any rhyme scheme due to the nature of the language.⁵ “Tombeau” is equal to “epitaph”, for which numerous models exist in this mortal world. Mallarmé’s generic titles conceive the varieties of concreteness.

On the other hand, the readers can write many examples of the genres specified by the titles. It may be easier and more pleasant than decoding the succeeding abstract verses. Writing is, at least, more active than reading, as is suggested by the ironical expression, “du stérile hiver a resplendi l’ennui”, in sonnet 2 of “Plusieurs Sonnets”. From the title, Mallarmé’s ambiguous, or paradoxically ambitious poem may be qualified as “active writing”, after the American painter, Jackson Pollock’s painting. It should be noted that the abstract expressionist, Pollock, was influenced by Japanese calligraphy, the typified art of abstraction in black brush and white paper.⁶

Mallarmé’s writing challengingly incites the reader’s positive reading/writing with its central image of abstract refinement, or “Pure as the naked heavens” in the Wordsworthian terms. The angelic purity is paradoxically alluring, as close to vacancy. The reader is pushed to violate the apparently innocent texts, which are self-abusive, though demanding. The poet himself welcomes the readers’ responses, or “scoliaestes futurs”, in the bibliography placed at the end of the 1899 collection.

Mallarmé’s circulative poetry thereby sets up a magnetic cosmos in three-dimension, in which the reader’s live reaction intersects with the traces of the invisible writer’s action in the image

of superseding heat rays. The uncanny cosmos presents a scene in which death appropriates life to rise again. The black letters of the poem raise an animated space, activating the author's residue of life disseminated just before his death. Fundamentally, the written words represent the death of any writing.

In Mallarmé's poems, life is reasonably produced from death. This is a paradoxical victory of death, which is verbalized by the poet himself as "la mort triomphait" in "Le Tombeau d'Edgar Poe" and the following exposition in his "Crise de vers":

L'œuvre pure implique la disparition élocutoire du poète, qui cède l'initiative aux mots, par le heurt de leur inégalité mobilisés; ils s'allument de reflets réciproques comme une virtuelle traînée de feux sur des pierreries, remplaçant la respiration perceptible en l'ancien souffle lyrique ou la direction personnelle enthousiaste de la phrase. (211)

The four-dimensional resurrection of the author is accelerated in the imposing embellishment of the first verses for "Plusieurs Sonnets": "Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui" (sonnet 2), "Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx" (sonnet 4), and, especially, "Victorieusement fui le suicide beau" for sonnet 3. The strength of the adverb, "Victorieusement", is qualified as "trionphe" by Pierre Brunel (94). Marshall C. Olds qualifies the first verse of sonnet 2 as "perhaps the boldest of Mallarmé's lines" (24).

With the echoes of the author's powerful voice, the opening verses previously heighten his resurrection through the interaction between him and the reader, as with the generic title. The subjectively enforced expressions, as also presented by the 1887 "Triptyque" in the image of absent whiteness, motivate the abstractness of the poems, away from the "readerly" writer's business to rationally choose realistic descriptions.⁷ Mallarmé's

abrupt and apparently exclusive expressions sound fresh, though juvenile, different from, for example, the contagious excitement in the French composer Maurice Ravel's *Bolero* and the simplified senility in his sonata for violin and cello.

The influence from the English nursery rhymes, which the author actually translated, is suspected, as is discussed in section 3 of this article. Mallarmé's career as a poet is superimposed on his career as a teacher and a father. At the end of the encyclopedic poem, which is paradoxically entitled "Prose", a willful but anonymous child appears. The new-born child called "Anastase" is ascribed by Brunel to Anatole, the dead son of Mallarmé and the hero of his "Tombeau d'Anatole" (96).

It should be noted that, in "Plusieurs Sonnets", the conflict between life and death is dramatized throughout all four poems, taking allegoric masks.

In sonnet 1, the battle between light and darkness, which insinuates both the dawn and the burgeoning of spring, is superimposed on the struggle of the speaker/poet ("génie") against the unresponsive society. The genius's dark days are suggested from the beginning, i.e., the latter part of the generic title, "Sonnets", which manifests the subsequent development of the author's poetics.

In the next sonnet, the life force is transformed into a swan whose task is to break the frozen lake, from which the spring mist will rise, accelerating the revival of earth. The sound of rising mist will harmonize with the swan's song, which symbolizes the genius's salvational poem.

In sonnet 3, the speaker's joy in conquering the temptation of suicide makes up a sonnet as a hallelujah. His excitement is superimposed on Cinderella's rushing escape in order to solidify his survival with earthly prizes such as harvest ("roses") and royalty ("impératrice enfant").

In the final fourth sonnet, the old ideas of the poet ("le Maître") are chosen and renewed, simulating a reviving bird, phoenix. The new poem

will be refined (“un or” and “scintillations”) but human, even regarding the reader’s sentimental reactions (“des pleurs”). The poem is to be incessantly recreated by the reader to stimulate and advance the real world of life and death.

2. The poetic overcoming of death and arbitrariness

The incantational, thus forwarding sonnets seek for a rejuvenation or a return to the Edenic potential, rather than a regression to juvenility, concurrently with the prevailing image of circulation. It should be noted that the quest for the author’s lost life within the reader’s interpretation is conducted through the production of an explosive image of unified life, which entails the identification of the reader with the author and that of form with meaning, i.e., the overcoming of the arbitrariness of language in writing. Mallarmé deplores in his “Crise de vers”: “quelle déception, devant la perversité conférant à *jour* comme à *nuît*, contradictoirement, des timbres obscur ici, là clair” (208).

Arbitrariness means the restriction of free-will, typified by language, the first medium of human communication, which represents culture as a whole. The humans exist in the systematization of arbitrariness, forced to neglect natural disorder. The attempt to overcome, or to develop arbitrariness is embodied by translation, which connects languages for multilateral communication.

Arbitrariness represents, as it were, a double-edged sword. It guarantees communication, that is, the shared sense of union between the addresser and the addressee. To cause that sense between the individuals, the social consent for identification between different objects is required. The rule-governed identification is arbitrariness, typified by language, which forcibly connects expression/form and content/meaning. The arbitrariness of cultural rules privileges human consciousness

which accepts the rules to deploy communication between each other for overcoming its own isolation as a tentacular point. The heightened consciousness distinguishes death from life, though both are physically connected. The evidence of the connection is the supposed existence of human unconscious not to be recognized by the upper site of consciousness.

Arbitrariness makes differences, by circumscribing the identifiable area such as the domain of “happiness” and that of “unhappiness”. The human consciousness is sharpened, forced to distinguish between the same and the different. Self-identity is the concept formed by arbitrariness, which the consciousness needs to acquire in order to deploy its apparently free movements. An individual’s cognitive process, which refers to arbitrariness to socialize itself, may be traced back to the quasi-autonomy of the human consciousness, which is considered as physically connected to the lower part of mentality, the unconscious, without recognizing the connection. The unconscious represents otherness within each self, which is hereditarily collective.

Mallarmé’s “Plusieurs Sonnets” are posited as a cemetery, as is suggested by Brunel (88-89). Sonnet 1 features the speaker’s death bed. Sonnet 2 spreads a frozen lake for the graveyard of a swan. The harvested field induces suicide in the next sonnet. The final fourth poem presents an allegoric scene for erecting a tombstone, repeating the expressions for lifting such as “très haut dédiant”, “lampedophore”, and “le septuor”. The tomb is to be made for enshrining a cremation urn (“cinéraire amphore”).

The graveyard as sonnets, i.e., the invisible author’s traces of creative effort, is for collectively stirring life force. This is also for the energizing union of the conscious and the unconscious. The stir is actualized by the interaction between the reader in life and the author in ash. The white paper for containing the poems in black letters is

presumably intended as becoming ashes under the fire of a phoenix, the reviving bird which appears in sonnet 4. The firing image of life force is a transformation of the mourning tears of the author and the reader in this mortal world. Different from his early lyrics in watery images,⁸ Mallarmé's late poetry presents an abstract cosmos of neutrality, neither wet nor dry. The cosmos conceives, however, the life force's metamorphosing potential. Moreover, the abstract neutrality of the Mallarmean poems strengthens the anonymity of the reader and the author. The triggered power of life thus becomes universal.

Mallarmé's late poems, particularly "Plusieurs Sonnets", are also an apparatus which changes absence to presence.⁹ The reader concretizes the incarnated absence as new life in cooperation with the author.

As is indicated by many critics,¹⁰ the Mallarmean poetry makes the reader see a cosmos, or an image of completion and infinity. This is mainly because his poetry, particularly his late sonnets, tries to overcome death, the central concern for the readers, each in his/her separate consciousness. The outside real world is actually composed of death and life. Moreover, since the Renaissance, modernity has been intensifying the individual consciousness. The self-reflexivity of the consciousness is not complete, since it cannot see the unconscious, which is considered as physically connected to the consciousness. The incapability means that the life in recognition, i.e., the active consciousness, is not everything for the humans. They are alive, simultaneously conceiving death.

As if to "be proud", the deploring of John Donne, death appears to sweep over Mallarmé's late poems with metaphorical weight: the imagery of funeral (e.g. "cinéraire amphore"), the suppressed syntax (e.g. "Que s'est d'un astre"), the abstract defacement of meaning (e.g. "nul ptyx"), and the ominous incantation (e.g. "or, tempête!"). Especially, a series of epitaphs are seen.

Nevertheless, with the words emitted both in its own text and the readers' mind, the poetry concentrates on turning death to life, as being unified circularly and abstractly. The commenting words are also produced in the discussion between the readers in search of more persuasive interpretations. The poetry should be life itself, or rather, quintessential life. The purified force corresponds to "rêve", the literal dream word for the poet. Generally, the Mallarmean late poems are in a manipulated syntax, simulating the ancient Greek that does not regard the order of words. The Greekness presumably represents an aspiration for the basic. Mallarmé's interest in Greek mythology is marked in his long poem, entitled "L'Après-midi d'un Faune". "Faune" goes back to "Pan" in Greek mythology.

The Mallarmé poems' openness resides in abstract mimesis. The poems describe a world, which is reminiscent of the everyday landscape, though anonymously defaced and uncanny. In "Plusieurs Sonnets", for instance, a living salon is furnished with ebony, but each piece is shapeless. The inanimate objects, such as darkness, winter, suicide, and nails, are personified. The poems thus present mimetic but distorted scenes with everyday ornaments in an unexpected movement of energy.

The strange scenes are, however, intact, or "pure" in Mallarmé's cherished qualification, without the author's critical view, which is buried under the self-reflexive signification of the texts. This implies that, in Mallarmé's world, not the substance but the movement is pushed to the fore, which is thereby merged into the advancing energy, i.e., the basis of life force. The world then becomes life itself. Another label for the basis of life is presence. Mallarmé's late poetry places itself on the margin of absence and presence, thereby foregrounding its own existence.

On the other hand, the criticism of the world is left to the reader. The reader's task is dual: to complement the undeveloped world and to evaluate

it. In due course, however, the positive world of life lets the reader entirely accept itself. Life precedes the mortal reader.

The intactness, if artful, of the Mallarmé poems is obviously seen, compared, for example, to the American poet, William Bronk's conceptual poems. Bronk's poems are also abstract, but his speaker tends to enquire the significance of his described world. In his poem entitled "The Abjuration Avowed", the final line manifests the poet's intention to conclude the text, by echoing the evaluative terms, "No" and "true": "No; I don't believe. But it is true". The author's voiceful control dominates in the Bronk poem from the beginning, "Yes". Generally, the beginning of a literary work imposingly directs the reader's subsequent interpretation.

Escaping any completing evaluation, the Mallarmé poem's speaker stays in his quasi-autonomous world in an obedient but positive way, as is self-reflexively indicated by the first sonnet in "Plusieurs Sonnets": "Que s'est d'un astre en fête allumé le génie". Moreover, the speaker/poet ascetically continues to reflect on his poetics, by leaving the poems' title generic. He does not make himself a god. Engaged in the making of poetry, he becomes the poetry itself. His poetry thus appears incomplete and horizontal. Any hierarchical distinction, involving the author and the reader, or form and content, is ignored. In other words, Mallarmé's late poems try to represent a kind of nirvana. He stays more human than the savior. The speaker's receptive positivity incites the reader to freely supplement Mallarmé's possible world. The poet constructs his text not by the subtractive criticism but by the cumulative embellishment including the use of the tacit elevation, "génie". His late poetry represents an apparatus for the poet to save himself in a skillful and influential way. The poet equalizes all including the writer, the reader, the world, and its potential for revival. Since the poet equals the world, if fictive and

poetic, his poetry also saves the world. The world is illimitable, expanding through the readers' continuous interpretations. Salvation disseminates itself.

The modernist art, in general, seeks to appropriate the realness of the objects, by foregrounding their essence. Take, for example, the American painter, Georgia O'Keeffe's poetic simplification of flowers and the French poet, Paul Eluard's shortness for the *haiku*-like poem in three lines. As with Mallarmé, the artists aim for more real than real. This is for the consolation and the completion of their sharpened consciousness, which is even conscious of itself including its own death. Mallarmé's poetry still enjoys popularity, which means that the poetry has been successful in drawing numerous readers to the poetic graveyard as a furnace of intensified life.

A key for the Mallarmé poems' popularity resides in their intertextuality, i.e., the superimposition of old familiar works on the author's own poetry, as is discussed in the next section of this article. It should be noted that the old works need to lie in the readers' collective unconscious. The intertextual graveyard stirs, at least, nostalgia to begin a dialogue with the dead.

3. Mallarmé's late poems in intertextuality

3.1 The Mallarmean sonnets and the English nursery rhymes

As a teacher of English, Mallarmé gives an affective evaluation, "Quel curieux tableau!" (Barbier 99), to the following nursery rhyme on the flying spoon:

Hey! diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laughed
To see the sport
While the dish ran after the spoon. (Barbier

99)

The jumping rhythm of the above rhyme parallels that in Mallarmé's late poems in syntactical scrambles. The most typical expression is seen in the final poem of "Plusieurs Sonnets". In the poem, the second verse defers the verb's direct object by inserting an appositional qualifier, "lampadophore, / . . .", while keeping a bouncing sound in the separation of words by commas: "L'Angoisse, ce minuit, soutient, lampadophore,". In that representative sonnet, the nursery's supplies are fully given: "ongles", "bibelot", "pleurs", "licornes", "nixé", and "septuor". The puzzling fantasy, connected to juvenility, may also be qualified as a "curieux tableau".

The hidden key word of the final piece may be considered as "cuiller/cuillère", or "spoon" in English. In the poem, the polished nails are raised, giving the image of a spoon held by fingers. The cremated ashes should be collected by a sort of spoon into an urn ("amphore"). The singular horn in the unicorns ("licornes") leads to linear spoons, by picking up a water fairy ("nixé").

Moreover, in the image of night coupled with a silver moon, the final rhyming words in "-i(y)x", i.e., "onyx", "Phénix", "ptyx", "Styx", "nixé", and "fixe", may be viewed as a camouflage of the words in pair, "spoon" and "cuiller". The first reason is that in the above English rhyme, which is a possible source of influence on the sonnet, the two words, "moon" and "spoon", constitute a rhyming pair. In the sonnet, the constant appearance of the "-i(y)x" words in transformation leads to the metamorphosing moon, which is connected to a spoon in the English rhyme. The second reason is that the sonnet's common suffix "i(y)x" represents an anagram of the first half of the phonetic symbols of the word "cuiller": kɥi. The voiceless [s] can be ignored as inaudible, or externalized at least as the sound of air caused by the moving spoon.

In addition, the frequent term, "or", in the

sonnet is a reverse of "silver", as the silver moon is a twisting mirror for the golden sun. The poem's speaker is presumably a happy child born with a silver spoon, who ironically evokes the poet's dead son, "Anatole". The child's name, "Anatole", is hidden in the personified term, "Angoisse", and the classical, or sacerdotal "lampadophore". In the first version of this sonnet, which was written in the summer of 1868, the word "Angoisse" is not seen. Anatole died in 1879. The definitive version of the sonnet was published in 1887. With only two manuscripts being left for this sonnet, one for the first version and another for the 1887 publication (Mallarmé, *Œuvres* 1: 1189), it may be thought that the anagram "Angoisse" was added to the definitive version, the final concluding poem for actualizing rebirth. According to Charles Chadwick (86), the word "Anastase" is originally Greek, meaning the resurrection of Christ.

The final decorations of the poem, the twinkling seven stars ("scintillations" and "septuor"), evoke a shining moon, the night's main star, according to Genesis, this archetypal graveyard as resources for civilization. The combination of the moon and the spoon is the motif of another nursery rhyme as follows:

The man in the moon
 Came down too soon,
 And asked his way to Norwich;
 He went by the south,
 And burnt his mouth
 With supping cold plum porridge. (Hirano 29)

Though Mallarmé's translation of the above rhyme is not found in his collection of manuscripts,¹¹ the suggestive two similarities between the rhyme and his above sonnet cannot be ignored. First, the sonnet's northern traffic in a starry night can be explained by a possible influence from the above rhyme on the moony man's trip to the south. The common prop, the moon, reverses the direction.

Moreover, the place name, “Norwich”, designates north, including the first common letters, “nor”, and is actually situated north of London, the central city of England. Another puzzle, an agonizing gold (“un or / Agonise”) may be seen as a camouflaged spoon in silver, which is forcibly curved to be golden, for acquiring an image of the moon, i.e., a reflection of the gold ball, the sun. The presence of spoon is implied in the moon to be metamorphosed into a tool for eating porridge.

Incidentally, based on the rhyme, a silver rattle as the curved spoon was released onto the market by Tiffany & Co., in 1997. The rattle is named “Man in the Moon”. In the rattle on sale as a Christmas gift, the profile of Christ is glimpsed, suggesting that the rhyme’s “man in the moon” represents the son of God. The conquered tragedy implied by the rhyme through the Tiffany rattle has also been transferred to Mallarmé’s concluding fourth sonnet for resurrection in which a grand figure, “le Maître”, appears.

3.2 The Mallarmean sonnets and the Shakespearean poems

Among Mallarmé’s late poems, “Plusieurs Sonnets” are marked by theatrical progression. The four poems’ abstract narrative both universalizes and dramatizes the visualized scenes throughout the poems, each in the fixed form of 14 lines. The first sonnet opens with the menacing darkness (“l’ombre menaçante”), which is sublimated to the twinkling stars (“septuor”) at the end of the final sonnet. The poems are thus engaged in performances, making a poetic world in multiple meanings. The ungraspable meanings may, however, be ascribed to the Greek four elements: air, water, earth, and fire, i.e., the source of life and death.

The first sonnet may be viewed as an expansion of the image of air. The spread of evening darkness (“l’ombre”), a dream (“Rêve”), a wing (“son aile”), and floral wreaths (“des

guirlandes célèbres”) indicates, or rather, creates space, which is endlessly expanded.

The second sonnet foregrounds the existence of water, which is crystallized into a captured swan under a frozen lake.

The third sonnet presents a fertile earth on which deploy cultural activities in conflict. The stage is contracted to a tomb in preparation (“mon absent tombeau”).

The final fourth sonnet highlights fire, reflected in the polished nails (“purs ongles”) and the jewels (“leur onyx”). The image of fire is emphasized, codified in a long, classical word, “lampadophore”, and incarnated as both a phoenix (“le Phénix”) and seven stars (“le septuor”).

The Greek elements, i.e., air, water, earth, and fire, thereby cooperate to engender a poetic cosmos within the four sonnets. In the appearance of emerging from the old Greek elements, the poems may be posited as performative as the works in progress. The abstract poems are, in fact, kaleidoscopically meaningful. From another angle, the active poems in process may be viewed as making their own stage, while simultaneously deploying their poetic world on that stage, as rendered by the verse, “Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx” (sonnet 4 of “Plusieurs Sonnets”). In the reader’s interpretation, tracing back the four elements and decoding the deployed world can overlap. The sonnets are both producers and products, both form and content, and both exterior and interior. In the Buddhist thought, the four elements represent a human body (“Shidai”).

“Plusieurs Sonnets” may be qualified as the most engaging among Mallarmé’s late poems, largely because they succeed in keeping a grammatical syntax, which is threatened by the aligned oxymorons. The examples of excessively troubled syntax are seen in the minor sonnets, such as “A la nue accablante tu”. Furthermore, each poem in the same sonnet form may be seen as an alter ego of the other three poems. Each poem

is, however, self-sufficient in itself, conceiving both life and death. At the end of the final sonnet, the seven stars (“septuor”) are doubled to count fourteen, following the sonnet form, by a mirror reflection. Moreover, a set of four sonnets, which are continuously placed without any conspicuous demarcation such as titles and numbers to make up a unity,¹² shadows forth its own double, i.e., another quartet of sonnets, simulating a mirror reflection of the final seven stars. The late sonnets seek for self-multiplication and revival. In the prevailing image of reflection, life is only made a reverse of death. The shining salon of ebony in the first sonnet (“salle d’ébène”) represents a laboratory for mingling life with death, which is embodied by the speaker in bed.

In the poetic making, the shiny wood, “ébène”, is transformed into a mirror, a stage, and a toy box concealing poetic props, because the wood corresponds to space itself, as is suggested by the appositional expression, “salle d’ébène”.

The meaning of death is developed in Mallarmé’s other series of poems, all the titles of which have the word “Tombeau”. The grave/death is a basis of life in antithetical emergence. Life is not necessary to be codified in verbal forms other than the typical suite, “Plusieurs Sonnets”, as life can be actualized by the reader’s active interpretation.

The performative sonnets may be traced back to the Shakespearean sonnets published in 1609, which are almost too reputed thus imposing canon at least today.

In his essay entitled “Hamlet”, Mallarmé evaluates Shakespeare’s work as “si bien façonnée” (168). Austin Gill takes Mallarmé’s following words as a confession of the influence Shakespeare’s sonnets had on him: “mon boniment d’après un mode primitif du sonnet, usité à la Renaissance anglaise” (20).

The interpretation of the Mallarmean sonnets, i.e., the works in process, becomes historical,

taking time.

Among Shakespeare’s 154 sonnets, the piece numbered 45 suggests itself as a source of direct influence on Mallarmé’s “Plusieurs Sonnets”. In the Shakespearean sonnet, the Greek four elements are designated to form the body and the soul of the speaker: “My life, being made of four. . .”. The expression, “These present-absent”, which qualifies the speaker’s mentality, i.e., “my thought” as “slight air” and “my desire” as “purging fire”, is particularly notable. The word “present-absent” can summarize the whole of Mallarmé’s late poetry in uncanniness (Takeda, *Word* 85-86). In addition, the circular image prevailing in the Shakespearean sonnet connects itself to the Mallarmean poems’ cyclical oneness. According to the English sonnet, the speaker’s flying two elements, i.e., “air” and “fire”, commute between him and his lover. It should be noted that the Shakespearean sonnets as a whole are characterized by circularity, iterating the same sonnet form. This is for the union of the speaker and his lover, which he seeks to actualize through a figurative incantation in repeating circular pictures. A representative picture describes a recurrence of the lover’s youthful beauty in her progeny.

3.3 The Mallarmean poems and paintings

The English painting entitled *Ophelia* may also be considered as a source of inspiration for Mallarmé’s late poetry. In the painting, which was produced by a Pre-Raphaelite, John Everett Millais, in 1852, the drowning heroine with her smiling face upward renders her tragedy irretrievable and complete. The painting may be viewed as a twisted version of Botticelli’s *The Birth of Venus* with the upright and newborn heroine. In the opening poem of Mallarmé’s last collection, which is entitled “Salut”, a troop of drowning sirens are featured by the inverted figure, “à l’envers”.

Mallarmé refers to Ophelia, the heroine of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, in his essay entitled

“Hamlet”, though Millais’ painting featuring the heroine is not therein explicitly mentioned. The evidence that the poet actually knew Millais’ work is yet to be researched. Nevertheless, Millais’ *Ophelia* represents one of the most famous adaptations of the Shakespearean tragedy at least today, surviving the latter half of the 19th century, i.e., Mallarmé’s epoch. It is therefore highly possible that the poet, who was a teacher of English, came across the painting and was impressed by it.

In addition to the inversion, the watery image of the English painting was presumably appealing to Mallarmé. The image abounds in his poetry from its early lyrical stage to its late conceptual phase. Water leads to alcohol, a cause of inversion.

It should be noted that the poet’s other favorite paintings, i.e., Manet’s pre-impressionist pieces, are also marked by fluidity. In his essay entitled “Le Jury de peinture pour 1874 et M. Manet”, Mallarmé admires the simplicity and the suggestiveness of Manet’s paintings (411-12). Furthermore, Deborah A. K. Aish indicates the influence of the impressionist paintings on Mallarmé’s works viewed as “fuyantes” (14-15).

The metamorphosing chain, which connects water, air, light, and spirit, entails mystery and dream. The Mallarmé poems owe their unity to the intersemiotic imagery of water, the self-contradictory symbol of purity and fertility.

4. The interaction between genres in Mallarmé’s poetry

Mallarmé’s intention for actualizing unity in writing can be seen not only in his abstract sonnets but also in his prose poems. In the poet’s *Œuvres complètes* edited by Bertrand Marchal, 13 poems are collected under the two successive designations, *Poèmes en prose* and “Anecdotes ou poèmes”. The collection follows the editing of the poet himself, who gathered the 13 poems under the

label “Anecdotes ou poèmes” in his *Divagations* published in 1897. Among those, the early pieces are marked by clarity, which is more pushed than the poet’s early verses that are lucid but self-assertive in metrical arrangement. For instance, the poem entitled “Plainte d’automne” begins with the following biographical explanation: “Depuis que Maria m’a quitté pour aller dans une autre étoile”. The semantic clarity given in a restrained length and rhythm, which simulates a schoolbook, is not Mallarmé’s first intention for other genres of writings, be it verse or prose.

What the poet sought for in writing may be recognized by elucidating the significance of clarity in the combination of prose and poetry, i.e., prose poems. A tentative hypothesis comes up from the fact that clarity is social, presupposing the understanding readership in a language community, whereas the creation of prose poetry is experimental and intentional. The intention should be clearly transmitted to the readership.

In other words, the author Mallarmé, who is well known for his difficult writing, was concerned with clarity and he was conscious of the distinction between clarity and opacity. The Mallarmean ambiguity was then intended by the poet Mallarmé himself. A covering formula, which is logically deduced, may be: ambiguity represents clarity superimposed on clarity. To put it differently, the double text involving the prose poetry becomes clearer than clear. The verification of the formula is to be accomplished by identifying the dual difficulty of Mallarmé’s late poems including his sinuous prose poetry, which actually appeared during his veteran phase.

The attempt at the verification is at the final part of this section. The abstractness of his poems allows, or rather promotes the interpreter’s omnidirectional flights of speculation including deduction, which is congenial to abstraction. In the same vein, the engaging expressions such as “obscurcissent moins”, which is easily turned over

to “éclairent plus”, induces the reader to play with the decipherment.

Another key for elucidating the status of clarity is given by one of Mallarmé’s experimental poems in duality, which is paradoxically entitled “Prose”. The first five stanzas of “Prose” are as follows:

Hyperbole! de ma mémoire
Triomphalement ne sais-tu
Te lever, aujourd’hui grimoire
Dans un livre de fer vêtu:

Car j’installe, par la science,
L’hymne des cœurs spirituels
En l’œuvre de ma patience,
Atlas, herbiers et rituels.

Nous promenions notre visage
(Nous fûmes deux, je le maintiens)
Sur maints charmes de paysage,
O sœur, y comparant les tiens.

L’ère d’autorité se trouble
Lorsque, sans nul motif, on dit
De ce midi que notre double
Inconscience approfondit

Que, sol des cent iris, son site,
Ils savent s’il a bien été,
Ne porte pas de nom que cite
L’or de la trompette d’Été.

The above long poem’s structure is that from the three meaningful words, “Hyperbole”, “Anastase”, and “Pulchérie”, the narration is drawn. All three words are secluded and emphasized by exclamation marks. In particular, placed at first, “Hyperbole” literally emits many echoes for directing interpretation, meaning excessive words. The dual structure is embellished by the couple (“Nous fûmes deux”) presumably on honeymoon.

The twofold poem’s theme is production. The second key word, “Anastase”, is considered as an anagram of “Anatole”, the name of the poet’s dead son (Brunel 96). The honeymooners are expected to realize the rebirth of Anatole.

The long poem, “Prose”, which is connected to Huysmans’s novel,¹³ has been a puzzle for critics.¹⁴ The difficulty is related to a religious incantation by various critics, who consider that the title “Prose” designates a genre of Latin prayers.¹⁵ Then, the title “Prose” means a poetic form.

In this poem, nevertheless, the term “Prose” signifies overall, including the meaning of the word, “poetry”, as is suggested by Chadwick (75). The poem combines poeticity, i.e., formal rigidity and prosaism, i.e., colloquial verbal flow. The quatrain poem is regularly divided into 14 stanzas, simulating a sonnet, whereas the colloquial conjunction, “Car”, as well as the spontaneous parentheses, lightly transgress the poem’s calculated organization.

The word “prose” includes “rose”, a flower name cherished by Mallarmé.¹⁶ As a French symbolist, he stood in the stream of late romanticism. The word “rose” is a synonym of “poem” for the poet, signifying a representative flower; he seeks for a birth of artful expression, that is, poetry, by the prose that begins with a romantic phrase, “Je dis: une fleur!” (“Crise de vers” 213).

The definition of prose may be traced back to the experiment of prose poetry by Baudelaire: an unrhymed and long sentence which expresses, or corresponds to the unpredictable movement of the human mind.¹⁷

In the Mallarmé poem entitled “Prose”, it is suggested at the beginning that the term “prose” is a synonym of “hyperbole”, since the two words are in an appositional connection. In the second stanza, the word “prose” has a periphrase, “l’œuvre de ma patience”. “Prose” then signifies many (“hyper”) words (“bole” and “œuvre”) to be patiently interpreted, corresponding to the word’s

conventional meaning as an antithesis of poetry, i.e., an irregular verbal expression. The poem presents, in fact, an encyclopedic guide of an island with its flora and fauna, using many words in a colloquial flow, which is difficult to grasp.

The poem's words are, however, classified into three groups, each unified by each of the three capitalized words with the exclamation marks: "Hyperbole", "Anastase", and "Pulchérie".

The difficulty of the poem, "Prose", equals the characteristics of prose as defined by Baudelaire: long and descriptive, though partial (or metonymic). The partiality, which comes from being unrhymed in regular prose, is paradoxically emphasized by the poem "Prose" in the apparently awkward rhymes.¹⁸ The 14-quatrain poem's lengthiness, which corresponds to a fourfold sonnet, is imposing for the reader, who tries to imagine the detailed whole of the site presented by the speaker. The partially minute description is metonymical, as is qualified by his own expression, "D'un lucide contour, lacune". The appositional relation identifies "contour" (outline) with "lacune" (lack), thereby suggesting that the partial expression of the poem, which aims to offer a panoramic view, is to be imaginatively supplemented by the reader. The authorial era ("L'ère d'autorité"), for example, may have other qualifications such as "Christian", "sacerdotal", or "classical", referring to the epoch of Scholasticism or the Greco-Roman antiquity. By declaring that the site is no other than real ("l'air charge / De vue et non de visions"), the poem apparently intends to describe the site in detail, involving its landscape, flora and fauna, and cultural life ("Atlas, herbiers et rituels"). The intention is, however, frustrated by the rhymed structure of the Latin hymn, another meaning of "prose", so that the descriptive detail is only given by the outline metonymically. The speaker is half a poet, half a modern scientist ("Ils savent s'il a bien été"). The word "science" is actually used in the poem, meaning the speaker's skill.

The twofold poem, paradoxically entitled "Prose", which combines the three single words with the long narration, tries to be objective, by devaluing idealism ("Idées") as subjectively conceptual ("Gloire du long désir"). Nevertheless, a subjective tone is presented by the very devalued term, "Idées", which is actually used in the poem. The overlapping of poetry and prose is manifested by the quasi-connection of the fourth and fifth stanzas by the conjunction, "Que". The fourth stanza corresponds to the final fourth verse for the first quatrain in a sonnet. The formal rules such as the sonnet's internal separation is alien to writings in prose. The implicitness of poetry and the explicitness of prose are symbolized by the unconscious ("Inconscience") of the speaker and his frustrated description. The poem entitled "Prose" may be tentatively concluded as an aesthetic experiment for merging prose into poetry in the collection entitled *Les Poésies*. The linearity of "Prose"'s textual body defamiliarizes and impresses the syntactical lengthening of regular prose. The linearity also represents a tombstone as a culmination of verbal expression fusing clarity into ambiguity, and form into meaning. The tombstone with the incantatory epitaph is a bridge to connect earth and heaven.

Concerning clarity and difficulty, the apparently miscellaneous poems play a significant role in Mallarmé's late project. The following titleless poems are disparate, without making any series with imposing weight, unlike "Plusieurs Sonnets" and other suites, thus seemingly miscellaneous: "La chevelure vol d'une flamme à l'extrême", "Au seul souci de voyager", "Quelle soie aux baumes de temps", "M'introduire dans ton histoire", "A la nue accablante tu", and "Mes bouquins refermés sur le nom de Paphos". Nevertheless, since each of the above six poems formalizes a sonnet, they cannot be ignored.

All the poems are based on a grammatical syntax, the flow of which is, however, occasionally

stopped by the insertion of appositional qualification (e.g. “(La chevelure) vol”) and the elimination of conjugation and even of a whole verb (e.g. “mourir (pourpre la roue)”, “tu / Basse”). In addition, the euphemistic metaphors, such as “mille écumes” and “une joyeuse et tutélaire torche”, prevent the reader’s quick understanding.

The seemingly extra insertions and eliminations trouble the reader’s interpretation up and down, and back and forth. This makes, nonetheless, a circulative cosmos involving both his/her interpretation and the interpreted text, concurrently with his/her continuous efforts to decipher the difficult euphemism, or the modernist version of “préciosité”, without solutions.¹⁹ Furthermore, the verbs placed without conjugations or the eliminated ones give the image of having transmitted their inherent imagery of movement into Mallarmé’s late poetic world in twisted activation.

It should be noted that all the above miscellaneous poems may be ascribed to unity, by describing circular pictures. Also, Mallarmé’s late stylistic features, i.e., insertions and eliminations, contract a poem to be a minimal unity, which may be viewed as a single word in the image of the eye of a typhoon. In addition, the poems equally take the sonnet form. Designating an authentic form of poetry, a sonnet is synonymous with oneness. In Mallarmé’s late poems, oneness is multiplied, which is a source of oneiric purity.

Semantically, the circulative image produced by mirror reflection gives depth in “‘Quelle soie aux baumes de temps’”. Simulating a mirror image, the intertextual echoes from Baudelaire’s poems also deepen the following sonnets: “‘Au seul souci de voyager’”, “‘Quelle soie aux baumes de temps’”, and “‘M’ introduire dans ton histoire’”.²⁰ In “‘La chevelure vol d’une flamme à l’extrême’”, the attractive heroine and the observer/speaker face each other to be entangled and fused into the heroine’s shining hair. The miscellaneous poems’

difficulty, or complexity, resides in their semantic duality to be subsumed into unity. Unity then has two contradictory tasks: to conceive duality and, simultaneously, to dissipate it.

The six poems cooperatively make up a voluminous oneness, in the same way as the other miscellanea, i.e., a suite of occasional but suggestive poems.²¹ The collective oneness is more meaningful than the disparate original poems, as a result of the interaction of form and meaning, or clarity and opacity. Mallarmé’s late poetry is difficult both productively and endlessly.

It should be noted that the endless difficulty comes from, and goes back to, the poetic unity. The difficulty thereby takes unity as a concluding point, though any conclusion is provisional in the interminable cycle of interpretation. A new formula comes up: the aimed clarity as a result of difficulty equals unity. In sum, it can be considered that, for Mallarmé himself, clarity means unity, even if the consideration needs to clear up its leaps in logic.

The two more miscellaneous pieces, identically named “Hommage”, can be classified into the “Tombeau” series, which also involves the long poem, “Toast funèbre”. As collected epitaphs, the series reinforces the reversibility of “Plusieurs Sonnets”, from which new life comes forth. The difficulty of the “Tombeau” series including “Hommage” may thus be passed because of the lucidity of their theme and effect.

The union of life and death, which is realized by the reader/author interaction in concretizing Mallarmé’s late poetry, represents an ultimate clarity of meaning, in that clarity means salvational revelation. In other words, the semantic clarity corresponds to the object in signification in C. S. Peirce’s concept, thus the reader’s sense of being persuaded.²² The sense should reach an acme by transcending the limitation of death and life. The reader’s ontologic ecstasy replaces his/her cognitive persuasion coming with identifying a signifier with a signified. In other words, the

identification is illusorily substituted by the image of fused life and death, which brings ecstasy, dissipating cognitive distinctions. The distinctions are only arbitrary, thus not absolute and negligible. In poetry, at least, the reader is allowed to temporarily forget the arbitrary rules of his/her community and to be refreshed in an artful nirvana. The Mallarmean poetry is a salvational magic; within its restricted framework, it makes the reader believe that it appropriates all including semantic clarity. The Mallarmé poems' manifold circulations are, in fact, dazzling, causing ecstasy.

The above-mentioned leaps in logic are then cleared up. In the Mallarmé poems, clarity equals unity, whereas that unity is illusorily, or at most skillfully, given. All art is, anyhow, basically trickery and fake. Mallarmé himself declares that not the real forest but the name "forest" constitutes a poem ("Crise de vers" 210). Olds indicates that Mallarmé's poetry is highly concerned with revelation (37).

In one of his prose poems, entitled "La Déclaration foraine", the poet himself endorses the hypothesis that the semantic clarity is illusorily given, or "charmer un esprit", by a sense of unity, or "l'auriez entendu si irréfutablement":

Comme vous, Madame, ne l'auriez entendu si irréfutablement, malgré sa réduplication sur une rime du trait final, mon boniment d'après un mode primitif du sonnet, je le gage, si chaque terme ne s'en était répercuté jusqu'à vous par de variés tympanes, pour charmer un esprit ouvert à la compréhension multiple. (428)

The poetry, in general, more or less realizes a pure union by confusing the form and the content with the density of expression. The poetry should thus overcome death and arbitrariness, while simultaneously appropriating the semantic clarity.

The union of life and death represents a double

text, the source of clarity. The clarifying union is most successfully actualized by the generic quartet, "Plusieurs Sonnets", in Mallarmé's late poetry.

The poet Mallarmé set up a poetic paradise in nirvana, i.e., an ultimate dream, presumably saving himself by overcoming the heaviest deaths of his mother, sister, son, and his impending own. He claims: "le suggérer, voilà le rêve" ("Réponses à des enquêtes" 700). In Mallarmé's poetic nirvana, death is leveled with life and the signifier is fused into the signified. The difference between form and meaning, or opacity and clarity, is to be cleared up for revitalizing the human consciousness under the stabilization of arbitrary conventions, i.e., cultural routines, which are codified by language. As a manipulator of language, the poet is responsible for the revitalization of the human consciousness.

5. The poetic unity as all

Mallarmé's poetry converges on his final collection of poems, which was published by Deman in 1899. Though the collection is posthumous, it was prepared by the author and reflects his intention. Brunel posits that the collection constitutes itself as a basic text (139).

The final collection is the second one for the author. His first collection of poems was published in 1887. There is no significant difference between the first and the second. In the second final one, some occasional poems, such as "Feuillet d'Album" and "Petit air", are added to the grand works, such as Hérodiade's "Scène" and the late sonnets, which have already represented the core of the first collection.

The final 1899 collection, which is simply named *Les Poésies*, embodies a singular book, that is, "le livre" as a cosmos dreamed by Mallarmé himself. The collection is, in fact, total, conceiving both the early mimetic poems and the late abstract ones, and both the sonnets in a conventional form and the long theatrical pieces.

With the poem entitled “Prose”, the collection even manipulates practical information for compiling an encyclopedia including the miscellanea.

By the two cognate collections, the author emphasizes a close connection between poetry and unity, both as a result of advanced duality. From a single word, a poem develops, whereas the collected poems make a unique book. The book is a dead but reviving site where meet the author and the reader. The unity of the book conceives semantic duality for further production and development, while compiling itself in a combinable monadic form. The unity means a finalization for further development, i.e., the end and the beginning. It may be concluded that the poet Mallarmé has intentionally left only one collection of poems, the book of books, which was published twice in 1887 and in 1899.

6. Unity, circulation, interpretation, and translation

Mallarmé’s poetic unity is open and developing. The reader is given a vast, if painful, freedom of interpretation even in a revelation of immortality and completion, since the site of revelation is fictive, of which the reader is half conscious. Encountering difficulties in reading the text, the reader first asks the author’s intention, as the author is the direct maker of the text. The circulation of interpretations and enquiries enchain the reader, the author, and the authorial references such as dictionaries makes a poem a conceptual cosmos. The cosmos embodies an actualization of semantic possibilities of the poem. In short, the reader makes up a poem in dialogue with the invisible author and the world. Mallarmé’s original poems should thus be basically mimetic. Mallarmé’s late poetry reveals both the capability and the juvenility of the human language as a communication medium. Language

is flexibly applicable with its hidden potential for signification.

According to the concept of the American semiotician, C. S. Peirce, interpretation is translation (Savan 17). Mallarmé’s late poetry, which demands of the reader diversified efforts of interpretation, has particularly been a large challenge for the translation into other languages.

In the case of the Mallarmé poems, even his accessible early poems have numerous instances of “interlingual translation” in Roman Jakobson’s concept under the Peircean influence. Jakobson named the translation between different languages “interlingual translation”, commenting that “interlingual translation” is “translation proper” (261). Jakobson’s other two kinds of translation are: “intralingual translation” and “intersemiotic translation”. The three kinds of translation are nonetheless unified as the relays between signs.

To sum up, the Mallarmé poems are challenging but pure unlike Baudelaire’s multifarious poetry. And flexible but neutral unlike Rimbaud and Verlaine’s characteristic poetry. In short, the Mallarmean accessibility has succeeded in acquiring international acclaim. The poems’ success in unifying the author, the reader, and the text may be ascribed to the engaging circularity and unity, which is systematically made up from the generic titles through the union of life/form and death/meaning in Mallarmé’s late poems. Constituting themselves as archetypes, the early poems are equally unified, mainly by the image of water. As a previous conclusion, the title of each poem is in principle a single word, which is, actually, frequently so, as in the case of the Mallarmé poems. Reflecting each word of the original text, the worldwide attempts of translation have continuously been growing Mallarmé’s poetic world, while simultaneously revitalizing the translators/readers.

Notes

- 1 In the title page of the collection, the designation of the author's name, i.e., "*de S. Mallarmé*", is separately shown under the title, *Les Poésies*.
- 2 Mallarmé used the term "rêve" as a keyword for his poetics, as follows: "le *suggérer*, voilà le rêve" ("Réponses à des enquêtes" 700).
- 3 Davies points out the allowance in Mallarmé's frequent use of the indefinite article "maint" and many suppressions of the definite articles for nouns. See Davies 224.
- 4 The term "para-text", meaning the supplemental body of writing, is from Gérard Genette. See Graham 103-06.
- 5 The Japanese sonnet was created under the influence of Western models after the 1868 Meiji Restoration, which was the inception of the country's voluntary modernization.
- 6 For the Japanese influence on Pollock's painting, refer to Koppel. According to Randall Rothenberg, "By the 1950's, the expressiveness of Japanese calligraphy could be sensed in the work of Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. . .".
- 7 The term "readerly", meaning "an attitude of passivity" (Sim and Loon 74), is coined under the influence of Roland Barthes' concept in his *S/Z*. The opposite of "readerly" is "writerly", which is applicable to Mallarmé's writing, as "demand(ing) the active participation of the reader" (Sim and Loon 74).
- 8 For the watery images of the early lyrics, see Takeda, *Human* 93-108.
- 9 For the Mallarmean absence/presence, see Takeda, *Word* 65-90.
- 10 See, for example, Aish 7, Bird 182, and Raftery-Skehan and Scott 28.
- 11 The manuscripts of Mallarmé's translations of the nursery rhymes were collected by Carl Paul Barbier under the title, *Recueil de «Nursery Rhymes»*. The manuscripts had not been published during the poet's lifetime.
- 12 The white spaces seen between each poem appear to be an extension of the spaces between lines in each poem.
- 13 In the 1899 collection, the indication, "(pour des Esseintes)", was marked under the poem's title. "Des Esseintes" is the name of the Huysmans novel's hero.
- 14 In Albert Thibaudet's words, "La *Prose* passe pour la quintessence de l'inintelligible" (403).
- 15 See Brunel 101-03, Chadwick 88, Davies 214, Giroux 147, and Olds 18.
- 16 The predilection is revealed in the poet's frequent use of the term "rose" in his poems such as sonnet 3 of "Plusieurs Sonnets", which is concluded by the word "roses".
- 17 In the preface to his *Spleen de Paris*, Baudelaire gives his definition of prose as follows: "le miracle d'une prose poétique, musicale sans rythme et sans rime, assez souple et assez heurtée pour s'adapter aux mouvements lyriques de l'âme, aux ondulations de la rêverie, aux soubresauts de la conscience" (275-76).
- 18 For the awkwardness of the poem's rhyme, see Bowie 75.
- 19 The classical qualification, "préciosité", regarding Mallarmé's expressions was adopted by Davies (247 and 268) and Chadwick (80).
- 20 The sonnet "'Au seul souci'" resounds the echoes from Baudelaire's verses, "L'Invitation au voyage" and "L'Albatros". "'Quelle soie'" reflects "La Chevelure", as well as Baudelaire's prose poem entitled "Chacun sa chimère". "'M'introduire'" also echoes "La Chevelure". In addition, Mark Raftery-Skehan and David Scott indicate the echo from Blake's "Jerusalem" in "'M'introduire dans ton histoire'" (124).
- 21 The remaining, but passable miscellanea are as follows: "Eventail", "Autre Eventail", "Feuillet d'Album", "Remémoration d'Amis belges", "Chansons Bas", "Billet à Whistler", and "Petit air".
- 22 For the Peircean concept, "object", see Takeda, *Human* 13-14.

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