

AN APPRAISAL  
OF  
MALLARME'S DEBT TO BAUDELAIRE

by

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### ABSTRACT

This study represents an attempt to determine the extent of Mallarmé's debt to Baudelaire. It is generally recognized that Mallarmé underwent the influence of Baudelaire in the course of the development of his thought and expression. Mallarmé himself recognized this debt and at one period of his life referred to Baudelaire as his master. Yet, a great diversity of opinion exists as to the importance and duration of this influence, a fact borne out by "une vue d'ensemble" of critical opinion.

In order to bring Baudelaire's role more clearly into its proper perspective, the first part of this assessment contains a brief discussion of divergent critical opinion, and a summary of other important influences to which Mallarmé is said to have been subjected. Mallarmé's poetry written prior to his encounter with poems of Les Fleurs du Mal is also considered, particularly his religious poems and those in the collection Entre quatre murs.

In the second part of this study we compare the aesthetic and metaphysical concepts held by the two poets, and their attitudes towards society, poetry, and the material world. Their physical and spiritual worlds, and the special nature of each poet's ideal are also examined.

In part III we examine some of Mallarmé's poems written from 1861 to 1865 - the period in which he is generally believed to have been most completely under the sway of Baudelaire - with a view to

ascertaining in more tangible form Mallarmé's debt to Baudelaire, in terms of themes, imagery, and expression. We also mention certain Baudelairian reminiscences in poems written by Mallarmé after 1865: poems in which the originality and characteristic Mallarméan traits are manifest and undisputed.

This study, it is hoped, will help not only to clarify certain concepts held by both great poets, but contribute to a greater understanding of the veritable nature of Baudelaire's role in the development of Mallarmé's unique contribution to French verse.

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## INTRODUCTION

It has been generally acknowledged that Baudelaire's work influenced the development of Mallarmé's poetic thought and expression. "Tous les commentateurs", wrote Jean-Pierre Richard in 1961, "ont signalé le rôle fécondant de l'oeuvre baudelairienne, par rapport à celle de Mallarmé. Mallarmé lui-même a d'ailleurs maintes fois affirmé sa dette."<sup>1</sup> Mallarmé's debt to Baudelaire, however, has not been adequately appraised, and we do not have, as the same critic has pointed out, any comprehensive "travail d'ensemble" on the "rapports profonds" between these two poets. Earlier, in 1951, the critic, Henri Peyre, had remarked that "le sujet 'Mallarmé et Baudelaire' a reçu trop peu d'attention..."<sup>2</sup>

Wide reading reveals a remarkable divergence of critical opinion concerning the extent of Mallarmé's indebtedness to Baudelaire. Part of the problem in achieving a meaningful appraisal of this debt lies in the difficulty of carefully distinguishing between the purely Baudelairian influence and the other complex forces which combined to shape Mallarmé's poetry. Another vexing problem is that of delimiting the meaning of the term "influence". Joseph Chiari, for example, favours the theory of T.S. Eliot that "the problem of influence is integrated into the vaster process of unavoidable growth, a process which, in so far as what preceded unavoidably determines what followed, gives full scope to direct and above all to indirect influence."<sup>3</sup>

Léon Cellier moreover, does not give an adequate answer to the question

he poses: "Mais ces mots de fraternité, parenté, affinité (sans parler du plus vague de tous: influence), que signifient-ils au juste ?"<sup>4</sup> But, he points out, like Chiari, that one must first distinguish between "fond" and "forme", or between "l'art" and "le rêve".<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the difficulty of defining "influence", there is the delicate task of determining the various contributions of nineteenth century thought which also form a part of this "debt". Referring to the various influences to which Mallarmé was subjected at the time of his writing the collection of poems entitled Entre quatre murs, Henri Mondor sums them up in the following terms: "... les unes imputables aux affinités électives, aux penchants exaucés, les autres venues du hasard, du souvenir des lectures, de l'atmosphère littéraire de l'époque, de la rébellion d'un enfant prisonnier à qui la poésie classique la moins lyrique était autoritairement et exclusivement imposée."<sup>6</sup> It is therefore an extremely delicate task to separate even the affiliations of Mallarmé with Baudelaire from those of Mallarmé with other currents of nineteenth-century poetic thought or to state that Mallarmé owed such and such an idea to Baudelaire rather than to an immediate or far-removed predecessor of Baudelaire. In his recent book, R.G. Cohn has thus summarized the evolution of Mallarmé's verse:

Mallarmé's poems are the culmination of a long evolution of French lyricism which began in the Middle Ages, took notable shape in the sixteenth century, and after gathering subtle resources of articulation in the classic period, leaped into Romanticism and its finer heir, Symbolism...

... on the whole, in the nineteenth century, the seminal development from Lamartine through Hugo and Baudelaire to the Symbolists (with major stimulus from coeval English and German writers and the American, Poe) is predominantly an intensification of romanticism, with classicism in a supporting role.<sup>7</sup>



One could, of course, trace the origins of Mallarmé's thought even further back than the Middle Ages. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact filiation of a certain idea. For example, commenting on the theory of the oneness of the universe adopted by Mallarmé, Chiari points out: "The famous theory of the oneness of the universe apprehended in moments of mystical union with the great one is as old as Plotinus, and again, is only a derivative of Plato's beliefs. It is also Schelling's theory, it fits with the Kantian theory of the 'noumenon', and it was quite widespread in England and in France too.... These views are those of Swedenborg, Boehme, Blake and many others..."<sup>8</sup> Y. Park, in his thesis of 1966, traces Mallarmé's thought to Plotinus rather than to Plato, and also to Leibnitz, but also points out that it was not entirely linked to any of these philosophical visions of the universe.<sup>9</sup>

For similar reasons Guy Delfel contends that neither Hegel's nor Plato's ideas had any real influence on Mallarmé, and that Mallarmé's aesthetics were of his own making: "Comment ne pas voir que, dans ce cas, si Mallarmé a tiré toute son esthétique de lui-même, elle devient une vivante confirmation de la logique de l'attitude idéaliste en art ? Cette confrontation devient alors une véritable expérience philosophique et une des plus belles preuves de la force, de la logique et de l'ampleur de la pensée mallarméenne."<sup>10</sup> The role of exterior influence is also minimized by Jean-Pierre Richard who wrote in 1961: "Si Mallarmé d'ailleurs a subi bien des influences (de Baudelaire à Wagner, en passant par Poe, Manet, Hegel et les danseuses), celles-ci l'ont moins modifié qu'approfondi."<sup>11</sup> Mallarmé himself affirmed in 1898 in his "Sur l'Idéal à Vingt Ans"

the minimal importance of "l'apport hasardeux extérieur qu'on recueille... sous le nom d'expérience" compared with "sa native illumination."<sup>12</sup> He also stated in precise and clear terms the source from which he drew his inspiration:

Le poète puise en son Individualité secrète et antérieure plus que dans les circonstances.<sup>13</sup>

By "Individualité secrète" Mallarmé is no doubt referring to that collectivity of personal, intimate feelings which hide behind the poet's images; and by "antérieure" that particular conception which constituted his personal vision of the world prior to certain events, or, as Mme Ayda has explained, "antérieurement au choc ou chocs qui ont entraîné la formation dans son âme, de complexes et de symboles."<sup>14</sup> The nature of these events or incidents will be taken up in the next chapter.

One might ask why one should study the influence to which a great poet has been subjected. Such a study does not seek to undermine his merits, but try to show how the poet developed and arrived at his essential originality. The growth of the creative mind is extremely interesting - in Henri Mondor's opinion it is "plus intéressante que celle du corps ou du coeur quand il s'agit des écrivains..."<sup>15</sup> Mallarmé himself gave an excellent commentary on his early poetry and on what distinguished it from his mature work:

Il [Taine] ne croit pas qu'un écrivain puisse entièrement changer de manière, ce qui est faux; je l'ai observé sur moi... J'avais une prolixité violente et une enthousiaste diffusion, écrivant tout du premier jet, bien entendu et croyant à l'effusion, en style. Qu'y a-t-il de plus différent que l'écopier d'alors, vrai et primesautier, avec le littérateur d'à présent qui a horreur d'une chose dite sans être arrangée.<sup>16</sup>

The idea that a great poet assimilates, fuses or transmutes the different elements which have influenced him or contributed to his originality has been expressed by many critics. Paul Valéry perhaps over-simplified the problem when he wrote in 1930: "C'est ainsi que Mallarmé développant en soi quelques-unes des qualités des poètes romantiques et de Baudelaire, observant en eux ce qu'ils contenaient de plus exquisement accompli... a peu à peu déduit une manière toute particulière, et finalement une doctrine et des problèmes tout nouveaux, prodigieusement étrangers aux modes mêmes de sentir et de penser de ses pères et frères en poésie."<sup>17</sup>

Jean Starobinski expressed a similar idea in an article of 1948: "Les matériaux hérités de Baudelaire subiront une étrange transmutation, selon la loi d'évolution interne de la production mallarméenne."<sup>18</sup>

From the foregoing remarks, it is apparent that many factors are involved in the complex task of arriving at a just assessment of Mallarmé's debt to Baudelaire. It would be impossible in this brief study to attempt to trace and adequately relate all the influences which could have contributed to Mallarmé's poetic growth or evolution. However, major problems related to this complex question will be discussed together with the comments of major critics before a final appraisal is attempted.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Jean-Pierre Richard, L'Univers Imaginaire de Mallarmé, p.75.
2. Henri Peyre, Connaissance de Baudelaire, p. 161.
3. J. Chiari, Symbolisme from Poe to Mallarmé. The Growth of a Myth, p. 3; theory of T.S. Eliot propounded in Eliot's Introduction to the Selected Poems of Ezra Pound, Faber and Faber, 1928, pp. x-xi.
4. Léon Cellier, Mallarmé et la morte qui parle, p. 47.
5. Ibid., p. 48; cf. J. Chiari op.cit., pp. 171-172.
6. Henri Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 240.
7. R.G. Cohn, Towards the Poems of Mallarmé, pp. 1-2.
8. J. Chiari, op. cit., p. 41.
9. Y. Park, L'idée chez Mallarmé, p. 98.
10. G. Delfel, L'Esthétique de Stéphane Mallarmé, p. 70.
11. J.-P. Richard, op. cit., p. 34.
12. Stéphane Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, p. 883.
13. Ibid., p. 876
14. A. Ayda, Le drame intérieur de Mallarmé ou l'origine des symboles mallarméens, p. 94.
15. H. Mondor, op. cit., p. 8.
16. From a letter to Eugène Lefébure of February 1865. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 154-155.
17. P. Valéry, Variété II, "Lettre sur Mallarmé", p. 215.
18. J. Starobinski, "Mallarmé et la Tradition Poétique Française", in Les Lettres, t. III, p. 44.

PART I

CRITICAL OPINION

## CHAPTER I

## MALLARME'S EARLY YEARS

Certain events in the life of the young Mallarmé deeply affected the development of his thought. Léon Cellier, among other critics, such as Mme Ayda and Charles Mauron, has insisted on the capital importance of Mallarmé's early years. "A mesure que la biographie de Mallarmé est mieux connue," asserts Cellier, "il apparaît que les premières années de sa vie ont joué dans son destin de poète un rôle capital. Comme tout poète lyrique il connaissait la place essentielle que tiennent dans l'imagination les souvenirs d'enfance, les extases, les amours et les douleurs enfantines."<sup>1</sup> The following lines from Mallarmé's "Conférence sur Villiers de l'Isle-Adam", written 1889-1890, reveals the large part Mallarmé attributed, in literary creation, to personal memories and to intimate experiences:

... Sait-on ce que c'est qu'écrire... C'est... s'arroger...  
quelque devoir de tout recréer avec des réminiscences....  
Un à un, chacun de nos orgueils, les susciter dans leur  
antériorité et voir.<sup>2</sup>

Mallarmé's correspondance and early works reveal a pious, devout and mystical young Stéphane. His childhood and youth, however, were marked by three major events: the death of his mother in 1847 when Mallarmé was five years old, of his sister, Maria, in 1857, and that of a dear friend, Harriet Smyth, in 1859.

After the death of Mallarmé's mother, the notion of religion was henceforth to be linked to her image and memory. Proof of this can be found in passages of the poems, "La Cantate pour la première communion"<sup>3</sup>, written in 1858, four years after his first communion,

and "La Prière d'une Mère"<sup>4</sup>, one year later. If the pious content of these poems evokes the memory of his mother, declares Mme Ayda, "C'est parce que, pour Mallarmé 'piété' signifiera psychiquement 'fidélité au souvenir de la mère' que plus tard, ayant perdu la foi religieuse, il ne cessera d'être poursuivi par le remords d'être hanté par l'Azur'."<sup>5</sup>

These poems and two narrations written by the young Mallarmé in 1854, namely, "La Coupe d'or" and "l'Ange gardien"<sup>6</sup>, reveal his first allusion to the invisible world inhabited by angels and saints, presided over by a powerful, protective and good God - a world in which his mother was present. This world was in constant relationship with the real world. In the dream world in which the young orphan took refuge, he found goodness, purity, harmony and beauty.

The mystic years of the young Stéphane, those from 1854 to 1857, play an important role in Mallarmé's future development and offer valuable clues to our understanding of his subsequent thought. These years help clarify the ardour with which the poet was later to deny the existence of God. Furthermore, declares Mme Ayda, Mallarmé would do his utmost to find in the practice of his poetry the serenity he had enjoyed during his mystic years.<sup>7</sup> Certainly, as Mallarmé wrote in 1864, he wished to reach "la plus haute cime de sérénité où nous ravisse la beauté"<sup>8</sup>, but whether it was because he had already enjoyed "serenity" in his childhood is an interesting interpretation of the facts.

The death of his beloved sister, Maria, August 31, 1857, was a staggering blow to the young Mallarmé, and henceforth he would live haunted by the memory of the untimely event.<sup>9</sup> Charles Mauron,

like many other critics, attributes great importance to this loss in that he considered it vital to "l'explication des Poésies, les confidences, les lettres ou les 'premiers états' les plus suggestifs."<sup>10</sup>

The anguish and sorrow of the young Mallarmé after Maria's death can be felt in the cycle of the "Rêveries" in the collection of poems Entre quatre murs.<sup>11</sup> His sentiments and impressions at the funeral of Maria are expressed in his prose poem entitled "Plainte d'Automne", written in 1863 and first entitled "Orgue de Barbarie".<sup>12</sup> Maria's name is mentioned three times, but the image of the girl remains indistinct.

Some time after the death of Maria, Mallarmé wrote a story which was inspired by the desire to see his sister return to earth even in the form of a "fantôme". This story or "conte" is usually referred to by the title, "Ce que disaient les trois cigognes" <sup>13</sup> and is, according to Mme Ayda, of extreme importance - it is "le document le plus important qui existe pour la connaissance de Mallarmé, la clef la plus utile, la plus efficace dont nous disposions pour déchiffrer son oeuvre."<sup>14</sup> Her chapter entitled "la genèse des symboles" shows how the poignant memory of his sister, "la blanche créature" of the narration will continue to nourish the imagination of Stéphane Mallarmé and will inspire in him "bien des images et bien des strophes impérissables..."<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the incomprehensibility of the young man at the death of his sister, and his desire for an explanation of the absurdity of the acts of Providence lies at the origin of the metaphysical curiosity that will remain with the poet throughout his life.<sup>16</sup>

Although H. Mondor attributed this "conte" to an earlier



period (1857-1858) to the "époque séraphique du poète"<sup>17</sup>, L.J. Austin suggests that it was written in 1860 when Mallarmé became acquainted with Baudelaire's work. In addition to the fact that the style of this narration appears to be superior to the writing of many of the poems in the collection, Entre quatre murs, written 1859-1860, Austin asserts that it also contains Baudelairian echoes.<sup>18</sup> Similarly P.O. Walzer has pointed out some Baudelairian reminiscences in this "conte"<sup>19</sup> which would seem to bear out Austin's contention. It does however seem rather contradictory, in view of the above statement, that Austin could not find in any of the poems of Entre quatre murs, some of which were written in 1860, any trace of a knowledge, even superficial, of Baudelaire.<sup>20</sup>

Another tragic event which had a marked effect on the young Mallarmé was the death in 1859 of his friend, Harriet Smyth, to whom he had become greatly attached since the death of his sister. In terms of its far-reaching influence on his work, this was perhaps the most important crisis through which Mallarmé passed.<sup>21</sup> It was only with Mondor's discovery of some of Mallarmé's notebooks, published in Mallarmé lycéen in 1954<sup>22</sup>, that the fact became known that the heroine celebrated in the two elegies, "Sa fosse est creusée" and "Sa tombe est fermée", was really known and loved by Mallarmé. It is interesting to note that in 1938 Kurt Wais expressed the hypothesis - at a time when the heroine of the two poems was not known - that one can find in these two works the germ of all Mallarmé's poetry, and that the tragedy they contained caused the poet to lose faith in religion and therefore lies at the root of his subsequent longing for a "paradis antérieur".<sup>23</sup> In a subsequent work on Mallarmé, Wais

abandoned this hypothesis, one with which Mme Ayda finds herself in agreement. The psychic and moral upheaval caused by the deaths of Maria and Harriet, she states, "déterminera les conditions dans lesquelles s'édifiera l'architecture du symbolisme mallarméen".<sup>24</sup> The word "antérieur" which occurs frequently in Mallarmé's poetry is used with the meaning "antérieur au doute" or "antérieur aux événements qui ont provoqué le doute" or "antérieur de la perte de la foi".<sup>25</sup>

The depth of the moral crisis which shook Stéphane Mallarmé in the year 1859 can be more justly measured when one reads the poems in the collection Entre quatre murs. Five months after he had written the long poem "Prière d'une mère"<sup>26</sup> (1859) in which he had expressed the feeling that prayers alone could save him from danger, and in which he asked God to leave his faith intact, Mallarmé wrote a poem in which he expressed his indignation that his prayer had not been granted. In "Colère d'Allah", written December 7, 1859, we find such lines as,

Allah le regardait d'un oeil indifférent

and

Allah le regardait froid comme un Dieu de marbre.<sup>27</sup>

With Harriet's death, the interior universe of Mallarmé underwent a deep transformation. The pious child is seen emancipating himself from the moral and doctrinal constraints that had dominated him until then. Henceforth, other themes appear in his work. In Entre quatre murs, writes L.J. Austin, "une orientation toute nouvelle apparaît... à côté des plaintes élégiaques des fanfaronnades bacchiques et bientôt, des rêveries érotiques et des éclats blasphématoires. Ce sont des vers d'un adolescent troublé..."<sup>28</sup> The crisis of 1859 brought about

a revolt against God, and loss of faith.

\* \* \*

Entre quatre murs contains over 1400 lines.<sup>29</sup> Of the large quantity the young Mallarmé composed in such a short time (1859-1860), L.J. Austin has observed, "Ce recueil... suffit ainsi à battre en brèche 'la légende imbécile de sa stérilité hative, de son impuissance'. Il faut dire pourtant, que c'est Mallarmé le premier qui a imprudemment créé cette légende; mais il ne fallait pas prendre au pied de la lettre ses nombreuses allusions, dans ses poèmes et ses lettres de jeunesse, à sa 'stérilité' et à son 'impuissance'."<sup>30</sup> Thus, when Mallarmé complained of "stérilité" or "impuissance" it was not due to the fact that he could not write poetry, but that he could not write the kind of poetry he wished. Both H. Mondor and L.J. Austin, who have made a careful study of the poems of this collection, state that the quality is rather mediocre, and does not presage the exquisite verse to come.<sup>31</sup>

It is interesting to note that in Mallarmé's poem "Cloche des Morts"<sup>32</sup>, one finds the quadruple repetition of "Hélas", a device subsequently used by Mallarmé in "L'Azur" and which has been generally attributed to the influence of Poe.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, L.J. Austin did not find any trace of Baudelaire's influence in the poems of Entre quatre murs.<sup>34</sup> Although one can find numerous references to such Baudelairian terms as "chevelure", "tresses", and "parfum"<sup>35</sup>, these, according to H. Mondor, preceded Mallarmé's acquaintance with Baudelaire's work. Mondor seems anxious not to attribute any influence to Baudelaire at this stage. He argues in favour of Hugo's influence

regarding, for example, the use of "fleurdelise":

"la lecture de l'adjectif fleurdelisé m'ayant rappelé dans Spleen de Baudelaire que Mallarmé recopiait en 1860, le vers

"Son lit fleurdelisé se transforme en tombeau"

je crus d'abord à cette influence; mais il est plus vraisemblable que les deux poètes cadets avaient lu, dans Hugo (les Contemplations):

"Et faut-il qu'à jamais pour moi, quand vient le soir  
Au lieu de s'étoiler le lit se fleurdelise..."<sup>36</sup>

The major influences on Mallarmé at the time he wrote Entre quatre murs were, as both H. Mondor, L.J. Austin and others have pointed out, those of Lamartine, de Musset and above all of Victor Hugo. It is as a disciple of Musset, declares Austin, that Mallarmé opens his collection, but this influence was not lasting, and the last borrowing from Musset seems to date from July 1859.<sup>37</sup> Mallarmé himself recognized the presence of "l'âme lamartinienne" in himself:

... puis j'ai traversé bien des pensions et lycées, d'âme lamartinienne avec un secret désir de remplacer, un jour, Beranger...<sup>38</sup>

Léon Cellier points out that "l'âme du jeune Mallarmé était lamartinienne parce que sa prière était celle de l'enfant à son réveil."<sup>39</sup>

The influence of Lamartine is also to be found in the pious poems written preceding the collection Entre quatre murs. Mme Ayda also argues for the influence of Lamartine, as well as that of Victor Hugo, in the two elegies, "Sa fosse est creusée", and "Sa tombe est fermée".<sup>40</sup>

From February 1859, Mallarmé reveals himself a faithful disciple of Victor Hugo. This major influence which will be taken up again in a later chapter, persists throughout the collection of poems, even when other elements are included.<sup>41</sup>

There were other minor influences of the Romantic poets<sup>42</sup>; surprisingly, Vigny is the only one (according to L.J. Austin) of all the great Romantic poets who does not seem to have influenced Mallarmé. The influence of these poets, contends Mme Ayda, was to remain with Mallarmé throughout his life: "Dès sa tendre adolescence Mallarmé s'était nourri des merveilles du Romantisme et son esprit était imbu des thèmes romantiques. Il ne fera que chanter ces thèmes jusqu'à la fin de sa vie.... Le jeune Mallarmé empruntera aux Romantiques non seulement leurs thèmes, leurs images, mais aussi leur terminologie, leurs symboles. Le vocabulaire du jeune chrétien s'en trouvera transformé."<sup>43</sup> Mallarmé wrote of his personal preferences and of his ideal in April 1860 :

Moi, quand j'étais petit et que j'étais classique  
J'étais à parler franc, fort peu mélancolique

J'aimais le sucre d'orge et les vers de Racine.

Des fleurs ?... je connaissais les fleurs de papier peint:  
Les fleurs de rhétorique et les fleurs du Parnasse.

Mon idéal était ces vieux coqs étamés  
Qui grincent bêtement sur les clochers ruinés:  
(Réponse à une Pièce de Vers)<sup>44</sup>

Thus, Mallarmé traces his passage from classicism to Parnassianism, and then to Romanticism.

As early as 1859 Mallarmé appears to recognize the mediocrity of his poetry for he wrote in one of his poems: "Ces vers sont bien mauvais."<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, he set out to improve his poetry by copying out certain works of his favourite poets. Three notebooks containing Mallarmé's copyings, each dated 1860 and entitled "Glances", were found by Mondor at the same time as the notebook containing Entre quatre murs. The titles of the poems that appear in these notebooks are listed in

Mallarmé lycéen<sup>46</sup>, and the number of lines transcribed is given as more than 8000<sup>47</sup>. Why did Mallarmé copy so many lines? Mondor explains that it was because Mallarmé, dissatisfied with his volume of poetry, felt the necessity of studying other poetry "et d'abord en artisan."<sup>48</sup> L.J. Austin expresses a similar opinion, "... l'on peut se demander si Mallarmé n'avait pas cessé sa production personnelle pour étudier de plus près son métier."<sup>49</sup>

In his personal anthology of 1860, Mallarmé included nine poems by Poe and twenty-nine by Baudelaire; many poems by 16th century poets were also included. Regarding his choice of Baudelaire's poems, Mondor commented that it represented "toutes les cordes baudelairiennes", especially "les plus spécifiques, morbides et sinistres: le romantisme noir hérité de 1820, la recherche d'étrangeté prônée par Gautier, le goût du macabre et le sublime du familier dûs à Sainte-Beuve."<sup>50</sup> What a contrast between this selection and Mallarmé's "Cantate pour la première communion" or his "Prière d'une mère"! L.J. Austin agrees with Mondor that the poems chosen from Baudelaire were among "les plus virulents"<sup>51</sup>, but he claims that "toutes les cordes baudelairiennes" are not represented: "Ce qui frappe dans ce choix, ce sont les omissions autant que les poèmes retenus... tous ces éléments essentiels du recueil échappant pour le moment au jeune lycéen qui bientôt pourtant devait assumer pleinement l'héritage de Baudelaire."<sup>52</sup> Thus, it was the romanticism of Baudelaire that first impressed Mallarmé. Indeed, if Mallarmé had such a fervent admiration for Baudelaire, it was no doubt because he considered him the last of the great Romantics.<sup>53</sup>

## CHAPTER II

## MALLARME'S DEBT TO BAUDELAIRE

Most critics agree that the reading of Baudelaire's poems had a very great influence on Mallarmé. After reading les Fleurs du Mal, wrote Mondor in 1954, Mallarmé realized the weaknesses of his volume of poetry Entre quatre murs and abandoned any idea of publishing it: "Après la lecture des Fleurs du Mal, en effet, tout ce premier volume que les ouvrages non décourageants de Victor Hugo avaient à la fois inspiré et facilité dut lui paraître tout à fait puéril."<sup>54</sup>

It was Baudelaire who, according to the same critic, liberated Mallarmé's spirit and indicated the path he was to follow.<sup>55</sup> In an article of 1956, L.J. Austin echoed Mondor's opinion that Baudelaire, and then Poe, "mettent Mallarmé... dans la voie qu'il cherchait jusqu'alors en vain."<sup>56</sup>

It was the following lines by Baudelaire written in 1857, that, in Mondor's opinion, turned Mallarmé away from Victor Hugo:

... toute âme éprise de poésie pure me comprendra quand je dirai que parmi notre race poétique, Victor Hugo serait moins admiré, s'il était parfait, et qu'il n'a pu se faire pardonner tout son génie lyrique qu'en introduisant de force et brutalement dans la poésie ce qu'Edgar Poe considérerait comme l'hérésie moderne capitale: l'enseignement.<sup>57</sup>

A different explanation for Mallarmé's turning away from Hugo's poetry was given by Albert Thibaudet, namely, that in his two poems, "Sa fosse est creusée" and "Sa tombe est fermée"-which Thibaudet published for the first time<sup>58</sup>- Mallarmé tried to attain Hugo's oratorical style, and that he failed so completely that any further attempt was

out of the question.<sup>59</sup> Thibaudet goes on to say that the author of these two poems had, in 1859, much to unlearn; that it was, first of all, the influence of Baudelaire, which was to govern him until 1870, and afterwards it was especially that of the English poets that "mit fin chez lui à toute velléité hugolienne et qui nous aide à voir dans ces vers qu'il écrivait à dix-sept ans une manière de rougeole poétique."<sup>60</sup>

The viewpoint expressed by Thibaudet is not shared by many other critics. Gardner Davies wrote in 1947: "This harsh judgment does not seem altogether justified and is of little value as an explanation of Mallarmé's swing toward Baudelairean poetry."<sup>61</sup> It is interesting that almost every statement made by Thibaudet in the article of 1933 has been criticized by others. With the exception of Mme Ayda and Léon Cellier<sup>62</sup>, the critics seem to agree that with the reading of les Fleurs du Mal, Mallarmé transferred his allegiance from Hugo to Baudelaire, although the decisive cult of Baudelaire co-existed for a short time with that of Hugo in Mallarmé's mind.<sup>63</sup>

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From the slight evidence available, we can infer that there was nothing in the way of a friendship, or personal relationship, between Mallarmé and Baudelaire.<sup>64</sup>

The statement made by Léon Lemonnier in 1923 that there was no direct personal influence of Baudelaire on Mallarmé seems to be highly plausible: "Il ne semble pas que Baudelaire et Mallarmé aient jamais eu une entrevue de quelque importance, ni qu'ils aient jamais



échangé de lettre; il n'y a donc point eu d'influence personnelle directe, et c'est la seule comparaison de leurs ouvrages qui peut révéler leurs relations intellectuelles."<sup>65</sup>

The fact that Baudelaire evinced little interest in Mallarmé's poetry is suggested by the following two excerpts from Mallarmé's correspondence. Both letters were written April 1864, the first being taken from a letter from Emmanuel des Essarts to Mallarmé:

J'ai montré tes vers à Mery, à Vacquerie et à Baudelaire. Baudelaire les a écoutés sans désapprobation ce qui est un très grand signe de faveur. S'il ne les avait pas goûtés, il m'eût interrompu.<sup>66</sup>

The following lines are included in a letter from H. Cazalis to Mallarmé:

Nous [Emmanuel et Henri] avons dîné avec Baudelaire; une cousine qui... m'a demandé tous tes vers, a fait lire à Emmanuel Les Fenêtres et l'Azur, le maître a écouté avec une très fine attention, mais selon l'usage... n'a rien dit.<sup>67</sup>

In a letter of December 1864 Cazalis wrote to Mallarmé that Baudelaire appeared to hate him:

Il paraît que ton dieu Baudelaire te hait, et c'est bien mal récompenser, tu me l'avoueras, la religion, le culte pur de son croyant le plus fidèle.<sup>68</sup>

Mallarmé's feelings for Baudelaire do not seem to have been modified to any extent by the above lines from Cazalis. Up till 1867 he expressed great admiration for his master. He referred to the poet as "le grand Baudelaire"<sup>69</sup>, and "cet extraordinaire et pur génie"<sup>70</sup>. In his review of poems by Des Essarts, in "Le Senonais", March 22, 1862, Mallarmé referred to les Fleurs du Mal and Banville's les Odes funambulesques as "les derniers chefs-d'oeuvre du siècle".<sup>71</sup>

In a letter to Cazalis of July 1864, Mallarmé praised Baudelaire's poetry and indicated the qualities he most admired:

Car tu est un fier poète, mon ami... Toi seul, Edgar Poe et Baudelaire étiez capables de ce poème qui, comme certains regards de femme, contient des mondes de pensées et de sensations... Tout y est merveilleusement disposé pour l'effet à produire, et malgré cet art, le tableau reste simple et vivant. Je suis fou de ces vers parce qu'ils résument toute mon esthétique...<sup>72</sup>

It was the "effet" produced, the sensation caused by the careful arrangement of words and ideas that Mallarmé liked in Baudelaire's poetry. In a letter to Lefébure, regarding a recently published drama, Elén by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, there is another such reference:

Vous ressentirez une sensation à chacun des mots, comme en lisant Baudelaire. Il n'y a pas là une syllabe qui n'ait été pesée pendant une nuit de rêverie.<sup>73</sup>

In the same letter Mallarmé writes of his dislike for Des Essarts' book Les Elévations, and declares that the words are "mis souvent au hasard" and added that "On ne ressent à cette lecture aucune sensation neuve"<sup>74</sup> Other than such scattered fragments culled from Mallarmé's correspondence, we do not have a precise statement of Mallarmé's opinion of Baudelaire's quality as an artist. As to Mallarmé's poetic theory, he attributed it to Poe.

In a letter to A. Albert Collignon, April 11, 1864, Mallarmé had expressed the intention of publishing an article "sur le spleen de Paris et sur l'oeuvre de ce maître"<sup>75</sup>, but this article was either not written or has not come down to us. He had also expressed the intention of writing a thesis dedicated to Baudelaire and to Poe.<sup>76</sup> The only article Mallarmé devoted to Baudelaire was the second movement of his prose poem "Symphonie Littéraire"<sup>77</sup>, and the only poem was "Le Tombeau de Baudelaire"<sup>78</sup>

Although Mallarmé alluded, in a letter of May 14, 1867 to Cazalis, to a certain detachment from Baudelaire's influence<sup>79</sup>, we

may nevertheless conclude that the disciple always admired and venerated his master's poetry from the time of his first encounter with it in 1860<sup>80</sup>, even if after 1867 he evolved a more unique and personal expression. It is noteworthy that Mallarmé never openly expressed criticism of Baudelaire, and that after 1867 his direct allusions to him cease.

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Mallarmé was regarded by his friends as Baudelaire's disciple.<sup>81</sup> When they wanted to praise his poems, they likened these to Baudelaire's. In June 1862 Lefébure wrote to Mallarmé (probably referring to "Le Sonneur" and "Spleen printanier"): "Baudelaire s'il rajeunissait pourrait signer vos sonnets."<sup>82</sup> After reading "L'Azur", Armand Renaud, in a letter of February 12, 1864, assured Mallarmé that it was a poem "de la famille de Poe et de Baudelaire mais avec plus de spiritualisme."<sup>83</sup> In his Vie de Mallarmé Henri Mondor cites a surprising remark, which he declares, Mendès attributed to Charles Cros: "Mallarmé est un Baudelaire cassé dont les morceaux n'ont pu se recoller."<sup>84</sup> In his book of 1920, Ernest Raynaud had, on two different instances<sup>85</sup>, also quoted the above statement which Charles Cros was supposed to have made. But Raynaud had commented that this remark should not be taken too seriously, although he had affirmed that Mallarmé continued to revere Baudelaire. In a recent article (1967) L.J. Austin contends that Cros did not make the above statement: "Cette boutade amusante, mais excessive et injuste, est considérée comme apocryphe et invraisemblable de la part de Cros par

L. Forestier et Pascal Pia dans leur édition des Oeuvres complètes de Charles Cros."<sup>86</sup> Another surprising comment on the relationship between Mallarmé and Baudelaire was made by Charles Coligny and appeared in l'Artiste of June 15, 1865: "Stéphane Mallarmé est un lyrique forcené et sera toujours un hyper-lyrique: Shakespeare et Edgar Poe sont ses dieux, et il dit que ses dieux le conduisent à M. Charles Baudelaire."<sup>87</sup>

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Critics have seldom agreed as to the importance, duration and durability of Baudelaire's influence on Mallarmé. The number of errors or prejudices concerning this problem of influence was underlined by Mme Ayda<sup>88</sup> who blamed Henri Mondor for the legend of the abrupt and overwhelming discovery of Baudelairean poetry by Mallarmé in the year 1861. But Mondor in his Vie de Mallarmé<sup>89</sup> was quoting from an article by Henry Charpentier<sup>90</sup> in which the latter related the anecdote about Mallarmé buying the second edition of les Fleurs du Mal when he was very young: the year "1861" is stated in the footnote. Thus the year "1861" was generally accepted as the date of Mallarmé's acquaintance with Baudelaire's poetry.<sup>91</sup> Of course, with the discovery of the notebooks of "les Glanes", it became known that Mallarmé was already copying some of Baudelaire's poems in 1860, and he could have been acquainted with his poetry even as early as 1859.<sup>92</sup>

As to the importance or value of Mallarmé's affiliations with Baudelaire, the differences of opinion are often perplexing.

In 1923 Léon Lemonnier attributed great importance to the artistic affinities between Baudelaire and Mallarmé in the literary history of France: "L'influence de Baudelaire sur Mallarmé est le lien qui unit les différents mouvements littéraires du siècle dernier."<sup>93</sup>

Mallarmé's debt to Baudelaire was also considered important by Paul Valéry who wrote in 1930 that "la plus grande gloire de Baudelaire... est sans doute d'avoir engendré quelques très grands poètes. Ni Verlaine, ni Mallarmé, ni Rimbaud n'eussent été ce qu'ils furent sans la lecture qu'ils firent des Fleurs du Mal à l'âge décisif."<sup>94</sup> For L.J. Austin, writing in 1967, Valéry owed his poetic awakening to Mallarmé, who, in turn, owed his to Baudelaire.<sup>95</sup>

The majority of critics, while conceding that Baudelaire had a great influence on Mallarmé, claim that this influence did not prove lasting. In his article of 1923 Léon Lemonnier restricted Baudelaire's influence to the poems that appeared in the Parnasse Contemporain of 1866<sup>96</sup> and which were written before Mallarmé was twenty-five. He concludes, "C'est donc en sa jeunesse que Mallarmé fut le disciple de Baudelaire."<sup>97</sup> Mme Noulet, in her work of 1940, expressed agreement with Lemonnier and gave reasons why Baudelaire's influence on Mallarmé could not be lasting. She would restrict the influence of Baudelaire even further than did Lemonnier: "Il faut oser établir une démarcation plus précise. Si l'on a quelque raison de croire, ainsi que je l'ai montré, qu'Aumône, Angoisse, Tristesse d'Eté ont été écrits, comme Le Guignon et Le Sonneur, avant ou pendant 1862, l'influence de Baudelaire s'arrête cette année-là; avant les vingt ans, à l'âge où l'on refait les vers des autres. Pas au delà. A partir de 1863, elle s'atténue si elle n'est pas complètement

dominée ou reniée."<sup>98</sup> Mme Noulet contends that Mallarmé's article "L'Art Pour Tous"<sup>99</sup>, written in 1862, already expresses the original ideas of the author and shows that Mallarmé was even at that time rejecting the influence of Baudelaire.

Henri Mondor, in his Vie de Mallarmé, concedes that Baudelaire's influence on Mallarmé was "massive, impérieuse", but that it lasted for only three or four years. He claims that when A. Thibaudet in his article of 1933 ("A l'Ombre des Contemplations") had fixed 1870 as the date up till which Baudelaire's influence was to dominate, he (Thibaudet) had arbitrarily lengthened the duration.<sup>100</sup> Mondor, moreover, takes at face value the remark made by Mallarmé in the letter to Cazalis, that he had separated from Baudelaire: "Le livre de Dierx est un beau développement de Leconte de Lisle. S'en séparera-t-il comme moi de Baudelaire ?"<sup>101</sup>

In an article of 1926, "De Stéphane Mallarmé", Henry Charpentier had written that even earlier than 1867, Mallarmé in his "Symphonie littéraire"<sup>102</sup> was bidding Baudelaire (and also Banville and Gautier) farewell: "... il [Mallarmé] rend à Baudelaire, à Gautier et à Banville les honneurs qu'il leur doit, mais qui sonnent comme un adieu."<sup>103</sup> In a recent and noteworthy article entitled "Mallarmé sur Baudelaire", Austin Gill presents a convincing argument that Mallarmé did not present Baudelaire in a very favourable light in his "Symphonie littéraire" and that Mallarmé's poems "Le Guignon" and "Les Fleurs"<sup>104</sup> express an anti-Baudelairian bitterness.<sup>105</sup> This point of view, however, has not found wide acceptance.

Many other critics have followed the opinion of Lemonnier, Charpentier, Noulet, and Mondor that the influence of Baudelaire

on Mallarmé was limited. Thus Jacques Scherer wrote in 1947: "Au reste l'influence de Baudelaire sur Mallarmé n'a été importante que pendant un très petit nombre d'années; le jeune bachelier hugolâtre ne découvre les Fleurs du Mal qu'en 1861 et dès 1867, il se dira 'séparé de Baudelaire'."<sup>106</sup> Henri Peyre wrote in 1951 that Mallarmé appeared very Baudelairian in his beginning works, but that very quickly he went beyond Baudelaire in metaphysical boldness and in a magicianly originality of syntax: "la réelle influence de son aîné se décèle dans divers aspects de l'homme et de sa pensée mais assez peu sur l'oeuvre accomplie."<sup>107</sup> Both Wallace Fowlie and Guy Michaud, in their respective works, published in 1953, express the view that Baudelaire's influence on Mallarmé was limited; Fowlie restricted it to six years<sup>108</sup>, Michaud to a period described as "not very long."<sup>109</sup> In a work entitled The Symbolist Aesthetic in France (1950), A.G. Lehman has minimized the influence of Baudelaire on Mallarmé. "From the very start", he wrote, "there is nothing to be gained by treating Mallarmé as the 'successor' of Baudelaire, at least in what concerns his philosophy of art."<sup>110</sup> René Wellek in a later critical work, A History of Modern Criticism (1965), stressed important differences between the two poets:

Mallarmé shares with Baudelaire the views common to Poe, but does not believe in the creative Imagination, in the mastery and assimilation of reality. In that identification of subject and object which is the central ultimately romantic core of Baudelaire's aesthetics. Though Mallarmé occasionally speaks of correspondences and analogies and certainly uses the methods in his poems, he neither shares Baudelaire's general philosophy of a universe of symbols or hieroglyphics, nor is particularly concerned with a rhetoric or metamorphoses ... In truth, independent of Poe or Baudelaire, Mallarmé develops several other old ideas to their logical or illogical extremes.<sup>111</sup>

Some critics, on the contrary, have argued for a lasting influence of

Baudelaire. After pointing out that Mallarmé's style was not influenced by either Baudelaire or Poe, Deborah Aish, in her work of 1938, mentions that Mallarmé took as his point of departure the Baudelairian theory of correspondances.<sup>112</sup> Jean Starobinski in an article published in 1948, expressed the opinion that the material Mallarmé inherited from Baudelaire "subiront une étrange transmutation, selon la loi d'évolution interne de la production mallarméenne"<sup>113</sup>, and therefore it subsists in Mallarmé's final work and thought. L.J. Austin, in his article of 1956, pointed out, as we have noted earlier, that Mallarmé was at first interested in the "romanticism of Baudelaire", that the influence of the latter which is striking in the poems of Mallarmé's youth and which remains very apparent in those of the Premier Parnasse is quite exterior: "Il s'agit là bien plus d'une imitation magistrale, que d'une influence proprement dite."<sup>114</sup> The lessons Mallarmé learned from Baudelaire were "notamment celle qui touche à l'effort magistral de l'Imagination désireuse, non seulement de se satisfaire par le symbole éclatant dans les spectacles du monde, mais d'établir un lien entre ceux-ci et la parole chargée de l'exprimer."<sup>115</sup> In the wake of Baudelaire, Mallarmé was to say in 1894:

Le tour de telle phrase ou le lac d'un distique, copiés sur notre confirmation, aident l'éclosion en nous, d'aperçus et de correspondances.<sup>116</sup>

Mallarmé, indeed, felt the need to shake off the hold of Baudelaire, and to affirm his own originality, but as Austin affirms, for a long time after Mallarmé stopped imitating Baudelaire, and after Mallarmé had thought himself separated from him, the influence of the master would continue to act on him through his theory of correspon-



dances.<sup>117</sup> This profound influence of Baudelaire will be discussed in Part II.

R.G. Cohn, in a work published in 1966, has pointed out affinities between Mallarmé and Lamartine, Hugo, Nerval, Poe and Baudelaire whom he calls Mallarmé's spiritual forebears: "He [Mallarmé] shares their belief in the universal analogy, in the ultimate harmony or connectivity of all reality. The things of the world can rise... to membership in a paradisiacal order, akin to Plato's realm of pure essence..."<sup>118</sup>

From the above critical opinion, we may conclude that most critics agree that Baudelaire did exert an influence on Mallarmé, but that there is considerable divergence of thought as to how deep it went and how decisive or lasting it proved to be. An attempt to assess this influence in terms of affinities and divergences of thought regarding certain concepts held by the two poets will be taken up in a later Chapter.

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A brief discussion of the indirect influences of Baudelaire on Mallarmé and the critical opinion surrounding this question leads us to the assumption that Mallarmé derived his concept of certain authors from Baudelaire. Mallarmé owed to Baudelaire not only his veneration for Théodore de Banville, but also his admiration for Edgar Poe.<sup>119</sup> Mallarmé certainly did not share all the opinions of his great predecessor regarding Poe, but it does seem that both agreed as to the greatness of the American. Poe was, according to Baudelaire,

"Un des plus grands héros littéraires, l'homme de génie."<sup>120</sup> For Mallarmé, Poe was "le prince spirituel de cet âge"<sup>121</sup> and "l'âme poétique la plus noble qui jamais vécut."<sup>122</sup> Baudelaire had expressed a very high opinion of Poe's work; he lauded Poe for "... son admirable style pur et bizarre... serré comme les mailles d'une armure;"<sup>123</sup> and he described his poetry as "... quelque chose de profond et de miroitant comme le rêve, de mystérieux et de parfait comme le cristal."<sup>124</sup> The above remarks by Baudelaire might, as Henri Mondor suggested, have inspired in Mallarmé a poetic aim to which he himself should aspire.<sup>125</sup>

Most critics agree with Lemonnier's opinion that Mallarmé owed his veneration for Poe to Baudelaire.<sup>126</sup> In transmitting this cult to Mallarmé, Baudelaire was to influence the life and work of the latter, for it was because of his admiration for the American author that Mallarmé found his practical vocation. Mallarmé earned his living teaching the native language of Poe, and in order to continue the work of Baudelaire, Mallarmé undertook to give a French version of Poe's poems thus pursuing the work initiated by Baudelaire. Despite its plausibility, this explanation although acceptable to H. Mondor and Mme Noulet that Mallarmé had discovered the American poet through Baudelaire, is opposed by certain critics. Mme Ayda, for example, attributes Mallarmé's sudden passion for English to his acquaintance with Harriet Smyth during the holidays of 1857 and further argues that it is likely that Mallarmé knew Poe's works in translation, well before those of Baudelaire, and that Mallarmé could have read still other translations of Poe's works.<sup>127</sup>

### CHAPTER III

#### OTHER INFLUENCES

Mme Ayda also differs with most critics as to the limited duration of the influence of Victor Hugo, according to which, after reading les Fleurs du Mal, Mallarmé transferred his allegiance from Hugo to Baudelaire.<sup>128</sup> In an article published in 1953<sup>129</sup> Mme Ayda compiled a long list of Mallarmé's borrowings from Victor Hugo and claimed that they were so abundant as to place Hugo side by side with Baudelaire as a major influence. Lloyd J. Austin, in 1956, expressed doubts about the extent of these borrowings, and contended that Mme Ayda's article exaggerated a great deal "par des rapprochements souvent peu convaincants la durée de l'étendue de l'influence de Hugo sur Mallarmé."<sup>130</sup> Austin also very clearly shows that the essential fact was that Mallarmé's poetic is founded on concentration and condensation like Baudelaire's, whereas Hugo relies on the opposite principles of enumeration and expansion.<sup>131</sup> To this Léon Cellier retorted, in 1959, that Mallarmé does indeed practice a Baudelairian form of concentration, but that which is concentrated in his poems suggest Victor Hugo.<sup>132</sup> Cellier, moreover, agrees with Mme Ayda as to the durability of influence of Hugo on Mallarmé. He blames what he calls "la formule stupide de Thibaudet" (that is, Thibaudet's referring to Mallarmé's poetry composed under the influence of Hugo as "une manière de rougeole poétique"<sup>133</sup>) for the fact that every study devoted to Hugo's influence on Mallarmé naturally tends to minimize this influence.<sup>134</sup> He takes exception to Austin's statement

that the work of Baudelaire exerted an influence "en profondeur" on Mallarmé<sup>135</sup> while that of Hugo did not, and he poses the question: "Mais précisément, l'idée qu'Hugo puisse exercer une influence 'en profondeur', est-elle donc inconcevable ?" He concludes that far from exaggerating, Mme Ayda errs "par défaut plus que par excès." Cellier's statement that "Ce réseau d'images qui subsiste d'un bout à l'autre de l'oeuvre de Mallarmé est incontestablement d'origine hugolienne" is no doubt an exaggeration. Léon Cellier, like Mme Ayda, L.J. Austin and H. Mondor, among other critics, have indeed provided an interesting debate; however, Hugo's influence on Mallarmé is such that it cannot be ignored or refuted.

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Critical opinion on the influence of Poe on Mallarmé varies considerably, and the subject is interesting in that critics usually compare the influence of Baudelaire to that of the American on Mallarmé. Léon Lemonnier, in an article in Revue Mondiale (1929) and in a book, Edgar Poe et les Poètes Français (1932), concluded that Poe's influence was felt at the beginning and that it acted as a stimulant to Mallarmé.<sup>136</sup> Lemonnier also pointed out that closer affinities existed between Poe and Mallarmé than between Baudelaire and Mallarmé. However, he also asserted that the differences between Poe and Mallarmé are important, and that Mallarmé's aesthetics are far from being contained in those of Poe. Moreover, the influence on Mallarmé of Stuart Mill's idealism, that of Carlyle, and above all, that of Hegel are far more important than that of Poe. The influence of Poe, concludes Lemonnier, was more

likely felt in Mallarmé's life than in his work, for the traces of Poe that are found in his poems are few and quite superficial in nature.

Paul Valéry, in 1930, gave his explanation of the great attraction which Poe had exercised over him, as well as over Baudelaire and Mallarmé: "Poe montrait une voie, il enseignait une doctrine très séduisante et très rigoureuse dans laquelle une sorte de mathématique et une sorte de mystique s'unissaient."<sup>137</sup> Mallarmé, himself, revered Poe, and he attributed his poetic theory to Poe rather than to Baudelaire. In a letter of January 1864, Mallarmé wrote to H. Cazalis:

Toutefois, plus j'irai, plus je serai fidèle à ces sévères idées que m'a léguées mon grand maître Edgar Poe.<sup>138</sup>

Mme Noulet pointed out, in 1940, that although Mallarmé admired Baudelaire, he never called him "grand maître", a title reserved for Poe alone, whose influence was more lasting: "... il est bien vrai que l'influence de Baudelaire fut très passagère et celle d'Edgar Poe plus durable."<sup>139</sup> H. Mondor expressed a similar belief in 1940-41 that Mallarmé's veneration for Poe which replaced that for Baudelaire had a more lasting influence.<sup>140</sup> Charles Mauron, however, rejects this view; he felt that even without Poe, the production of Mallarmé would not have been very different.<sup>141</sup> Henri Peyre, writing in 1951, believed that the celebrated declarations of Mallarmé in reply to Jules Huret<sup>142</sup> were not inspired but helped by Poe; it was Poe's idea "to suggest" rather than "to describe"<sup>143</sup>. Professor Mansell Jones, in his work of 1951, has, on the other hand, attempted to minimize the debt to Poe in so far as the cult of perfection is attributed to him.<sup>144</sup> Joseph Chiari, who in his Symbolisme from Poe

to Mallarmé (1956), attempted an extensive investigation of the question of Poe's influence on Mallarmé, came to the conclusion that it was "very small, very insignificant indeed."<sup>145</sup> Mallarmé may have advocated the doctrines of poetic theory suggested in Poe's writings, but as Chiari points out, "the practice is different both in the theorist and the one who admires the theory. The facts show that in either case, theory and poetry are two different things." Chiari concludes that we find very few traces of Poe's influence in the poetry of Mallarmé who, like Baudelaire and Valéry, has insisted that Poe was the poet who had influenced him most.<sup>146</sup> In his History of Modern Criticism (1965), René Wellek while acknowledging a greater influence of Poe on Mallarmé, asserts Mallarmé's independence from both of them: "As a theorist Mallarmé derives from Poe and Baudelaire, but radically differs from them on central points... The link with Baudelaire's aesthetics is far more tenuous than with Poe's... In truth, independent of Poe or Baudelaire, Mallarmé develops several other old ideas to their logical or illogical extremes..."<sup>147</sup>

From the foregoing examination of critical opinion we cannot assess with accuracy the true nature and extent of Mallarmé's debt to Poe, nor can we determine conclusively whether Baudelaire's or Poe's influence was the greater. It would certainly appear incontestable that Poe's doctrines as expressed in such works as The Poetic Principle, The Philosophy of Composition, and Marginalis, and as expounded by Baudelaire in, for example, Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, did indeed influence Mallarmé in the formation of his poetic theory, although he later diverged markedly from both Poe and Baudelaire as his poetry became more personal and exclusive.

The question of whether Mallarmé read Hegel and was influenced directly or indirectly by this German philosopher has been keenly debated. On the one hand, critics like H. Mondor, Mme Ayda, Charles Mauron, M. Antoine-Adam, Jean-Pierre Richard and Y. Park, claim that Mallarmé read Hegel, or that he was influenced by his thought.<sup>148</sup> L.J. Austin claims that although Mallarmé probably did not read Hegel in the text, he was acquainted with his general ideas with which he could have become familiar in his discussions with his friends Lefébure and Villiers de l'Isle-Adam.<sup>149</sup> A probable source of the Hegelianism of Mallarmé was, according to Austin, the article in the Revue des Deux Mondes of February 1861 by Edmond Scherer entitled "Hegel et l'hegelianisme", from which Mallarmé may well have taken ideas - ideas that were to be transformed and given a central place in his personal meditations. Mallarmé identified himself with the absolute Spirit of Hegel<sup>150</sup>, and completed the Baudelairian doctrine of correspondances by incorporating it into Hegelian idealism; he also asserted his originality with regard to Hegel, as Austin contends, "dans la conclusion qu'il a tiré des prémisses du philosophe, à savoir que 'tout l'univers existe pour aboutir à un livre'."<sup>151</sup>

On the other hand, critics like G. Delfel and R. Wellek, argue that Mallarmé did not read Hegel and that he was not influenced by his philosophy. Thus Delfel asserts in his work of 1951 that it would be an error to link Mallarmé's thought to that of Hegel: "Rien n'est plus vrai, dans la mesure où il n'y a pas eu d'influence directe, ni de Hegel, ni de Platon sur lui. Je suis convaincu que Mallarmé n'avait pas lu une ligne de Hegel en dépit de Villiers qui lui en conseillait la lecture et qu'il n'avait de Platon que quelques souve-

nirs scolaires."<sup>152</sup> In his work of 1965, R. Wellek also minimizes the influence of Hegel: "It seems unlikely that he [Mallarmé] had more than a bowing acquaintance with Plato or Hegel, with whom he has been associated. Nothing more is required at least to explain Mallarmé's poetic theories than the atmosphere of 19th century atheistic pessimism and some knowledge of the general ideas of the Neoplatonic tradition in aesthetics."<sup>153</sup>

While the evidence does not support the view that Mallarmé's knowledge of Hegel was great, it would seem reasonable to assume that the intellectual atmosphere in which he lived must have brought him into a contact with some of the ideas of the great German philosopher. But although it is highly doubtful that Mallarmé read or studied Hegel, it must be admitted that it is not difficult to establish affinities between the latter's philosophy and certain aspects of the poet's ultimate thought<sup>154</sup> which can be equally well explained in terms of the Neoplatonic tradition.

\* \* \*

In addition to the role played by certain events in the early life of Mallarmé, and to the contributions made to the growth of his creative spirit by the works of Victor Hugo, Edgar Poe, and Hegel, as well as by those of Baudelaire, the crisis of 1866 must be considered in order to understand more completely the development of Mallarmé's thought.

M. Antoine Adam, in an interesting article written in 1948, "Premières Etapes d'un Itinéraire", has underlined the fact that the



precision of dates is essential to an exact understanding of Mallarmé's poetry, and that it is not so much his philosophy that we must study as his experiences: those that produced the crisis of 1866. The Mallarmé before 1866 is to be distinguished from the Mallarmé after the crisis: "Or le Mallarmé réel manifeste, jusqu'en 1866, non pas du tout des préoccupations de métaphysicien, mais des ambitions très exigeantes d'artiste."<sup>155</sup> The poems written before what Jacques Scherer calls "la grande crise métaphysique" have "pour caractère commun d'être dépourvu de cette ambition métaphysique qui ne cessera de tourmenter Mallarmé depuis 1866 jusqu'à sa mort."<sup>156</sup>

The crisis which lasted till the middle of the year 1866 had two phases: the first in which Mallarmé found himself confronted by the "vide" or the "néant" (as described in a letter written to Cazalis the end of April 1866<sup>157</sup>), and the second in which he discovered the Absolute. A letter to Cazalis written May 1866 shows Mallarmé's new orientation:

Je suis en train de jeter les fondements d'un livre sur le Beau. Mon esprit se meut dans l'Eternel et en a eu plusieurs frissons, si l'on peut parler ainsi de l'Immuable.<sup>158</sup>

We have reached, as L.J. Austin points out, "le nadir de l'évolution spirituelle de Mallarmé."<sup>159</sup> Henceforth, Mallarmé will deny reality "pour édifier une construction fictive dont la beauté sera la garantie."<sup>160</sup> Mallarmé affirms the superiority of the "Rêve" as he wrote to Cazalis in April 1866:

... s'élançant forcément dans le Rêve... chantant l'Ame et toutes les divines impressions pareilles... et proclamant devant le Rien qui est la vérité, ces glorieux mensonges!<sup>161</sup>

And in an article on Théodore de Banville, Mallarmé declared in 1892:

La divine transposition pour l'accomplissement de quoi existe l'homme, va du fait à l'idéal.<sup>162</sup>

However, Mallarmé's ideal was not born of the crisis of 1866, it was the culmination of all Mallarmé's questionings since the deaths of his mother and sister and that of his friend, Harriet Smyth. It was in order to comprehend these losses as Mme Ayda has pointed out, that Mallarmé sought to "simplifier le monde" and to "le réduire à quelques principes intelligibles."<sup>163</sup>

Of the many lesser influences on Mallarmé's thought and expression, we should like to mention briefly two. Firstly, the importance of the influence of Théophile Gautier and secondly, the influence of the English poets.

Léon Cellier, in a chapter of his work of 1959, has pointed out that Mallarmé shared Gautier's "hantises de la mort", and that Mallarmé could have been influenced by Gautier rather than by Baudelaire in certain aspects of his work. Moreover, Cellier has also shown how Gautier's analysis or definition of Baudelaire's poetry greatly influenced Mallarmé's "Tombeau de Baudelaire".<sup>164</sup>

In a work of 1927 G. Turquet-Milnes emphasized the importance of the influence of the English poets: "Baudelaire... was Mallarmé's great master but only because he reinforced this English influence, because, he indeed was the most English of French poets."<sup>165</sup> Later, in 1933, A. Thibaudet rated the English poets as a greater influence than that of Baudelaire in ridding Mallarmé's poetry of certain weaknesses.<sup>166</sup> In 1947, Gardner Davies expressed a similar, but more reserved opinion: "Mallarmé's affinities with Anglo-Saxon poets are well-known and often exaggerated."<sup>167</sup> Critical opinion is also at variance concerning the importance of the English language on Mallarmé

who was a professor of English; however, no complete study of this subject has yet appeared although some shorter studies and articles have treated some aspects of it.<sup>168</sup>

We may nevertheless conclude that Baudelaire's role was indeed a major one in the poetic development of Mallarmé, in spite of his avowed predilection for Poe's poetic ideas.

Certain affinities and divergences in thought between Baudelaire and Mallarmé will be taken up in the following pages.

# NOTES TO PART I

1. Léon Cellier, Mallarmé et la morte qui parle, p. 13.
2. Stéphane Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (henceforth referred to as M. O.c.), p. 481.
3. Ibid., pp. 3-4.
4. Ibid., pp. 10-14.
5. A. Ayda, Le drame intérieur de Mallarmé ou l'origine des symboles mallarméens, p. 22.
6. cf. H. Mondor, Mallarmé plus intime, pp. 16 and 18.
7. cf. A. Ayda, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
8. M. O.c., p. 262.
9. cf. L. Cellier, op. cit., p. 15.
10. Charles Mauron, Mallarmé l'obscur, p. xii.
11. Henri Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, pp. 173-185.
12. M. O.c., p. 270.
13. It is called "La Jeune morte" by Mme Ayda; cf. op. cit., p. 48.
14. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 49.
15. Ibid., p. 57.
16. Ibid., p. 79.
17. H. Mondor, Mallarmé plus intime, p. 119 and 136.
18. L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", R.H.L.F., 56e année, no. 1, jan.-mars, 1956, pp. 82-83.
19. Pierre-Olivier Walzer, Essai sur Stéphane Mallarmé, Paris. Editions P. Seghers, "Poètes d'Aujourd'hui", no 94, 1963, p. 17.
20. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 83.
21. cf. Mme Ayda, op. cit., p. 77

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

22. How Mondor found these notebooks is discussed in his book, Mallarmé lycéen, pp. 112-113. There is a note, after "Sa tombe est fermée", p. 169 of Mallarmé lycéen written by Mallarmé as follows: "Ces deux dernières pièces sont à la mémoire d'Harriet Smyth, morte de la poitrine dans l'été de 1859. Une larme sur sa tombe, ce n'est pas trop pour tous les sourires angéliques qu'elle nous donnait."
23. Kurt Waß in his Mallarmé, ein Dichter des Jahrhundertendes, Munich, Bech, 1938; cited in "Stéphane Mallarmé, "Fifty Years of Research", French Studies, Vol. 1, no. 1, January 1947, by Gardner Davies, p. 8.
24. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 91.
25. Ibid., p. 90.
26. M. O.c., pp. 10-11.
27. In H. Mondor Mallarmé lycéen, pp. 137-138.
28. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 73.
29. Ibid., p. 73.
30. Ibid., p. 68.
31. cf. H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 238 and L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 74.
32. H. Mondor, ibid., p. 175.
33. Referring to the use of the quadruple repetition in Mallarmé's "L'Azur", Mme Noulet writes, "L'idée de la quadruple répétition à l'intérieur d'un même vers a peut-être été inspirée au poète par Edgar Poe dont il était en train de traduire "Les Cloches". p. 71, L'Oeuvre poétique de Mallarmé; cf. J. Chiari, Symbolisme from Poe to Mallarmé, p. 73: "On that specific problem even M. Schérer concedes that Mallarmé may have been influenced by Poe through Baudelaire." See also J. Schérer, l'Expression littéraire dans l'oeuvre de Mallarmé, p. 218.
34. L.J. Austin, op. cit.,
35. In H. Mondor Mallarmé lycéen, p. 125, 128, 129, 138, 141, 144, 146, etc.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

36. Ibid., p. 263.
37. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 69.
38. M. O.c., p. 662.
39. L. Cellier, op. cit., p. 19.
40. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 98.
41. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 70-71.
42. Ibid., p. 73.
43. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 218.
44. In H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 220.
45. Ibid., p. 198.
46. Pages 297-310 in H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen.
47. Ibid., p. 295.
48. Ibid., p. 277.
49. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 66.
50. H. Mondor, op. cit., pp. 318-319.
51. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé Disciple de Baudelaire: 'Le Parnasse Contemporain'" in Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France, t. 67, 1967, p. 438.
52. L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", pp. 79-80.
53. cf. H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, pp. 318-319; L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", p. 80; and A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 217.
54. H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 114.
55. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, pp. 28-29.
56. L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", p. 78.
57. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 24.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

58. Published for the first time in Nouvelle Revue Française, t. 40, 1er juin 1933, pp. 876-880.
59. Cf. A. Thibaudet, "A l'Ombre des Contemplations: Baudelaire et Mallarmé", in Nouvelle Revue Française, t. 40, 1er juin 1933, p. 871.
60. Ibid., p. 872.
61. G. Davies, op. cit., p. 8.
62. See pages
63. Cf. H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 318.
64. Cf. E. Raynaud, En Marge de la Mêlée symboliste, second edition, 1936, pp. 41-42; cited in A. Gill, "Mallarmé on Baudelaire" in Currents of Thought in French Literature, p. 94, Note 21. Ernest Raynaud reported that Mallarmé told him that he (Mallarmé) had never met Baudelaire except once on the street. On the other hand, Des Essarts states, in an article frequently mentioned in bibliographies but apparently seldom read, that they met at Mme Lejosne's. On this meeting, Austin Gill, in a recent article (1965) writes that Des Essarts might very well be misremembering thirty years after.
65. L. Lemonnier, "Baudelaire et Mallarmé" in la Grande Revue, juillet-octobre 1923, p. 16.
66. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 114, Note 2.
67. Ibid., p. 114, Note 3.
68. Ibid., p. 146, Note 1.
69. M. O.c., p. 223.
70. S. Mallarmé, Propos sur la poésie, p. 179.
71. M. O.c., p. 255.
72. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 122-123.
73. Ibid., p. 154.
74. Ibid., p. 153.
75. Ibid., p. 113.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

76. cf. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, pp. 295-296.
77. M. O.c., pp. 263-264.
78. Ibid., p. 70. The note on p. 1540 of this work reads as follows:  
 "C'est assez étrangement le seul témoignage que Mallarmé ait  
 laissé de son oeuvre, avec le sonnet: le Tombeau de Baudelaire,  
 de son admiration pour l'auteur des Fleurs du Mal dont les débuts  
 de son oeuvre poétique révèlent encore si nettement, même après  
 des modifications, son influence."
79. "Le livre de Dierx est un beau développement de Leconte de Lisle.  
 S'en séparera-t-il comme moi de Baudelaire ?" (Correspondance,  
 p. 244).
80. On hearing of Baudelaire's illness and death, Mallarmé expressed  
 sadness and grief (cf. Correspondance, pp. 209 and 259);  
 furthermore, in a letter of September 9, 1867, Lefébure wrote  
 to Mallarmé of "notre cher et vénéré Baudelaire". (Correspondance,  
 p. 259, Note 1).
81. cf. A. Gill, op. cit., p. 91, Note 8.
82. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 52.
83. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 108, Note 2.
84. H. Mondor, op. cit., p. 238, Note 2.
85. E. Raynaud, La Mêlée Symboliste, t.2, pp. 137 and 151.
86. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé Disciple de Baudelaire: 'Le Parnasse  
 Contemporain'", p. 437, Note 1.
87. Cited in W.T. Bandy and C. Pichois, Baudelaire devant ses contem-  
 porains, 1957, p. 199.
88. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 215.
89. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 29.
90. H. Charpentier, "De Stéphane Mallarmé" in Nouvelle Revue Française,  
 t. 27, juillet-dec., 1926, pp. 537-545.  
 "Il était bien jeune encore lorsqu'il acheta cette deuxième édition  
 des Fleurs du Mal que lui confisquèrent à deux reprises son père  
 et sa belle-mère et dont il ne conserva, lecteur obstiné, qu'un  
 troisième exemplaire, qu'il completa en y ajoutant, de sa main,  
 les six pièces condamnées et qu'il garda toute sa vie."



## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

91. Even as late as 1966, Y. Park in his thesis gives "1861" as the year when Mallarmé "a été bouleversé par la découverte des Fleurs du Mal." (p. 64).
92. cf. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 216, Note 7: "Mallarmé fut, dès 1859 en correspondance avec des camarades parisiens, tels qu'Espinas. Il avait donc l'occasion d'être informé des événements littéraires de la capitale. Or Baudelaire publiait alors depuis longtemps des vers et de la prose dans différentes revues, signant Baudelaire-Dufays..."
93. L. Lemonnier, "Baudelaire et Mallarmé", p. 16.
94. P. Valéry, Variété II, "Situation de Baudelaire", p. 173.
95. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé Disciple de Baudelaire: 'Le Parnasse Contemporain'". p. 437.
96. M. O.c., pp. 32-40.
97. L. Lemonnier, op. cit., p. 31.
98. E. Noulet, L'Oeuvre poétique de Mallarmé, p. 82.
99. M. O.c., p. 257.
100. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 29.
101. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 244.
102. M. O.c., "Symphonie littéraire", p. 261, written in 1864 and published in 1865.
103. In Nouvelle Revue Française, t. 27, juillet-déc., 1926, pp. 537-545.
104. Ibid., "Le Guignon", pp. 28-30, written in 1862 and revised in 1887; "Les Fleurs", pp. 33-34, 1864.
105. A. Gill, op. cit., pp. 104 and 112.
106. S. Schérer, L'Expression littéraire dans l'oeuvre de Mallarmé, pp. 217-218.
107. H. Peyre, Connaissance de Baudelaire, p. 161.
108. W. Fowlie, Mallarmé, p. 74.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

109. G. Michaud, Mallarmé, Translated by Marie Collins and Bertha Humez, p. 10.
110. A.G. Lehman, The Symbolist Aesthetic in France, p. 60.
111. R. Wellek, A History of Modern Criticism, The Later Nineteenth Century, (Vol. 4) pp. 453-454.
112. cf. D. Aish, La métaphore dans l'oeuvre de Mallarmé, pp. 9 and 13.
113. J. Starobinski, "Mallarmé et la Tradition Poétique Française", in Les Lettres, t. III, pp. 43-48.
114. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'livre'", p. 84.
115. L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", p. 80.
116. M. O.c., p. 646.
117. L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", p. 80.
118. R.G. Cohn, Toward the Poems of Mallarmé, pp. 2-3.
119. L. Lemonnier, op. cit., p. 16.
120. C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, V. Préface Edgar Poe: Sa Vie et Ses Oeuvres, p. 15.
121. cf. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, pp. 104, 228 and 531.
122. M. O.c., p. 531.
123. C. Baudelaire, Edgar Poe: Sa Vie et Ses Oeuvres, p. 29.
124. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 23.
125. H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 325: "Celui-ci [Baudelaire] avait donné, de la poésie d'Edgar Poe,... une définition qui paraît aujourd'hui, en son tour magistral, convenir si parfaitement à celle de Mallarmé que l'on peut se demander si sa lecture n'a pas éclairé pour toute sa vie, le but incomparable à viser au plus tôt..."
126. H. Mondor, ibid., p. 319 and E. Noulet, op. cit., p. 319.
127. cf. A. Ayda, op. cit., pp. 72-72, and 216-217.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

- Mme Ayda points out that "Edgar Poe avait été révélé au public français en 1845 par Alphonse Borghers qui avait publié, dans la Revue britannique, une traduction du 'Scarabée d'or'. Le 15 octobre 1846, une longue étude sur Poe était publiée par Emile Daurand-Forgues, dans la 'Revue des Deux mondes'." (p.217)
128. cf. H. Mondor, Mallarmé lycéen, p. 318.
  129. A. Ayda, "L'Influence de Victor Hugo sur Stéphane Mallarmé", Dialogues, Istambul, Cahier 3, juillet 1953.
  130. L.J. Austin, "Les Années d'Apprentissage de Stéphane Mallarmé", p. 78, Note 4. Austin writes, "Sur la permanence de l'admiration vouée par Mallarmé à Hugo, voir notre article sur Mallarmé, Victor Hugo et Richard Wagner (R.H.L.F., 1951, pp. 156-157).
  131. Ibid., p. 78, Note 4.
  132. cf. Léon Cellier, op. cit., p. 61.
  133. A. Thibaudet, op. cit., p. 372.
  134. L. Cellier, op. cit., pp. 42-43.
  135. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 80.
  136. cf. L. Lemonnier, "Influence d'Edgar Poe sur Mallarmé" in Revue Mondiale, t. 84, 1929, février 15, p. 370, 368; also L. Lemonnier, Edgar Poe et les poètes français, p. 105, 96-97, and 103-104.
  137. P. Valéry, Variété II, "Situation de Baudelaire", p. 143.
  138. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 104.
  139. E. Noulet, op. cit., p. 150.
  140. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 9 and p. 197.
  141. Charles Mauron, Mallarmé l'obscur, Préface, p. xiii-xiv.
  142. M. O.c., pp. 866-883.
  143. cf. H. Peyre, op. cit., pp. 114-115.
  144. M. Jones, The Background of Modern French Poetry, Cambridge University Press, 1951; cited in J. Chiari, Symbolisme from Poe to Mallarmé, p. 70.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

145. J. Chiari, op. cit., p. 158.
146. Ibid., pp. 161-162, 167 and 240; cf. with the following statement by P. Mansell Jones in his article "Poe, Baudelaire and Mallarmé" (Modern Language Review, vol. XXXIX, 1944) p. 240:  
 "The whole aesthetic system of the most influential of modern French poets, says Ferran (A. Ferran, L'Esthétique de Baudelaire), was founded on suggestions from Poe's The Poetic Principle."
147. R. Wellek, op. cit., pp. 453-454.
148. cf. Charles Mauron, Mallarmé l'obscur, p. xix: "Sans doute Mallarmé a lu Hegel dès Tournon..."
- A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 79: "Dans ce but, il étudiera ou feuillettera les ouvrages philosophiques de Hegel."
- A. Adam, "Premières étapes d'un itinéraire", in Les Lettres, t. III, p. 127: "... il est certain que Mallarmé lit alors Hegel."
- J.P. Richard, op. cit., p. 185: "En 1886 Mallarmé, nous le savons, découvre avec enthousiasme la pensée de Hegel." p. 233: "Hegel intervenait pourtant ici pour un esprit déjà marqué par l'influence de Baudelaire, et surtout de Poe."
- Y. Park, thesis, 1966, p. 97: "L'influence de Hegel sur Mallarmé est donc incontestable." As proof that Mallarmé read Hegel, Y. Park cites the following excerpt from a letter of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam to Mallarmé, September 11, 1866: "Quand paraîtra le Traité des Pierres Précieuses ?... Quant à Hegel je suis vraiment heureux que vous ayez accordé quelque attention à ce miraculeux génie..." (S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 231)
149. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'Livre'", p. 91.
150. Ibid., p. 93.
151. Ibid., p. 100; cf. M. O.c., p. 378
152. G. Delfel, L'Esthétique de Stéphane Mallarmé, p. 70.
153. R. Wellek, op. cit., p. 461.
154. Cf. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'Livre'", pp. 95-100.
155. A. Adam, op. cit., p. 126.
156. J. Schérer, Le "Livre" de Mallarmé, p. 7.

## NOTES TO PART I (Continued)

157. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 207: "Malheureusement, en creusant le vers à ce point, j'ai rencontré deux abîmes, qui me désespèrent. L'un est le Néant auquel je suis arrivé sans connaître le Bouddhisme et..."
158. Ibid., p. 216.
159. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'Livre'", p. 85.
160. Ibid., p. 86.
161. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 207-208.
162. M. O.c., p. 522.
163. A. Ayda, op. cit., p. 79; cf. M. O.c., p. 647
164. L. Cellier, op. cit., pp. 63-74.
165. Stéphane Mallarmé in English Verse. Translated by Arthur Ellis. With an Introduction by G. Turquet-Milnes, pp. 12-15.
166. A. Thibaudet, "A L'Ombre des Contemplations: Baudelaire et Mallarmé" in Nouvelle Revue Française, t. 40, 1er juin 1933, p. 872.
167. G. Davies, op. cit., p. 10.
168. Cf. J. Scherer, op. cit., pp. 29-30; E. Noulet, op. cit., pp. 159-160; J. Chiari, op. cit., pp. 77-79; H. Mondor, Autres précisions sur Mallarmé et Inédits, pp. 80-81.

## PART II

### AESTHETIC AND METAPHYSICAL CONCEPTS

CHAPTER I  
ATTITUDES OF THE POET TOWARDS SOCIETY  
AND THE WORLD

From Baudelaire, Mallarmé inherited a certain concept of the poet and of his attitude toward society and the world. Mallarmé shared Baudelaire's conviction that the artist or poet was a superior being, whose very superiority condemned him to a life of unhappiness on this earth. In Baudelaire's "L'Albatros" the condition of the poet is stated with remarkable clarity:

Le Poète est semblable au prince des nuées  
Qui hante la tempête et se rit de l'archer;  
Exilé sur le sol au milieu des huées,  
Ses ailes de géant l'empêchent de marcher.<sup>1</sup>

A similar feeling of anguish is reflected in Mallarmé's "L'Azur":

Le poète impuissant qui maudit son génie  
A travers un désert stérile de douleurs.<sup>2</sup>

Both Baudelaire and Mallarmé had a disdain for the common people, for society - for "la foule". For Baudelaire, the poet was "maudit" in a "mauvais monde... un monde goulé, affamé de matérialités."<sup>3</sup> Mallarmé had a similar opinion to that of Baudelaire that "la foule" should be scorned:

Il est à propos de dire ici que certains écrivains, maladroitement vaillants, ont tort de demander compte à la foule de l'ineptie de son goût et de la nullité de son imagination. Outre "qu'injurier la foule, c'est s'encanailler soi-même" comme dit justement Charles Baudelaire, l'inspiré doit dédaigner ces sorties contre le Philistin...<sup>4</sup>

In Baudelaire's remarkable poem "Elévation" the poet is described as one "Qui plane sur la vie..."<sup>5</sup> Mallarmé used a similar image when he

wrote of the poet's soaring above the mob:

Rappelons-nous que le poète... n'est pas le niveau  
au-dessus duquel rampent les autres hommes; c'est la  
foule qui est le niveau et il plane.<sup>6</sup>

For Baudelaire, the poet's superiority expressed itself in  
what he called "dandysme" in his article "Le Dandy".<sup>7</sup> Baudelaire's  
dandysm arose from the artist's need to adorn himself in so special  
and personal a way that he would stand apart from other men. Material  
elegance, however, declared Baudelaire, is but a symbol of the  
aristocratic superiority of his mind:

Le dandysme n'est même pas, comme beaucoup de personnes  
peu réfléchies paraissent le croire, un goût immodéré  
de la toilette et de l'élégance matérielle. Ces choses  
ne sont pour le parfait dandy qu'un symbole de la su-  
périorité aristocratique de son esprit.<sup>8</sup>

Although Mallarmé did not use the term "dandy", he adopted an  
intellectual attitude analagous to that of Baudelaire who had  
written of "cette attitude hautaine de caste provocante"<sup>9</sup>. In 1862  
in an article entitled "L'Art pour Tous", Mallarmé echoed Baude-  
laire's idea that the artist should keep aloof from the common  
people:

L'homme peut être démocrate, l'artiste se dédouble et  
doit rester aristocrate.<sup>10</sup>

The dandyism of Baudelaire, which was infinitely more  
profound than a mere pose, states Fowlie, "was bequeathed to  
Mallarmé in a somewhat altered, but still recognizable form." There  
is, he continues, "certainly something of the dandy in Mallarmé's  
composed and serene manner; in his speech... in his general atti-  
tude of sage and high priest and martyr. But much more than Baudelaire,  
although here he was initiated and directed by the example of Baude-  
laire, Mallarmé became the dandy as an artist... If meticulousness



of dress was for Baudelaire a sign of aristocracy and distinction of spirit, the verbal and exterior communication of a poem was for Mallarmé the symbol of an idea and the artifice resulting from the effort to translate or adorn the idea."<sup>11</sup>

Baudelaire's sense of remoteness, of isolation from his fellow human beings was keener than Mallarmé's in a social sense. The author of Les Fleurs du Mal said that he felt a "sentiment de solitude dès mon enfance. Malgré la famille-et au milieu des camarades, surtout, - sentiment de destinée éternellement solitaire."<sup>12</sup> Mallarmé's desire to exclude the public from his work led to the esoterism which colours his aesthetics.

In his article on "Le Dandy", Baudelaire wrote that dandys are representative of "ce qu'il y a de meilleur dans l'orgueil humain."<sup>13</sup> Not unlike his great predecessor, Mallarmé wrote in 1862 that in addition to being proud, poets must become disdainful: "O poètes, vous avez toujours été orgueilleux; soyez plus, devenez dédaigneux."<sup>14</sup> Baudelaire, moreover, considered "le dandysme" as "une espèce de religion."<sup>15</sup> This idea of the sacred character of the poet's nature and calling was carried even further by Mallarmé when he expressed his famous creed that everything sacred - art as well as religion - should be invested with mystery:

Toute chose sacrée et qui veut demeurer sacrée s'enveloppe de mystère. Les religions se retranchent à l'abri d'arcanes dévoilés au seul prédestiné: l'art a les siens.<sup>16</sup>

Mallarmé, therefore, would exclude the masses from poetry by the invention of an exclusive form of expression, which he described as "une langue immaculée".<sup>17</sup>

Like Baudelaire, Mallarmé saw the artist and poet as having

unique qualities which distinguished him from the common man and his conventions. As early as 1862, when he was only twenty, Mallarmé viewed the poet's domain as sacred, a domain which should be protected from intruders and into which only the elite would be permitted to enter. Thus, the principle of "dandysme" which Baudelaire had applied mainly to the poet is reflected in the lofty role accorded to poetry by Mallarmé, a role which helped to determine the hermetic quality of his poetic expression.

The poet, then, also sees himself as an exile in the terrestrial world, and aspires to free himself from its material ties by striving to attain the world of the ideal. For example, in Baudelaire's poem "Bénédiction", the poet is presented as "l'enfant déshérité"<sup>18</sup> while in "L'Albatros" he is "exilé sur le sol".<sup>19</sup> Similarly, in Mallarmé's early poem "Le Guignon", the poets are called "Dérisoires martyrs de hasards tortueux."<sup>20</sup> In "Elévation", Baudelaire expresses the wish to escape from "ces miasmes morbides" and "les ennuis et les vastes chagrins" to another world, situated:

Par delà le soleil, par delà les éthers  
Par delà les confins des sphères étoilées.<sup>21</sup>

Mallarmé, like Baudelaire seeks another sphere,

Au ciel intérieur où fleurit la Beauté.<sup>22</sup>

Reality, or our earthly existence, is considered ugly and imperfect. Mallarmé also shared Baudelaire's disgust and repugnance of the material world, although for somewhat different reasons. For Baudelaire, Nature is the symbol of evil. According to M. A. Ruff, "All of his[Baudelaire's] works were governed by his awareness of sin."<sup>23</sup> In his Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, Baudelaire expressed

his belief in the natural wickedness of man: "... nous sommes tous nés marqués pour le mal."<sup>24</sup> For Baudelaire this spiritual torment arose from two postulations which oppose each other radically: "Il y a dans tout homme, à toute heure, deux postulations simultanées, l'une vers Dieu, l'autre vers Satan. L'invocation à Dieu ou spiritualité est un désir de monter en grade; celle de Satan ou animalité est une joie de descendre."<sup>25</sup> The problem of good and evil did not present itself as such to Mallarmé: earthly existence is repugnant to him because of its formless aspect, its disorder, its impurity, its inconstancy.<sup>26</sup> Jean-Pierre Richard summarizes the reason for Mallarmé's disgust of matter in these terms: "... la négativité foncière de l'objet, ce qui le rend pour Mallarmé hostile et haïssable, se résume en deux grands attributs maléfiques: l'éparpillement et la lourdeur."<sup>27</sup>

For Baudelaire, the material world, as he conceived it, could never be completely eliminated as it was linked to the spiritual. There is a constant relationship between the two as exemplified by the soul and the body:

La corrélation perpétuelle de ce qu'on appelle l'âme avec ce qu'on appelle le corps explique très bien comment tout ce qui est matériel ou effluve du spirituel représente et représentera toujours le spirituel d'où il dérive.<sup>28</sup>

For Mallarmé, on the other hand, it was only by abolishing the real, or material, that one could attain the ideal. This refusal of matter is fundamental to Mallarmé's whole aesthetics, as Jean-Pierre Richard has succinctly stated: "Au départ de toute son esthétique se place un refus existentiel de la matière. Dès sa jeunesse son 'odeur de cuisine' provoquait en lui une nausée; plus tard il atténue sa répugnance... mais toujours et très fidèlement elle survit en lui."<sup>29</sup>

Although Mallarmé's repugnance for the material world was,

as we have noted, based on a premise different from that of Baudelaire; nevertheless both express a similar view of terrestrial existence. In his prose poem "Anywhere Out of the World", for example, Baudelaire likens this life to a hospital:

Cette vie est un hôpital où chaque malade est possédé du désir de changer de lit. Celui-ci voudrait souffrir en face du poêle, et celui-là croit qu'il guérirait à côté de la fenêtre.<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, in Mallarmé's "Les Fenêtres"<sup>31</sup>, the hospital is very much like that of Baudelaire. Both present the image of our imperfect world where man is imprisoned. In fact, the world of matter as presented by Mallarmé in this instance appears more revolting than that of Baudelaire:

Las du triste hôpital, et de l'encens fétide  
Qui monte en la blancheur banale des rideaux  
Vers le grand crucifix ennuyé du mur vide,  
Le moribond sournois redresse un vieux dos,

Baudelaire, to a far greater extent than Mallarmé, had expressed a keen awareness of the duality of the body and the soul. For Baudelaire, the soul during its terrestrial exile, cannot escape its prison, the body, or "le Réel":

Ce rêveur que l'horreur de son logis réveille  
Voilà bien ton emblème, Ame aux songes obscurs,  
Que le Réel étouffe entre ses quatre murs.<sup>32</sup>

In "Un Voyage à Cythère", Baudelaire expresses a feeling of disgust for the body, a feeling from which God alone can deliver him:

Ah! Seigneur! donnez-moi la force et le courage  
De contempler mon coeur et mon corps sans dégoût!<sup>33</sup>

Mallarmé echoes a similar repugnance for corporal existence in "Les Fenêtres":

Ainsi pris du dégoût de l'homme à l'âme dure  
Vautré dans le bonheur, où ses seuls appétits  
Mangent, et qui s'entête à chercher cette ordure<sup>34</sup>

Unlike Baudelaire, Mallarmé does not look for any outside support to sustain him. Though he realized with regret that "Ici-bas est maître", he cannot resign himself to "le vomissement impur de la Bêtise". The disgust of the material, therefore, is not as absolute in Baudelaire as in Mallarmé. Baudelaire, while aspiring to an almost religious spirituality, never loses his keen appetite for life, a fact which he asserts in his Journaux Intimes: "... goût très vif de la vie et du plaisir,"<sup>35</sup> a taste for life and pleasure which is still present in "Chant d'automne" at the moment when he feels death approach:

Ah! laissez-moi, mon front posé sur vos genoux,  
Goûter, en regrettant l'été blanc et torride,  
De l'arrière saison le rayon jaune et doux!<sup>36</sup>

Mallarmé, on the other hand, speaks ironically of the worthless nature of the happiness of this world in a letter of June 3, 1863 to Henri Cazalis:

... nous autres malheureux que la terre dégoûte et qui n'avons que le Rêve pour refuge. O mon Henri, abreuve-toi d'idéal. Le bonheur ici-bas est ignoble - il faut avoir les mains bien calleuses pour le ramasser.<sup>37</sup>

In his poem "Las de l'amer repos", written in February 1864, Mallarmé reaffirms his refusal of the material; he chooses "le terrain avare et froid de ma cervelle" in preference to "l'enfance adorable des bois de roses sous l'azur naturel."<sup>38</sup> The latter suggests the "paradis perdu" of Baudelaire's "Moesta et Errabunda" (le paradis parfumé, l'innocent paradis<sup>39</sup>), a paradise situated on the moral level. Mallarmé abandons this childhood paradise, whereas Baudelaire simply regrets it with a feeling of nostalgia. The implication of this fundamental divergence and the relationship between the spiritual and material worlds of the two poets is examined in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER II

## THE SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL WORLDS OF THE POET

Mallarmé, like Baudelaire, believed that the observable universe was but a distortion of the ideal and transcendent absolute, that the material world was imperfect and incoherent. But if he accepted the Baudelairean dualism which placed the Ideal and the Real in opposition, he soon went beyond it, as L.J. Austin has pointed out, "par son horreur de la vie et par son idéalisme exaspéré."<sup>40</sup>

As early as 1863 Mallarmé showed a major divergence of thought from that of Baudelaire with regard to the relationship existing between the material and spiritual worlds, or between "l'Idéal" and "le Réel". In a letter to H. Cazalis (June 3, 1863), Mallarmé wrote regarding Emmanuel des Essarts:

Il confond trop l'Idéal avec le Réel. La sottise d'un poète moderne a été jusqu'à se désoler que "l'Action ne fut pas la soeur du Rêve." Mon Dieu, s'il en était autrement, si le Rêve était ainsi défloré et abaissé, où donc nous sauverions-nous, nous autres malheureux que la terre dégoûte et qui n'avons que le Rêve pour refuge.<sup>41</sup>

The "poète moderne" referred to is Baudelaire who had written in "Le Reniement de Saint-Pierre" (1844-1848)<sup>42</sup>:

Certes, je sortirai quant à moi, satisfait  
d'un monde où l'action n'est pas la soeur du rêve.<sup>43</sup>

The "sottise" of the "poète moderne" lies in his taking reality seriously, in regretting that we live in a world where the real and the ideal do not dwell together in harmony.<sup>44</sup> For Mallarmé, as for Baudelaire, there is a sharp duality between the material

and the spiritual worlds; but whereas for the latter there exists a secret communication between these two universes, for the former, the real world must be eliminated or ignored. This feeling was expressed by Mallarmé in an article of 1862 devoted to a work by his friend Des Essarts:

Les sentiments de la vie parisienne pris au sérieux et vus à travers le prisme de la poésie, un idéal qui n'existe point par son propre rêve et soit le lyrisme de la réalité, telle est l'intention des "Poésies Parisiennes".<sup>45</sup>

As Georges Poulet has pointed out, if one reverses these terms, one obtains a perfect definition of Mallarmé's poetry: "Elle [sa poésie] veut exprimer un idéal qui existe par son propre rêve et qui ne soit pas le lyrisme de la réalité."<sup>46</sup> This definition differentiates the poetry of Mallarmé from that of Baudelaire, which has reality for its starting point. For Mallarmé no action can link those two worlds, which cannot exist together. Thus, writes Georges Poulet, "dès 1863, Mallarmé condamne-t-il et rejette-t-il le baudelairisme, non comme on l'a dit, à cause de son dualisme, mais au contraire parce qu'il n'a pas mis un abîme assez vaste entre deux mondes qu'aucune action ne peut relier."<sup>47</sup>

Contrary to Mallarmé, Baudelaire had wished to show the relationship between the material and the spiritual worlds. In spite of the impurity of matter, it has its value as a sign, as a symbol of the spiritual universe from which it emanates. The mystic theory of correspondances is very important in the poetic and aesthetic doctrines of Baudelaire. Nature is the symbol of a divine or transcendent reality. Everything that we see in this world is related to another world that we do not see; the invisible world manifests

itself in the visible one. For Baudelaire, "Tout l'univers visible n'est qu'un magasin d'images et de signes auxquels l'imagination donnera une place et une valeur relative."<sup>48</sup>

Like Baudelaire, Mallarmé aspired to a world beyond, to the "au-delà". But unlike his predecessor, he repulsed matter as being contingent, disordered, impure.<sup>49</sup> Mallarmé felt the necessity of liberating himself from matter which destroys the unity of the ideal universe. The world to which he aspired was one of perfection, coherence and unity; a world that he had lost and wanted to recapture. In the world of his childhood there had been harmony and unity. "Entre terre et ciel point ici de distance ni d'obstacle..." wrote Jean-Pierre Richard. "L'âme enfantine... vit en contact immédiat et permanent avec une réalité spirituelle qui tout à la fois la comble et la soutient."<sup>50</sup> In his thesis of 1966 Y. Park contends, "C'est ce monde de l'unité parfaite et originelle que Mallarmé croit avoir perdu et qu'il s'efforcera de retrouver. Cette vision de l'unité du monde est à la fois le point de départ et le point final de son aventure spirituelle..."<sup>51</sup> Since matter is incoherent and represents a rupture in the unity of the universe, it is to be rejected or eliminated. The theme of "Hérodiade" expresses the refusal of corporal life and of earthly things; Hérodiade says:

Du reste, je ne veux rien d'humain.<sup>52</sup>

Baudelaire's aesthetic idealism can thus be distinguished from that of Mallarmé - the former seeks to satisfy his aspiration for the Infinite and the eternal without breaking the ties which link mind to matter, while the latter denies any such relationship. The doctrine of correspondances, writes Georges Blin, "aboutit chez Baudelaire à la partici-



pation esthétique, c'est-à-dire l'aspiration vers l'infini traduite par le truchement des objets, la volonté d'exprimer 'l'infini dans le fini'... sans se séparer de l'appui du monde concret."<sup>53</sup> For Mallarmé, on the other hand, poetic creation consists in abolishing matter. He did not aim at revealing the hidden reality, as did Baudelaire, but sought to replace the phenomenal world by its mental image, the abstracted essentialised aspects which evoke the idea, or "la notion pure".<sup>54</sup> Hence, the flower he would evoke is not present in any bouquet:

Je dis: une fleur! et, hors de l'oubli où ma voix relègue  
aucun contour, en tant que quelque chose d'autre que les  
calices sus, musicalement se lève, idée même et suave,  
l'absente de tous bouquets.<sup>55</sup>

The vehicle for the attainment of Mallarmé's ideal was to be the province of the word itself. Whereas Baudelaire's poetics are grounded ultimately upon metaphysically oriented correspondances, and analogies between the visible and the invisible worlds in which empirical phenomena are the symbolical referents to a supra-terrestrial reality, Mallarmé's, on the other hand, relies upon the magically evocative nature of words. The poet yields his place to the importance of language and allows poetic expression to dominate, as Mallarmé suggests in a passage in "Crise de Vers":

L'oeuvre pure implique la disparition élocutoire du poète, qui cède l'initiative aux mots, par le heurt de leur inégalité mobilisée; 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.<sup>56</sup>

For Mallarmé, reality was to be realized by a notion of it, not by a concrete relative:

A l'égal de créer: la notion d'un objet, échappant, qui fait défaut.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, the main difference between the two poets lies ultimately on the basis of their poetics in relation to an absolute reality - that is, in their metaphysics, rather than in their poetics, as William W. King has underlined in a recent article: "The referents of Mallarmé's symbols are other symbols; the referents for Baudelaire's are immediate correspondences to the Absolute. The immediacy of the Absolute for Baudelaire allows his metaphysics to inform his poetics; the obliqueness of Reality for Mallarmé allows his poetics to retain signification on purely poetic grounds."<sup>58</sup>

## CHAPTER III.

## THE POETIC IDEAL

Mallarmé, like Baudelaire, felt compelled to seek for a supra-terrestrial ideal. In his prose poem "Laquelle est la Vraie ?"<sup>59</sup> Baudelaire tells of a certain very beautiful girl "Bénédicte" "Qui remplissait l'atmosphère d'idéal, et dont les yeux répandaient le désir de la grandeur, de la beauté, de la gloire et de tout ce qui fait croire à l'immortalité." After this girl had died and the author had buried her, he saw a small person who resembled the deceased and who claimed she was the true Bénédicte. The poet at first furiously replied, "Non! non! non!", but he concluded, "comme un loup pris au piège, je reste attaché, pour toujours peut-être, à la fosse de l'idéal."

In the poem "L'Azur"<sup>60</sup> Mallarmé tries to flee from "l'éternel azur" which represents the Ideal for him: he would seek in "la matière"

L'oubli de l'Idéal cruel...

But he cannot renounce his aspiration:

En vain l'Azur triomphe  
Je suis hanté. L'Azur! l'Azur! l'Azur! l'Azur!

What is the nature of the Ideal which so obsessed the poet ? For Baudelaire, as he expressed it in "Elévation"<sup>61</sup>, it was to be found in the world beyond this one, in "l'immensité profonde", "l'air supérieur", "les champs lumineux et sereins" to which his spirit could fly to purify itself and drink,

... comme une pure et divine liqueur  
Le feu clair qui remplit les espaces limpides

and where his thoughts

Vers les cieux le matin prennent un libre essor,

and where the poet

...plane sur la vie et comprend sans effort  
Le langage des fleurs et des choses muettes.

However, it was only at privileged moments that the poet could catch glimpses of the Ideal; in his Journaux intimes, Baudelaire describes the state of mind necessary for this:

Dans certains états de l'âme presque surnaturels, la profondeur de la vie se révèle tout entière dans le spectacle, si ordinaire qu'il soit, qu'on a sous les yeux.<sup>62</sup>

The Imagination has a supreme role in deciphering the meaning of the symbols that are present in the world around us. It is "la reine des facultés"<sup>63</sup>, the intermediary between the material and the spiritual worlds, and is the means by which the artist is enabled to discover spiritual reality through physical appearances and sensations. For Baudelaire the imagination is not fantasy, nor sensibility but

une faculté quasi divine qui perçoit tout d'abord en dehors des méthodes philosophiques, les rapports intimes et secrets des choses, les correspondances et les analogies.<sup>64</sup>

Like Baudelaire, Mallarmé aspired to an Ideal world, a world which was the antithesis of the material world which the poet could not accept. The term "Idéal" appears for the first time in Mallarmé's poetry in "Le Sonneur"<sup>65</sup> written in 1862:

J'ai beau tirer la cable à sonner l'Idéal.

In a letter to Henri Cazalis dated January 3, 1863, Mallarmé also used the term "Idéal":

Il [Emmanuel des Essarts] confond trop l'Idéal avec le Réel.<sup>66</sup>

The poem "Les Fenêtres"<sup>67</sup>, written in May 1863, does not clarify the notion of the Ideal but describes the climate in which it exists; it is the place

Que dore le matin chaste de l'Infini

...  
Au ciel antérieur où fleurit la Beauté.

It was Baudelaire, who, in emphasizing the doctrine of universal analogy, contributed to the clarification of the Mallarméan aspiration and the vision of the universe for which Mallarmé was vaguely searching. As a result of contact with the Baudelairian theory of correspondances around the year 1861, Mallarmé felt with more assurance that a coherent, unified universe existed behind an incoherent and disordered nature. Baudelaire revealed to Mallarmé above all, writes Park<sup>68</sup>, "cette vision géométrique de l'univers dans le sens où la géométrie se fonde sur un caractère structural et sur une entière rigueur." But, adds Park, "cette révélation n'a pas changé l'aspiration. Elle ne l'a pas modifiée, elle l'a simplement approfondie et précisée." In the poem "L'Azur"<sup>69</sup> written in January 1864, Mallarmé does not further clarify his conception of the Ideal; but he expresses his obsession with "l'Azur" which symbolises it, and which he cannot renounce even though he feels incapable of attaining it. Like the unattainable, the inimitable beauty of flowers, the blue of the azure mocks the poet who feels incapable of reproducing such purity and who must remain impotent in the awareness of his genius. The Ideal appears as something pure, transparent, immortal and eternal, as reflected in "l'azur". The Ideal is also Beauty, for the poet, in "Les Fenêtres"<sup>70</sup> aspires

A renaître portant mon rêve en diadème  
Au ciel antérieur où fleurit la Beauté.

However, the ideal is not linked to the material world, as in Baudelaire; Mallarmé sees it in the absence of material contingencies.

Mallarmé's Ideal, as Georges Poulet has described it, is analogous to mental reality, which is completely cut off from concrete, material reality: "La réalité n'est pas un point de départ. Il faut la retrancher ou l'ignorer."<sup>71</sup> Contrary to Baudelaire, Mallarmé looks for his ideal only in the mind, in thought conceived as the opposite of the material in art. In 1863 when he was only twenty-one, Mallarmé expressed a firm conviction that was to guide the writing of his poetry for years to come:

Il n'y a de vrai, d'immuable, de grand et de sacré  
que l'art.<sup>72</sup>

It was no doubt the following lines of Baudelaire which, according to H. Mondor, he recited with Lefébure, that inspired the above credo:

Il y a dans le Verbe quelque chose de sacré qui nous  
défend d'en faire un jeu de hasard... Relativement au  
rêve pur, l'impression non analysée, l'art défini,  
l'art positif est un blasphème.<sup>73</sup>

Mallarmé thus took poetry as the means of access to his ideal, as did Baudelaire.

Mallarmé replaced the term "Idéal" by that of "Idée" from about the year 1866, and then he replaced the term "Idée" by that of "Beau"<sup>74</sup> although he still continued to use "Idée". It is interesting to note, as Park has pointed out, that in 1894 Mallarmé used "Idée" with the meaning of "l'essence la plus essentielle du monde, de l'Etre ontologique le plus transparent"<sup>75</sup>, that is, with almost the same meaning as that of Baudelaire's "Idée" in his poem "L'Irrémédiable":

Une Idée, une Forme, un Etre  
 Parti de l'Azur et tombé  
 Dans un Styx bourbeux et plombé  
 Où nul oeil du Ciel ne pénètre;<sup>76</sup>

Although Baudelaire did not attempt to free the spiritual - or things emanating from the spirit - from the material world, as did Mallarmé, he believed in the eternity of the essence, of the Idea which maintains an existence autonomous from that of Matter. This idea is expressed in the following lines from Journaux Intimes:

Toute idée est, par elle-même, douée d'une vie immortelle,  
 comme une personne.

Toute forme créée, même par l'homme, est immortelle. Car  
 la forme est indépendante de la matière et ce ne sont  
 pas les molécules qui constituent la forme.<sup>77</sup>

and also in the last stanza of "Une Charogne":

Alors, o ma beauté, dites à la vermine  
 Que j'ai gardé la forme et l'essence divine  
 De mes amours décomposés!<sup>78</sup>

For Mallarmé it was the essence, or "l'Idée" alone, that counted, while for Baudelaire who, while admitting the superiority of mind over matter ("Ce qui est créé par l'esprit est plus vivant que la matière"<sup>79</sup>), never completely separated the object from its essence. Thus his Ideal, unlike Mallarmé's, is never completely disembodied. Mallarmé's Ideal existed only in the non-material; finally, it was the perfect and total coherence of the world which exists under the very appearance of the disorder of phenomena.<sup>80</sup>

\* \* \*

For Mallarmé as for Baudelaire the Ideal which each sought became synonymous with Beauty. The pursuit of Beauty is the primary

goal of all artistic expression. According to Baudelaire, the poet cannot separate himself from this ideal because "le Beau" is an innate instinct, an immortal appetite. In the following famous passage, Baudelaire reaffirms, in terms suggested by Poe's "Poetic Principle"<sup>81</sup>, the spiritual and transcendent nature of poetry, and its ability to reveal the beauty and mystery of the invisible world:

C'est cet admirable, cet immortel instinct du Beau qui nous fait considérer la terre et ses spectacles comme un aperçu, comme une correspondance du Ciel. La soif insatiable de tout ce qui est au-delà, et que révèle la vie, est la preuve la plus vivante de notre immortalité. C'est à la fois par la poésie, et à travers la poésie, par et à travers la musique que l'âme entrevoit les splendeurs situées derrière le tombeau.<sup>82</sup>

For Mallarmé poetry is the noblest activity and the highest expression of which man is capable. In a letter to M. Léo d'Orfer of June 27, 1884, Mallarmé wrote:

La poésie est l'expression par le langage humain ramené à son rythme essentiel du sens mystérieux des aspects de l'existence; elle doue ainsi d'authenticité notre séjour et constitue la seule tâche spirituelle.<sup>83</sup>

Baudelaire had established in 1857 the aspiration toward Beauty - a superior beauty - as the very principle of poetry:

Ainsi le principe de la poésie est strictement et simplement l'aspiration humaine vers une beauté supérieure.<sup>84</sup>

Mallarmé went even further than Baudelaire by declaring that Beauty is the aim of poetry and of life itself:

Il n'y a que la Beauté et elle n'a qu'une expression parfaite - la Poésie.<sup>85</sup>

Thus, the two poets sought a common goal; however, their concepts of Beauty differed considerably. For Baudelaire, "La dualité de l'art est une conséquence fatale de la dualité de l'homme".<sup>86</sup> Beauty is envisaged simultaneously as an emanation of the supra-



terrestrial Ideal and as a concrete reality immediately perceptible in the diversity of life. Beauty is thus composed of a variable, transitory element and of an eternal, invariable element which represents celestial and eternal Beauty. In his "Salon de 1846" Baudelaire wrote: "Toutes les beautés contiennent, comme tous les phénomènes possibles quelque chose d'éternel, et quelque chose de transitoire - d'absolu et de particulier."<sup>87</sup> The particular element of each beauty comes from the passions, and, continued Baudelaire: "comme nous avons nos passions particulières, nous avons notre beauté."<sup>88</sup>; moreover, "La beauté absolue et éternelle n'existe pas ou plutôt elle n'est qu'une abstraction écrémée à la surface générale des beautés diverses."<sup>89</sup>

For Mallarmé, however, Beauty contained nothing of a transitory nature, nothing of the passions, or of the material. Beauty was an Absolute, as indicated in a letter of January 12, 1864 in which Mallarmé wrote to Henri Cazalis regarding the poem "L'Azur" (which he forwarded with the letter):

L'effet produit sans une dissonance, sans une fioriture, même adorable qui distraît - voilà ce que je cherche. L'autre côté à envisager, le côté esthétique - Est-ce-beau ? Y a-t-il un reflet de la Beauté?<sup>90</sup>

Mallarmé thus sought to incorporate a reflection of Absolute Beauty into his poetry. The following passage from a letter written by Lefébure to Mallarmé in 1867 further attests to this concept of Beauty held by Mallarmé:

C'est là je crois l'idée qui a dû vous conduire à rejeter de votre Oeuvre tous les filaments qui lient la Beauté à la partie grossière de l'homme et l'alourdissement de la matière... Mais mon cher ami, et c'est là votre gloire, pour éprouver le grand frémissement de l'Inconnu... Vous vous trouvez à un moment unique où il vous est impossible de condenser la quintessence du Beau...<sup>91</sup>

Thus it was "la quintessence du Beau" that Mallarmé sought to incorporate into his poetry; his concept of Beauty is detached from anything material - "à la partie grossière de l'homme et l'alourdissement de matière." For Mallarmé the search for his ideal can be described as an adventure. Beauty is to be found only after travelling in unknown countries, in high cold altitudes, away from torrid reality, in the purest glaciers of Aesthetics. Here is an account of his discovery of "le Beau" contained in a letter to H. Cazalis of July 1866:

Imagine que je suis en voyage et que, par ce soleil, l'encre des auberges est séchée. En vérité, je voyage, mais dans des pays inconnus et si, pour fuir la réalité torride, je me plais à évoquer des images froides, je te dirai que je suis depuis un mois dans les plus purs glaciers de l'Esthétique - qu'après avoir trouvé le Néant, j'ai trouvé le Beau - et que tu ne peux t'imaginer dans quelles altitudes lucides je m'aventure.<sup>92</sup>

Although Baudelaire had also affirmed his belief in an Absolute Beauty, he did not think it could be realized in this world. Thus he stated: "Quoique le principe universel soit un, la nature ne donne rien d'absolu, ni même de complet; je ne vois que des individus."<sup>93</sup> Since the poet can never attain absolute Beauty, the ideal becomes tinged with sadness; it is a mysterious inaccessible ideal whose essence is unknown. In his Journaux Intimes Baudelaire expressed his definition of "le Beau":

J'ai trouvé la définition du Beau, de mon Beau. C'est quelque chose d'ardent et de triste, quelque chose d'un peu vague, laissant carrière à la conjecture.<sup>94</sup>

His Beauty is, therefore, considered as something variable rather than absolute; its character is determined to a large extent by the temperament or sensibility of the artist.<sup>95</sup> According to Baudelaire all beauty has some element of strangeness: "... l'étrangeté... est

comme le condiment indispensable de toute beauté."<sup>96</sup> Baudelaire also contended that "le beau" is always astonishing<sup>97</sup> and that the horrible, artistically expressed, becomes beauty: "C'est un des privilèges prodigieux de l'Art que l'horrible, artistement exprimé, devienne beauté ..."<sup>98</sup>

Here Baudelaire is, of course, speaking of Beauty as he thinks it can be realized on this earth, of the "particular element of each beauty"<sup>99</sup> - an element not present in the Mallarméan conception of Beauty. For Mallarmé, then, Beauty was an Absolute, an abstract, immaterial and pure, whereas for Baudelaire, it had an element of the transitory as well as of the eternal. For the latter, Beauty, which is a manifestation of the celestial element in terrestrial and transitory sensations, may be described as one of those innate ideas contained in the soul and grasped by an immediate intuition of the mind. In his "Salon de 1846" Baudelaire stated: "En fait d'art je suis surnaturaliste. Je crois que l'artiste ne peut trouver dans la nature tous ses types, mais que les plus remarquables lui sont révélés dans son âme comme la symbolique innée des idées innées et au même instant."<sup>100</sup>

The transposition of material objects into a superior order so that they represent symbolically the spiritual reality from which they proceed is operated by the imagination. For Mallarmé the imagination does not play the role or have the importance it does for Baudelaire. It is the intellect that is able to abstract from perceptions of the senses an absolute beauty, the idea of beauty freed from material contingencies. Baudelaire, it should be noted, admitted the existence of a transcendent idea of Beauty. He recognized in Beauty an absolute of a metaphysical order, indispensable to the spiritual designs of the

poet who stated in his "Paradis Artificiels": "L'idée de beauté doit naturellement s'emparer d'une place vaste dans un tempérament spirituel tel que je l'ai supposé."<sup>101</sup> The conquest of absolute Beauty is an Icarian temptation which Baudelaire did not always resist. His poem "Les Plaintes d'un Icare" shows to what spiritual peril the artist exposes himself when yielding to the temptation to attain to ideal Beauty:

Et brûlé par l'amour du beau  
Je n'aurai pas l'honneur sublime  
De donner mon nom à l'abîme  
Qui me servira de tombeau.<sup>102</sup>

Mallarmé, on the other hand, never gave up the attempt to realize absolute Beauty in his poetry. As early as 1866 in a letter to Cazalis he voiced his ambition:

Je suis en train de jeter les fondements d'un livre sur le Beau. Mon esprit se meut dans l'Eternel, et en a eu plusieurs frissons, si l'on peut parler ainsi de l'Immuable.<sup>103</sup>

In another letter to Cazalis, also written in May 1866, Mallarmé expressed his intention of revising the poems he had already written because they had not been conceived in the light of Beauty as he now perceived it:

Sentant que, bien qu'aucun de ces poèmes n'ait été, en réalité, conçu en vue de la Beauté, mais plutôt comme autant d'intuitives révélations de mon tempérament,... pour les publier tels, je consacrai des nuits consécutives à les corriger...<sup>104</sup>

It should be pointed that although Baudelaire conceived of Beauty in nature<sup>105</sup> as dual, some of the attributes of Mallarmé's absolute Beauty were already present in his poem "La Beauté"<sup>106</sup>, namely: mystery ("Je trône dans l'azur comme un sphinx incompris"), purity ("J'unis un coeur de neige à la blancheur des cygnes"),

impassivity ("Et jamais je ne pleure et jamais je ne ris"), and eternity ("Eternel et..."). True lovers of Beauty cannot give up the search for the essential eternal element that transposes reality into Beauty. In this same poem Beauty speaks:

Car j'ai pour fasciner ces dociles amants  
De purs miroirs qui font toutes choses belles:  
Mes yeux, mes larges yeux aux clartés éternelles.

In "L'Hymne à la Beauté", Baudelaire pays tribute to the power that Beauty has to open the doors of Infinity, to raise the poet to another sphere, to make life on this earth less hideous:

Que tu viennes du ciel ou de l'enfer, qu'importe  
O Beauté!...  
Si ton oeil, ton souris, ton pied, m'ouvrent la porte  
D'un Infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu ?<sup>107</sup>

Similarly, for Mallarmé, Beauty had the power to elevate him to another sphere. In his remarks on Théophile Gautier in "Symphonie Littéraire"<sup>108</sup>, the poet speaks of reaching "la plus haute cime de sérénité où nous ravisse la Beauté." But although Beauty as personified by Baudelaire has the serenity and austerity of the Mallarméan ideal, Baudelaire's aspirations were not carried to the same extreme as Mallarmé's. Baudelaire unlike Mallarmé, did not attempt to eliminate relative beauty from his ideal; it was through earthly phenomena that he sought to catch glimpses of the world beyond.

The Ideal for Mallarmé as for Baudelaire thus resides in the creation of Beauty. However, Mallarmé's concept of Beauty differs considerably from that of Baudelaire. Here Poe's ideas on Beauty are said to have intervened. "Poe," asserts Margaret Gilman, "had a more unearthly, ethereal, half-mystical conception of Beauty, a supernal Beauty, whereas Baudelaire's beauty has never been and never

entirely ceases to be of this earth."<sup>109</sup> Poe showed Mallarmé that the Ideal, in the form of "le Beau" constitutes a form not only sacred (as Baudelaire thought), but one that is also crystalline and purified. It was Hegel who, according to Jean-Pierre Richard<sup>110</sup> and Y. Park,<sup>111</sup> among many other critics, revealed to Mallarmé with clarity the synthetic aspect of "le Beau" summarized by the totality of the universe. "Le Beau" as Mallarmé ultimately conceived it was the Universe in its veritable aspect, its essence. A letter from Lefébure to Mallarmé written in 1867 attests very clearly how much the latter was preoccupied with the Reality of the Universe:

J'ai suffisamment compris votre théorie poétique du mystère qui est très vraie et confirmée par l'histoire. Jusqu'à présent, toutes les fois que l'homme a entendu le vrai, c'est-à-dire la constitution logique de l'univers, il s'est rejeté avec horreur vers l'illusion infinie et comme dit Baudelaire, n'a peut-être inventé le Ciel et même l'Enfer que pour échapper au Nevermore des Lucrèce et des Spinoza.<sup>112</sup>

For Mallarmé "le Beau" and "l'Idée" represent essentially the same thing, the image of the logical synthesis of the Universe. The word "Idée" emphasized the aspect of pure Reality of the vision of the Cosmos, and the word "Beau" that of the aesthetic structural nature of this vision.<sup>113</sup> For the critic Delfel, "L'aspect transcendant du réel, n'est pas une personne, mais un cosmos organisé sous le signe de la Beauté."<sup>114</sup> The Essence of the Universe may be considered "l'Idée" when it is seen as supreme Reality, and as Beauty when it is incarnated in Poetry. Mallarmé has been described by Park as an architect aspiring to a perfect form of the structure of the universe.<sup>7</sup> From this point of view Mallarmé is far from Baudelaire - described as a moralist or a mystic - whose only problem was spiritual salvation.<sup>115</sup>

"Le Beau" as Mallarmé conceived it is the Universe in its

veritable aspect, its essence. Mallarmé thus pushed Baudelaire's concept of the universal analogy to its logical conclusion, as L.J. Austin has pointed out in his article, on the formulation of Mallarmé's definitive ideal<sup>116</sup>, and in which he draws on Mallarmé's remarkable letter to Aubanel (1866) to show how Mallarmé rejoined this Baudelairian doctrine:

J'ai voulu te dire simplement que je venais de jeter le plan de mon oeuvre entier, après avoir trouvé la clef de moi-même, clef de voûte ou centre, si tu veux, pour ne pas brouiller de métaphores, centre de moi-même, où je me tiens comme une araignée sacrée sur les principaux fils déjà sortis de mon esprit, et à l'aide desquels je tisserai aux points de rencontre de merveilleuses dentelles, que j'en devine, et qui existent déjà dans le sein de la Beauté.<sup>117</sup>

This letter reveals that one of Mallarmé's guiding principles was "l'universelle analogie" with its relationship between all things and which therefore constitutes an extension of Baudelaire's doctrine of correspondances.<sup>118</sup>

Regarding "le Livre" which Mallarmé contemplated, the poet affirmed in 1895:

Les qualités, requises en cet ouvrage, à coup sûr le génie, m'épouvantent un parmi les dénués: ne s'y arrêter et, admis le volume ne comporter aucun signataire, quel est-il: l'hymne, harmonie et joie, comme pur ensemble groupé dans quelque circonstance fulgurante, des relations entre tout.<sup>119</sup>

Mallarmé sees the Universe and "le Beau" from the point of view of relationships, a fact to which he draws our attention in "La Musique et les Lettres":

Tout l'acte disponible, à jamais et seulement reste de saisir les rapports, entre temps, rares ou multipliés; d'après quelque état intérieur et que l'on veuille à son gré étendre, simplifier le monde.<sup>120</sup>

In other words, "le Beau" may be described as the "ensemble" logically

deduced from the varied relationships which constitute the universe. Within this system, as Mallarmé has said, it is possible that, by virtue of the poetic act, "l'univers retrouve en moi son identité."<sup>121</sup> The "Beau" therefore expresses relationships between all things. We may therefore conclude that by continuing the Baudelairian theory of correspondances in his vast project which he described as "le Livre", Mallarmé never entirely freed himself from the influence of Baudelaire. Paradoxically, writes L.J. Austin, "c'est après qu'il [Mallarmé] crut avoir secoué ce joug que l'influence profonde de Baudelaire devait agir sur lui, non plus celle du poète du péché, mais celle du théoricien des correspondances. Ce Baudelaire-là l'avait marqué pour la vie."<sup>122</sup>

\* \* \*

Mallarmé received from Baudelaire a certain conception of art - the negation of immediate reality and the aspiration toward an ideal of beauty which is the very aim of poetry. Both poets were greatly opposed to didactic poetry, or to verse which had any utilitarian aim. In his "Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe", Baudelaire expressed clearly the aim of poetry:

La poésie... n'a pas d'autre but qu'elle-même; elle ne peut en avoir d'autre, et, aucun poème ne sera si grand, si noble, si véritablement digne du nom du poème que celui qui aura été écrit uniquement pour le plaisir d'écrire un poème.<sup>123</sup>

Mallarmé, writing with regard to Banville, declared his faith in the doctrine of art in terms which recall those of Baudelaire:



Que tout poème composé autrement qu'en vue d'obéir  
au vieux génie du vers n'en est pas un.<sup>124</sup>

Baudelaire was very much against what he called "l'hérésie de l'enseignement" which included as inevitable corollaries "l'hérésie de la passion, de la vérité et de la morale."<sup>125</sup> This idea was taken from Poe's "Poetic Principle"<sup>126</sup> where Poe had divided the world of the mind into Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense, each of which had a different aim: The pure intellect aims at truth, taste shows us beauty, and the moral sense teaches us our duty. But whereas for Poe, the ultimate utility of art was unacceptable, for Baudelaire a certain morality is implicit in all great art - it is almost inevitably a by-product of poetry, as he stated in "Notes Nouvelles..":

Je ne veux pas dire que la poésie n'ennoblisse pas les  
mœurs - que son résultat final ne soit pas d'élever  
l'homme au-dessus du niveau des intérêts vulgaires.<sup>127</sup>

Mallarmé's article "L'Art pour Tous"<sup>128</sup> uses Baudelaire's term "hérésies" for part of the subtitle: "Hérésies Artistiques"; Mallarmé also speaks of "l'hérésie de l'enseignement" but in slightly different terms: "profanés par l'enseignement". Although not concerned with any ultimate utility for art, Mallarmé adopted the view that poetry has no other aim but itself; it should not be philosophical, descriptive, or moral. However, in November 1855 Mallarmé expressed his ambition to write a book which would be "l'explication orphique de la Terre":

...un livre, bonnement, en maints tomes, un livre qui  
soit un livre... j'irai plus loin, je dirai: le Livre,  
persuadé qu'au fond, il n'y en a qu'un... L'explica-  
tion orphique de la Terre, qui est le seul devoir du  
poète et le jeu littéraire par excellence.<sup>129</sup>

Both Baudelaire and Mallarmé opposed the conception of art as the servile reproduction of nature. For Baudelaire, untouched

Nature which is ugly<sup>130</sup>, which participates in original sin is "un amas incohérent de matériaux que l'artiste est invité à associer et à mettre en ordre."<sup>131</sup> The artist utilises the raw materials of nature, but he must subject them first to the creative will of the mind. It is the artist's function to decompose natural creation and to recreate its elements in order to create a new world. The principle of recreation must be informed by the agent of creativity, that is, the imaginative faculty. In his "Salon de 1859" Baudelaire explained,

Elle [l'imagination] décompose toute la création et, avec les matériaux amassés et disposés suivant des règles dont on ne peut trouver l'origine que dans le plus profond de l'âme, elle crée un monde nouveau, elle produit la sensation du neuf.<sup>132</sup>

For Mallarmé the world of matter was also one of incoherence, and the artist must re-create a new one, but instead of relying on the intuitive faculty, the imagination, Mallarmé relied on the intellect to evoke his dream-world. He sought to create "le livre", a great work "qui soit un livre, architectural et prémédité, et non un recueil des inspirations de hasard, fussent-elles merveilleuses."<sup>133</sup> Art, for Mallarmé, arises from a voluntary act, not from an intuitive process. As Mr. Fowlie commented, "un sonnet de Mallarmé est l'expression d'une volonté,"<sup>134</sup>

For Baudelaire "le hasard" also had no place in art. In his "Salon de 1846" he had stated: "Il n'y a pas de hasard dans l'art"<sup>135</sup> and in an article devoted to Théophile Gautier he had written in 1859: "Il y a dans le mot, dans le verbe, quelque chose de sacré qui nous défend d'en faire un jeu de hasard."<sup>136</sup> For Baudelaire, "la volonté" was also extremely important in the creative process. For him, the creative process is not a passive act, but the result of consciousness,

effort, of imagination functioning within the phenomenal world; a carefully controlled situation in which successive flights of the mind nourish the creative process. In his poem "Rêve Parisien" Baudelaire likens his task to the taming of an ocean so as to cause it to flow through a tunnel:

Architecte de mes féeries,  
Je faisais, à ma volonté  
Sous un tunnel de pierreries  
Passer un océan dompté.<sup>137</sup>

Here, will-power is directed toward moral ends, the control and transposition of nature which is a symbol of evil. For Mallarmé, as we have noted, nature was a symbol of disorder and incoherence; but for Baudelaire "la volonté" had an aesthetic function as well. He uses the term in this special sense in his article on "Le Dandy":

... toutes les conditions matérielles compliquées  
auxquelles ils se soumettent... ne sont qu'une gym-  
nastique propre à fortifier la volonté et à disci-  
pliner l'âme.<sup>138</sup>

Baudelaire and Mallarmé both saw in will-power a force necessary to the creative artist for the realization of his dream. The work of art is superior to nature as Baudelaire affirmed in his prose poem "Invitation au Voyage":

Pays singulier, supérieur aux autres, comme l'Art l'est  
à la nature où celle-ci est reformée par le rêve où elle  
est corrigée, embellie, refondue.<sup>139</sup>

But a work of art must, according to Baudelaire, contain the object (nature) and the subject (rêve); hence, his famous definition of pure art:

C'est créer une magie suggestive contenant à la fois  
l'objet et le sujet, le monde extérieur à l'artiste  
et l'artiste lui-même.<sup>140</sup>

The "rêve" or spiritual part of the artistic work is thus linked

closely to the real, to matter. This is not so for Mallarmé, for whom the phenomenal world disappears and is replaced by the poetic act which is language. "For the whole symbolist movement", states Chiari, "as well as for the aesthetic movement, Mallarmé excepted, art was a religion and the poet was the priest revealing the mystery of life.... He [Mallarmé] was all in one, the priest without temple who has projected all and himself in his song... he has provided himself very modestly with most of God's attributes, the most important being the power of self-creation, that is to say, of being the source of his own transcendence."<sup>141</sup> For Baudelaire, the work of art is at the same time the coherent expression of nature and the expression of the mind, whereas for Mallarmé it is but the expression of the mind. However, for Mallarmé as for Baudelaire the aim of poetry was to create "une magie suggestive"<sup>142</sup>. In this respect Mallarmé went much further than Baudelaire in his ardent desire to invest the object with mystery. In his "Réponses à des Enquêtes", he explained his creed which was to govern the writing of his most celebrated poetry:

Nommer un objet, c'est supprimer les trois-quarts de la jouissance du poème qui est faite de deviner peu à peu; le suggérer, voilà le rêve. C'est le parfait usage de ce mystère qui constitue le symbole: évoquer petit à petit un objet pour montrer un état d'âme, ou, inversement, choisir un objet et en dégager un état d'âme, par une série de déchiffrements.<sup>143</sup>

Mallarmé's poetic technique of suggesting and never describing is a tendency in line with Baudelaire's rejection of the photographic in art and his praise of the infusions of imagination.

Both Baudelaire and Mallarmé wrote on the difficulty of attaining the Ideal, which the poet must nevertheless struggle to realize. For Baudelaire, the fact that the ideal was unattainable

was fortunate for both the poets and the human race:

Si la clef de l'idéal était donnée immédiatement, le poète n'aurait plus besoin d'opérer cette concentration de toutes ses forces à laquelle se mesurent l'élévation de sa pensée et la densité spirituelle de son oeuvre. Les poètes, les artistes et toute la race humaine, seraient bien malheureux si l'idéal, cette absurdité, cette impossibilité, était trouvé.<sup>144</sup>

In his "L'Aube spirituelle"<sup>145</sup> Baudelaire writes of "l'Idéal rongeur" and "l'inaccessible azur". The quest for Beauty is never accompanied by the serenity and detachment that characterized Mallarmé's pursuit of his goal in his later years. For Baudelaire it supposes an interior conflict, a spiritual combat with matter. In his "Confiteor de l'Artiste", Baudelaire describes the study of the Beautiful as a duel:

L'étude du beau est un duel où l'artiste crie de frayeur avant d'être vaincu.<sup>146</sup>

For Mallarmé, also, the Ideal was, at the beginning, impossible to attain. Thus, in his poem "L'Azur"<sup>147</sup>, written in 1864, "l'azur" which symbolizes the inaccessible ideal, overwhelms the poet with its "sereine ironie" and its gaze of "un remords atterant". In his letter to Henri Cazalis written at the time he was forwarding to his friend a copy of "L'Azur", Mallarmé expressed the anguish through which he had passed to achieve his goal:

... Et ç'a été une terrible difficulté de combiner, dans une juste harmonie l'élément dramatique hostile à l'idée de poésie pure et subjective avec la sérénité et le calme de lignes nécessaires à la Beauté.<sup>148</sup>

## NOTES TO PART II

1. Charles Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Henceforth referred to as B. O.c.), p. 86.
2. Stéphane Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (henceforth referred to M. O.c.), p. 37.
3. C. Baudelaire, Préface to Nouvelles Histoires Extraordinaires d'Edgar Poe. Traduction de Charles Baudelaire. Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 4.
4. M. O.c., p. 258.
5. B. O.c., p. 86.
6. M. O.c., p. 259.
7. Written 1859 or 1860, in B. O.c., pp. 906-909.
8. Ibid., p. 907.
9. Ibid., p. 908.
10. M. O.c., p. 259.
11. W. Fowlie, Mallarmé, pp. 64-65.
12. B. O.c., p. 1210.
13. Ibid., p. 908.
14. M. O.c., p. 260.
15. B. O.c., p. 907.
16. M. O.c., p. 257.
17. Ibid., p. 257.
18. B. O.c., p. 83.
19. Ibid., p. 86.
20. M. O.c., p. 18.
21. B. O.c., pp. 87-7.
22. M. O.c., p. 33

## NOTES TO PART II (Continued)

23. M.A. Ruff, Baudelaire, p. 141.
24. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 6.
25. B. O.c., p. 1211.
26. cf. Y. Park, thesis, 1966, pp. 38-39, and Jean-Pierre Richard, L'Univers imaginaire de Mallarmé, pp. 376-377.
27. Jean-Pierre Richard, ibid., p. 376.
28. B. O.c., p. 893.
29. J.-P. Richard, Op. cit., p. 376.
30. B. O.c., p. 355.
31. M. O.c., pp. 32-33.
32. B. O.c., p. 228.
33. Ibid., p. 189.
34. M. O.c., p. 32.
35. B. O.c., p. 1210.
36. Ibid., p. 131.
37. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 90.
38. M. O.c., p. 35.
39. B. O.c., p. 137.
40. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'Livre'", p. 83.
41. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 90.
42. See C. Baudelaire, Les Fleurs du Mal, Editions Garnier Frères, p. 420 for dates.
43. B. O.c., p. 191.
44. cf. Austin Gill, "Mallarmé on Baudelaire", in Currents of Thought in French Literature, p. 96.
45. M. O.c., p. 256.

## NOTES TO PART II (Continued)

46. G. Poulet, Etudes sur le Temps Humain. II. La Distance Intérieure, Chapitre IX, p. 298.
47. Ibid., p. 304.
48. B. O.c., Cur. Esth., p. 779.
49. cf. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 53.
50. J.-P. Richard, op. cit., p. 41.
51. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 11.
52. M. O.c., p. 47.
53. Georges Blin, Baudelaire, pp. 189-191; cited in M. Eigeldinger, Le Platonisme de Baudelaire, p. 68.
54. M. O.c., p. 857.
55. W.W. King, "Baudelaire and Mallarmé: Metaphysics or Aesthetics", p. 122.
56. M. O.c., p. 366.
57. M. O.c., p. 647.
58. W. King, op. cit., p. 123.
59. B. O.c., pp. 342-343.
60. M. O.c., pp. 37-38.
61. B. O.c., pp. 86-87.
62. Ibid., p. 1197.
63. C. Baudelaire, Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 13.
64. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
65. M. O.c., p. 36.
66. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 90.
67. M. O.c., pp. 32-33.
68. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 65.



## NOTES TO PART II (Continued)

69. M. O.c., pp. 37-38.
70. Ibid., p. 32.
71. G. Poulet, op. cit., p. 299.
72. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 94.
73. B. O.c., p. 1035; cited in H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 200.
74. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 220.
75. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 112.
76. B. O.c., p. 151.
77. Ibid., p. 1230.
78. Ibid., p. 107.
79. Ibid., p. 1189.
80. cf. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 89.
81. cf. Edgar Allan Poe, Le Principe de la Poésie, pp. 48-53.
82. C. Baudelaire, Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 20.
83. S. Mallarmé, Propos sur la poésie, p. 118.
84. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 20; cf. E.A. Poe, Le Principe de la Poésie, p. 56.
85. S. Mallarmé, Propos sur la poésie, p. 79.
86. B. O.c., p. 883.
87. Ibid., p. 677.
88. Ibid., p. 677.
89. There is a contradiction in the role played by the passions in the creation of Beauty as expressed in the above passage and in the one in Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe (p. 20) where Baudelaire had written that the principle of poetry manifests itself "dans un enthousiasme, une excitation de l'âme - enthousiasme tout à fait indépendant de la passion qui est l'ivresse du coeur et de la vérité qui est la pâture de la raison." cf. E.A. Poe, op. cit., p. 48.

## NOTES TO PART II (Continued)

89. Ibid., p. 677.
90. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 103-104.
91. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, pp. 241-242.
92. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 220-221.
93. B. O.c., p. 643.
94. B. O.c., p. 1195.
95. Baudelaire as a Literary Critic. Selected Essays Introduced and Translated by L.B. Hyslop and Francis E. Hyslop, Jr., p. 15.
96. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 22.
97. B. O.c., p. 769.
98. Ibid., p. 1040.
99. Ibid., p. 677.
100. Ibid., p. 621.
101. Ibid., p. 468.
102. Ibid., pp. 244-245.
103. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 216.
104. Ibid., p. 215.
105. B. O.c., p. 383.
106. B. O.c., p. 96.
107. Ibid., p. 99.
108. M. O.c., p. 262.
109. M. Gilman, Baudelaire, the Critic, p. 111.
110. J.-P. Richard, op. cit., p. 233.
111. Y? Park, op. cit., p. 94.
112. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, pp. 238-239.

## NOTES TO PART II (Continued)

113. cf. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 97.
114. G. Delfel, L'Esthétique de Stéphane Mallarmé, p. 80.
115. cf. Y. Park, op. cit., p. 70.
116. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'Livre'", in Mercure de France, t. 317, 1953, jan.-avril, p. 84.
117. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 224-225.
118. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 88; cf. J.-P. Richard, op. cit., p. 233 and Y. Park, op. cit., p. 97.
119. M. O.c., p. 378.
120. Ibid., p. 647 (written 1894).
121. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 237.
122. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé et le Rêve du 'Livre'", p. 84.
123. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 44; cf. E.A. Poe, Le Principe de la Poésie, pp. 46-47.
124. Cited in Léon Lemonnier, "Baudelaire et Mallarmé" in La Grande Revue, juillet-octobre, 1923, p. 20.
125. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, pp. 18-19.
126. cf. E.A. Poe, Le Principe de la Poésie, pp. 48-49.
127. C. Baudelaire, Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe, p. 19.
128. M. O.c., pp. 257-260.
129. Ibid., pp. 662-663.
130. B. O.c., p. 772.
131. Ibid., p. 863.
132. Ibid., p. 773.
133. M. O.c., pp. 662-663.
134. W. Fowlie, Mallarmé, p. 25.

## NOTES TO PART II (Continued)

135. B. O.c., p. 261.

136. cf. ibid., p. 1035.

137. Ibid., p. 174.

138. Ibid., p. 907.

139. Ibid., p. 306.

140. Ibid., p. 926.

141. J. Chiari, Symbolisme from Poe to Mallarmé, The Growth of a Myth, p. 46.

142. B. O.c., p. 306.

143. M. O.c., p. 369.

144. B. O.c., pp. 642-643.

145. Ibid., p. 120.

146. Ibid., p. 284.

147. M. O.c., p. 37.

148. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 105.

PART III

BAUDELAIRIAN REFLECTIONS

IN MALLARME'S POETRY

## PART III

## BAUDELAIRIAN REFLECTIONS IN MALLARME'S POETRY

Baudelaire's influence is particularly evident in themes, imagery, and vocabulary in certain poems written by Mallarmé from 1861 to 1865.<sup>1</sup>

Mallarmé's "L'Enfant prodigue" (1861)<sup>1a</sup> is perhaps one of the most perfect poems "à la manière de Baudelaire qu'on ait jamais composés."<sup>2</sup> In addition to Baudelairean details<sup>3</sup>, two essential aspects of Baudelairean thought are present, namely, "le goût de l'Infini"<sup>4</sup> and "l'expérience du Gouffre"<sup>5</sup> which are strikingly condensed:

J'ai cherché l'Infini qui fait que l'homme pêche  
Et n'ai rien trouvé qu'un Gouffre ennemi du sommeil.<sup>6</sup>

Mallarmé made no allusion to this poem in his correspondence, and he made no attempt to publish it.

"Galanterie macabre"<sup>7</sup> which was written by Mallarmé in 1861 was published only in 1930.<sup>8</sup> This poem borrows many details from Baudelaire's work<sup>9</sup>, and has an earthy realism characteristic of his Petits poèmes en prose<sup>10</sup>. No doubt Mallarmé realized the exaggerated Baudelairean flavour of this poem, for despite Des Essarts' letter of March 3, 1864, in which he asked him why he excluded "Galanterie macabre" from publication<sup>11</sup>, Mallarmé continued to withhold it.

"Le Guignon" was written by Mallarmé in its entirety in 1862, as a dated manuscript proves; however, the poem as it appeared

in l'Artiste in March 1862 was but a fragment of the whole, including only the first five stanzas of three lines each, and is very different from the definitive text which comprised twenty-one stanzas of three lines each and a last line<sup>12</sup>. The first version of the entire poem was published in 1883 and in its definitive form in 1887<sup>13</sup>. This work attests the double influence of Théophile Gautier<sup>14</sup> and of Baudelaire. To the latter it no doubt owes its principal theme - the unhappy destiny of the man of letters - as well as its title, and certain elements of its imagery<sup>15</sup>.

The reason for the publication in 1862 of only a fragment of "Le Guignon" is, in Austin Gill's opinion, that the poem contained veiled criticism of Baudelaire, and that the editor of l'Artiste "was unwilling to publish what in 1862 the more discerning readers would recognize as an attack on Baudelaire...."<sup>16</sup>

Even though Mallarmé had expressed some dissension with his master<sup>17</sup>, many of the eleven poems composed between 1862 and 1865 and submitted to the first series of the Parnasse contemporain in 1866<sup>18</sup>, showed the continued influence of Baudelaire, and at the same time the continuing development of Mallarmé's originality.

The eleven poems of this group were given the title "Angoisse" (in preference to that of "Atonies"<sup>19</sup>), but might well have been entitled "Spleen et Idéal", the title given by Baudelaire to the first section of Les Fleurs du Mal. E. Lefébure has noted that this "spleen" constituted the force of Mallarmé as a poet and his grief as a man; he further added, "Je sens si bien cela... qu'il m'est impossible de vous lire sans que cela me fasse de la peine."<sup>20</sup> With Mallarmé, as with Baudelaire, spleen was a complex emotional state in which were

mixed irritation and depression, disgust and lassitude, which drew its source from a double movement: the violent rejection of a reality judged ugly and imperfect, and the ardent but unrealizable aspiration toward the ideal.<sup>21</sup>

The Baudelairian spleen is essentially metaphysical. Among the evils which oppress the poet are physical suffering, coupled with the feeling of moral solitude: that the soul is imprisoned in a body from which it cannot escape. Baudelaire wrote in a letter to his mother in 1857:

Ce que je sens, c'est un immense découragement, une sensation d'isolement insupportable, une peur perpétuelle d'un malheur vague.... C'est le véritable esprit de spleen.<sup>22</sup>

Mallarmé's sonnet "Renouveau"<sup>23</sup> composed in 1862, could, according to the poet, be called "Spleen printanier", and describes his curious feeling of sterility or "impuissance". Regarding this poem, Mallarmé wrote in a letter of June 4, 1862 to his friend H. Cazalis:

Emmanuel t'avait peut-être parlé d'une stérilité curieuse que le printemps avait installée en moi. Après trois mois d'impuissance, j'en suis enfin débarrassé, et mon premier sonnet est consacré à la décrire, c'est-à-dire à la maudire. C'est un genre assez nouveau que cette poésie, où les effets matériels du sang, des nerfs, sont analysés et mêlés aux effets moraux, de l'esprit, de l'âme. Cela pourrait s'appeler "Spleen printanier"!...<sup>24</sup>

This sonnet shows the influence of Baudelaire not only in the reformulation of a Baudelairian theme, but also in the application of the Baudelairian technique of correspondances, namely, the linking of physical sensations to sentiments and ideas. It also illustrates the paradox by which the "spleen" or "impuissance" becomes the starting point for a new creation which overcomes this morbid



feeling by giving expression to it, as Baudelaire himself had done in his four poems entitled "Spleen"<sup>25</sup>. Mallarmé, in "Renouveau", evokes similar sensations of "ennui", dejection, and confinement as had Baudelaire<sup>26</sup>. It was to this sonnet that Eugène Lefébure alluded when he wrote to Mallarmé in June 25, 1862: "Et Baudelaire, s'il rajeunissait, pourrait signer vos sonnets."<sup>27</sup>

The most Baudelairian poem of this series sent to the Parnasse contemporain of 1866 is perhaps the sonnet "Angoisse"<sup>28</sup> composed by Mallarmé in February 1864. In this poem, evasion from spleen is sought in love which becomes the search for forgetfulness in a dreamless sleep free of remorse. The theme was inspired by Baudelaire's poem "Le Lethé" (1850-52); other details are also reminiscent of Baudelaire.<sup>29</sup>

In "Les Fenêtres", composed in London (May 1863), Mallarmé's debt to the author of Les Fleurs du Mal is strikingly apparent in terms of ideas, images, and vocabulary.<sup>30</sup> This work evokes an expression of the nauseous invasion of the real world which the poet cannot escape, and that is reminiscent of Baudelaire: the theme of evasion, the desire to escape from this world and to flee toward the ideal<sup>31</sup>. In Mallarmé's work, "les fenêtres" which take on a magic quality may be traced to Baudelaire's prose poem of 1862, "Le Mauvais vitrier"<sup>32</sup>, and to the Leonardo stanza in his poem "Les Phares".<sup>33</sup>

In spite of the many Baudelairian reminiscences in "Les Fenêtres", and the fact that the central theme of the poem came from Baudelaire<sup>34</sup>, Mallarmé goes beyond Baudelaire in his complete rejection of reality and his refusal to link his ideal to the material world. Thus, as Georges Poulet has so admirably stated, "Ce petit

poème... est bien le premier où Mallarmé dépasse nettement le baudelairisme... c'est un poème authentiquement mallarméen parce qu'ultra-baudelairien...."<sup>35</sup>

Whereas in "Les Fenêtres" there was a violent rejection of reality to attain the sovereign ideal, in "l'Azur", a poem composed by Mallarmé at Tournon in January 1864, there is an opposite movement toward reality and away from the ideal. Here the poet's disgust for humanity is the same as in "Les Fenêtres".<sup>36</sup>, and a feeling of "ennui" is evoked similar to that in Baudelaire's poem "Au Lecteur", and is expressed in similar imagery.<sup>37</sup> An intense feeling of anguish is suggested, a sentiment arising from the poet's desire to renounce the "éternel azur" which symbolizes the "Idéal cruel" and his inability to forgo the challenge. Mallarmé's desperate position is reminiscent of Baudelaire's dilemma contained in the last paragraph of "Le Confiteur de l'Artiste"<sup>38</sup> where the sky, with its "profondeur" and "limpidité", like Mallarmé's "éternel azur", is a torment to the poet.

The feeling of anguish in both poets is deep and intense. In Baudelaire it is caused by the fear of his inability to achieve a work of artistic perfection, and the realization of the struggle involved in transposing the elements that Nature presents in order to create a work of beauty. In Mallarmé, it is the task of poetic creation itself that produces the anguish.<sup>39</sup> Hence the despair of Mallarmé, "le poète impuissant", "le poète de l'azur", is perhaps greater than that of Baudelaire. "L'impuissance chez Mallarmé," declares Georges Poulet, "tend en effet à un désespoir pire que chez Baudelaire, où elle est toujours teintée d'espoir, animée par des velléités d'action...

car l'idéal ne peut exister que dans un contraste insoutenable avec une réalité inverse qui le dément et qu'il dément."<sup>40</sup> The drama of Mallarmé, and the principal reason of his "impuissance", reside in the fact that the expression of the idea, which is non-material, presupposes a material correspondent, and Mallarmé wished to reject the material.<sup>41</sup> Mallarmé was keenly aware that matter is a virtually insurmountable obstacle and that he is "impuissant" since as a man he is part of the material world.

In his poem "Brise marine"<sup>42</sup>, composed at Tournon, May 1865, Mallarmé gives expression to this feeling: "La chair est triste, hélas!" He does not wish to contaminate the ideal with reality. When he speaks of "le vide papier que la blancheur défend", he is again referring to his "impuissance" to attain the ideal - he implies that ideas by being embodied in material forms on the paper, will spoil the purity of the ideal, symbolized by "la blancheur". This idea, of course, found no counterpart in Baudelaire, for whom reality provided the means of discovering the invisible, or ideal forms of beauty. The theme of escape from this world as expressed in Mallarmé's "Brise marine", however, is one found not only in Baudelaire<sup>43</sup>, but in many of the Romantic poets. When Baudelaire expressed his desire to flee "n'importe où hors du monde" in his prose poem "Anywhere out of the world"<sup>44</sup>, he was echoing, for example, Lamartine's desire to be

... au-delà des bornes de sa sphère [du soleil]<sup>45</sup>

This aspiration toward something other than this life, to escape to the "au-delà" is common to both Baudelaire and Mallarmé, and as Léon Lemonnier pointed out, also suggests the link between "le romantisme" and "le symbolisme".<sup>46</sup>

We may conclude therefore that Mallarmé inherited the "mal Baudelairian", and in the wake of the master, created remarkable verse from his deep inner feelings of "ennui" and horror of earthy existence, as well as from the anguish he suffered in his desire to attain his ideal.

\* \* \*

In the poem "Las de l'amer repos"<sup>47</sup>, written in February 1864, Mallarmé according to L.J. Austin's interpretation of this poem<sup>48</sup>, bade farewell to the poetry of anguished personal lyricism and announced his intention of adopting a new aesthetics, the serene and impersonal creation of beauty. Nevertheless, Mallarmé took some time before carrying out his ambition. Concerning the poems submitted to the Parnasse contemporain, he wrote to H. Cazalis in May 1866 that "Sentant que bien qu'aucun de ces poèmes n'ait été en réalité conçu en vue de la beauté mais plutôt comme autant d'intuitives révélations de mon tempérament et de la note qu'il donnerait... je consacrai des nuits consécutives à les corriger...."<sup>49</sup>

"Soupir"<sup>50</sup>, a poem composed by Mallarmé in April 1864, is Baudelairian in technique, and is based on the correspondance between a woman and a melancholy scene, and between an autumn season and an "état d'âme". The last line of this poem.

Se traîner le soleil jaune d'un long rayon  
contains several details to be found in the last line of Baudelaire's "Chant d'Automne":<sup>51</sup>

De l'arrière saison le rayon jaune et doux!  
But the tone of Mallarmé's poem is essentially his own.

Mallarmé's poem "Le Pitre châtié"<sup>52</sup>, composed March 1864, may well have been suggested by Baudelaire's prose poem "Le Vieux Saltimbanque"<sup>53</sup>, first published November 1861.

Of the poems written between 1861 and 1865, "Apparition"<sup>54</sup> is the one in which the influence of Baudelaire is least apparent. Although it was written in 1862 or 1863, Mallarmé did not include it with the poems sent to be published in the Parnasse contemporain in 1866, perhaps because of its personal content.<sup>55</sup> "Apparition" shows the fundamental originality of Mallarmé at this early date. "Le thème peut être le même que celui de Baudelaire", asserted Y. Park, but "la façon de le manier et de l'envisager est différente."<sup>56</sup>

In Mallarmé's "Hérodias"<sup>57</sup>, begun October 1864 and never completed, we have a mingling of the beautiful and the sad; or, as Fowlie has stated, "the romantic equation of beauty and death.... As pleasure and pain are inseparable, so any intense knowledge of the beautiful is synthesized with a knowledge of suffering."<sup>58</sup> This had also been the idea of Baudelaire, who had in some of his works, for example, "La Chevelure"<sup>59</sup> and "Parfum exotique"<sup>60</sup> mingled voluptuousness and sadness. Moreover, the following lines of an untitled sonnet composed by Baudelaire also contains these same elements and must surely have been present in Mallarmé's mind when he composed some lines of "Hérodias".

Ses yeux polis sont faits de minéraux charmants  
Et dans cette nature étrange et symbolique  
Où l'ange inviolé se mêle au sphinx antique,

Où tout n'est qu'or, acier, lumière et diamants,  
Resplendit à jamais, comme un astre inutile  
La froide majesté de la femme stérile.<sup>61</sup>

The last lines of the sonnet recalls Mallarmé's *Hérodiade*:

Observant la froideur stérile du métal<sup>62</sup>

Such words as "or", "acier", "astre", "inutile", used by Baudelaire also reappear in various lines of Mallarmé's poem. Baudelaire's taste for diamonds was bequeathed to Mallarmé, and as Jean-Pierre Richard has pointed out, "La rêverie diamantaire domine enfin toute l'esthétique de Mallarmé: l'art consistant à créer des 'pierreries littéraires' capables de briller pour elles-mêmes et mettant en lumière 'les bijoux de l'homme'."<sup>63</sup>

"L'Après-midi d'un Faune"<sup>64</sup> (June 1865) also owes something to Baudelaire in that its sensuality is reminiscent of the latter's "Lesbos" and "Femmes damnées"<sup>65</sup>.

Even in poems recognized as extremely original and typically Mallarméan, a trace of Baudelaire can be found. Mallarmé's sonnet, "Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui"<sup>66</sup> (published March 1885), for example, was no doubt influenced by Baudelaire's "Le Cygne"<sup>67</sup> and "L'Albatros"<sup>68</sup>. Mallarmé's swan - "Tout son col secouera cette blanche agonie" - reminds us of Baudelaire's with its "cou convulsif tendant sa tête avide." The albatros is described by Baudelaire as caught on the deck of a ship - it symbolizes the poet trapped by the contingencies of life and impeded in his flight towards the ideal - whereas Mallarmé's swan is trapped in the ice and symbolizes the poet as a prisoner of the ideal.<sup>69</sup> The line,

Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l'ennui<sup>70</sup>

recalls one in Baudelaire's poem "Paysage":

Et quand viendra l'hiver, aux neiges monotones.<sup>71</sup>

In Mallarmé's sonnet "Sur les bois oubliés quand passe

l'hiver sombre"<sup>72</sup>, almost the same scene is evoked as in Baudelaire's poem, "La servante au grand coeur"<sup>73</sup>. In the sonnet "Quand l'ombre menaça de la fatale loi"<sup>74</sup> (1883) the image:

Affligé de périr sous les plafonds funèbres  
Il a ployé son aile indubitable en moi

is similar to that in Baudelaire's poem "Spleen" LXXVIII:

S'en va battant les murs de son aile timide  
Et se cognant la tête à des plafonds pourris;<sup>75</sup>

However, there is a fundamental difference in thought between the poems of the two poets as has been underlined by Fowlie: "Whereas Baudelaire translates the despotism and cruelty of hope, Mallarmé moves beyond the personal anguish of the creating artist and the living man, into the cosmic drama, into an almost abstract and depersonalized image of the poetic psychology. Baudelaire's bat beating its wings against the walls of its cell becomes in Mallarmé's sonnet the bird unnamed which... folds its wings and accepts its fate."<sup>76</sup>

While we have thus far restricted ourselves to pointing out Baudelairian traits in some of Mallarmé's poems, similar elements could be traced in his prose poems. In fact, Mallarmé's prose poems are, as Mme Noulet has conceded, "un autre résultat de l'influence de Baudelaire et comme genre et comme technique et comme thème."<sup>77</sup>

It is interesting that even in Mallarmé's last prose poem, "Un coup de dés"<sup>78</sup>, some expressions may be traced to Baudelaire; for example, the lines:

assouplie par la vague et soustraite  
aux durs os perdus entre les ais<sup>79</sup>

are reminiscent of Baudelaire's

Toi qui, magiquement assouplis les vieux os<sup>80</sup>

Similarly, lines 7-8 of "Un coup de dés":

dans quelque proche tourbillon d'hilarité et d'horreur  
voltige autour du gouffre<sup>81</sup>

recall Baudelaire's "un brillant oiseau voltigeant sur les horreurs  
d'un gouffre".<sup>82</sup>

But, of course, by pointing out such Baudelairian reminiscences, we  
are not detracting from the fundamental originality of Mallarmé who  
transposed the elements he inherited into typically Mallarméan expressions.



# T A B L E

## BAUDELAIRIAN DETAILS IN MALLARME'S POETRY

### "L'Enfant Prodigue"\*

"une orange sèche"  
(line 1)

"ennemi du sommeil"  
(line 4)

"ainsi qu'un sable fin"  
(line 6)

Triple exclamation:

"O la mystique, ô la sanglante, ô l'amoureuse,"  
(line 9)

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"une vieille orange"  
("Au Lecteur", p. 81, line 20)

"ennemi du sommeil"  
("Tristesse de la Lune", p. 139, line 11)

"ainsi qu'un sable fin"  
("Les Chats", p. 140, line 13)

"O serments! ô parfums! ô baisers infinis!"  
("Le Balcon", p. 111, last line)

\* M. O.c., pp. 14-15; composed 1861, cf. p. 1386.

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

TABLE (Continued)

"Galanterie Macabre"\*

"Dans un de ces faubourgs"  
(line 1)

"vague effroi"  
(line 6)

"Dont le matin rougit la flamme"  
(line 8)

"gésine" (line 12)

"lésine" (line 15)

"Dans mon coeur où l'ennui pend ses drapeaux funèbres"  
(line 41)

"Démon", "Satan"  
(lines 40 and 44)

"Haine", "géhénne"  
(lines 45 and 47)

\* M. O.c., pp. 15-16.

Baudelaire's Works\*\*

"Le long du vieux faubourg"  
("Le Soleil", p. 155, line 1)

"vague épouvante"  
("Spleen" LXXVI. p. 146, line 20)

"La lampe sur le jour fait une tache rouge"  
("Le Crépuscule du Matin", p. 175)

Same words used in  
("Le Crépuscule du Matin", p. 175,  
lines 17-18)

"Sur mon crâne incliné plante son drapeau noir"  
("Spleen" LXXVIII, p. 147, last line)

"Démons", "Satan"  
("Au Lecteur", p. 81, lines 22 and 9)

"haine", "Géhénne"  
("Bénédiction", p. 84, lines 17 and 19)

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

TABLE (Continued)

"Le Guignon"\*

Baudelaire's Works \*\*\*\*

"Le Guignon"

Title from that of Baudelaire's poem "Le Guignon"  
(p. 92),\*\*  
also used in "Conseils aux jeunes littérateurs"  
(1846), p. 942.

"Ils tettent la Douleur comme ils tétaient le rêve"  
(line 16)

"Et tettent la Douleur comme une bonne louve"  
("Le Cygne", p. 159, line 47)

"Ils courent sous le fouet d'une monarque rageur"  
(line 29)

"L'ange aveugle de l'expiation s'est emparé d'eux  
et les fouette à tours de bras"  
(Préface to *Histoires extraordinaires*  
d'Edgar Poe, p. 3)\*\*\*

"Leur défaite, c'est par un ange très puissant"  
(line 13)

"Ils mangent de la cendre avec le même amour"  
(line 23)

"Ils mêlent de la cendre avec d'impurs crachats"  
("Bénédiction", p. 84, line 34)

"Quand en face tous leur ont craché les dédains"  
(line 61)

"Nous soulerons d'encens le vainqueur dans la fête"  
(line 58)

"Et je me soulerai de nard, d'encens, de myrrhe"  
("Bénédiction", line 41)

\* M. O.c., pp. 28-30; written 1862: cf. p. 1405.

\*\* Written in 1852 or perhaps even in 1849; cf. Les Fleurs du Mal, Editions Garnier Frères, p. 287.

\*\*\* Written in 1852 and published as a preface to his translation of Poe's stories; cf. Oeuvres complètes  
de Charles Baudelaire. V., pp. 3-32.

\*\*\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

TABLE (Continued)

"Renouveau"\*

"Renouveau"

"Et dans mon être à qui le sang morne préside"  
L'impuissance s'étire en un long baillement."  
(lines 3-4)

"Des crépuscules blancs tiédissent sous mon crâne  
Qu'un cercle de fer serre ainsi qu'un vieux tombeau"  
(lines 5 - 6)

Baudelaire's Works\*\*

"Mon âme mieux qu'au temps du tiède renouveau"  
("Brunes et pluies", p. 172, line 7)

"Et dans un baillement avalerait le monde  
... c'est l'Ennui..."  
("Au Lecteur", p. 82, lines 36-37)

"D'envelopper ainsi mon coeur et mon cerveau  
D'un linceul vaporeux et d'un vague tombeau"  
("Brunes et pluies", p. 172, lines 3-4)

\* M. O.c., p. 34; composed May, 1862.

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

TABLE (Continued)

"Angoisse"\*\*

"Je demande à ton lit le lourd sommeil sans songes  
Planant sous les rideaux inconnus du remords"  
(lines 5-6)

"ma native noblesse"  
(line 9)

"Ayant peur de dormir"  
(last line)

Baudelaire's Works \*\*

"sommeil lourd"  
("La Prière d'un Païen", 1861, p. 253, line 12)

"Je veux dormir! dormir plutôt que vivre  
Dans un sommeil aussi doux que la mort"  
("Le Léthé", pp. 215-216, lines 9-10)

"Ces natives grandeurs"  
("J'aime le souvenir de ces époques nues",  
p. 88, line 16)

"J'ai peur du sommeil"  
("Le Gouffre", 1862, p. 244, line 9)

\* M. O.c., p. 35; composed February 1864.

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

TABLE (Continued)

"Les Fenêtres"\*\*

"Las du triste hôpital et de l'encens fétide"

...

Vers le grand crucifix ennuyé du mur vide"  
(lines 1 and 3)

"Son oeil à l'horizon de lumière gorgé"  
(line 16)

"Voit des galères d'or, belles comme des cygnes"  
(line 17)

"Dans un grand nonchaloir chargé de souvenir"  
(line 20)

"Je fuis et je m'accroche à toutes les croisées"

...

Je me mire et me vois ange! et je meurs et j'aime  
- Que la vitre soit l'art, soit la mysticité"  
(lines 25, 29-30)

Baudelaire's Works \*\*

"Rembrandt, triste hôpital tout rempli de murmures  
Et d'un grand crucifix décoré seulement"  
("Les Phares", 1857, p. 89, lines 9-10)

"Quelquefois des échappées magnifiques, gorgées  
de lumière...."  
(Préface to Translation of Poe's Histoires  
extraordinaires)

"Où les vaisseaux glissant dans l'or et dans  
la moire"  
("La Chevelure", p. 101, line 18)

"O parfum chargé de nonchaloir"  
...  
Des souvenirs..."  
("La Chevelure", p. 101, lines 2 and 4)

"Léonard de Vinci, miroir profond et sombre  
Où des anges charmants avec un doux sourire  
Tout chargé de mystère apparaissent à l'ombre"  
("Les Phares", 1857, p. 89, lines 5-7)

TABLE (Continued)

"Les Fenêtres" (continued)

"Que dore le matin chaste de l'Infini"

...  
"Au ciel antérieur où fleurit la Beauté"  
(lines 28 and 32)

"Est-il moyen, ô moi qui connais l'amertume  
D'enfoncer le cristal par le monstre insulté  
Et de m'enfuir avec mes deux ailes sans plumes  
Au risque de tomber pendant l'éternité"  
(last stanza)

Baudelaire's Works\*\*

"Vers les cieux le matin prennent un libre essor"  
("L'Élévation", p. 66, line 18)

"Nous voulons, tant ce feu nous brûle le cerveau  
Plonger au fond du gouffre, Enfer ou Ciel,  
qu'importe  
Au fond de l'Inconnu pour trouver du nouveau"  
("Le Voyage", 1854, p. 203, last stanza)

\* M. O.C., pp. 32-33; composed May, 1863.

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

TABLE (Continued)

"L'Azur"\*

"De l'éternel azur la sereine ironie  
Accable...  
Le poète impuissant..."  
(lines 1-2 and 3)

"l'Idéal cruel"  
(line 22)

"Encor! que sans répit les tristes cheminées  
Fument et que de suie une errante prison  
Eteigne dans l'horreur de ses noires trainées  
Le soleil se mourant jaunâtre à l'horizon"  
(lines 17-20)

"Lugubrement bailler vers un trépas obscur"  
(line 28)

Baudelaire's Works \*\*

"Des Cieux spirituels l'inaccessible azur"  
("L'Aube spirituel", p. 120, line 5)

"Et maintenant la profondeur du ciel me cons-  
terne, sa limpidité m'exaspère"  
("Le Confiteor de l'Artiste", p. 284)

"Vers le soleil ironique et cruellement bleu"  
("Le Cygne", p. 158, line 26)

"Quand la pluie étalant ses immenses trainées  
d'une vaste prison imite les barreaux"  
("Spleen" LXXVII, p. 147, lines 9-10)

"Et dans un baillement avalerait le monde"  
("Au Lecteur", p. 81, line 36)

\* M. O.C., pp. 37-38; composed January 1864.

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.



TABLE (Continued)

"Brise Marine"\*

"Fuir! là-bas fuir! Je sens que des oiseaux sont ivres  
d'être parmi l'écume inconnue et les cieux"  
(lines 2-3)

For rhythm and movement of above lines

"reflétés par les yeux"  
(line 4)

"Lève l'ancre pour une exotique nature!  
Un Ennui..."  
(lines 10 and 11)

"Mais ô mon coeur, entends le chant des matelots"  
(last line)

Baudelaire's Works\*\*

"Par delà le soleil, par delà les éthers  
Par delà les confins des sphères étoilées

...  
"Envoles-toi bien loin..."  
("Elévation", p. 86, lines 3-4 and 9)

"Emporte-moi wagon, enlève-moi frégate  
Loin! loin! ici la boue est faite de nos pleurs"  
("Moesta et Errabunda", 1855, p. 137, lines 11-12)

"reflété par mes yeux"  
("La Vie antérieure", 1854-55, p. 93, line 8)

"... levons l'ancre!  
Ce pays nous ennue"  
("Le Voyage", 1859, VIII, p. 203, lines 1-2)

"Se mêle dans mon âme au chant du marinier"  
("Parfum exotique", 1857, p. 100, last line)

\* M. O.c., p. 38; composed May 1865.

\*\* All quotations are taken from C. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.

## NOTES TO PART III

1. We have listed in tabular form at the end of this part of the study (pp. 99-107) a number of interesting "rapprochements" in the works of these two poets.
- 1a. M.O.c., pp. 14-15; see p. 1386 for date of manuscript.
2. H. Mondor, Vie de Mallarmé, p. 30.
3. See Table, p. 99.
4. Baudelaire, Charles, Oeuvres complètes, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (henceforth referred to as B. O.c.), pp. 437-440: "Le Poème du Haschisch I - Le goût de l'Infini".
5. Cf. B. O.c., p. 244, "Le Gouffre"; p. 151. "L'Irrémédiable"; and p. 107, "De Profundi Clamavi". See also C. Baudelaire, Les Fleurs du Mal, Editions Garnier Frères, notes by Antoine Adam, pp. 300 and 448, and B. Fondane's work, Baudelaire et l'Expérience du Gouffre: cf. A. Ayda, Le drame intérieur de Mallarmé, p. 144.
6. M. O.c., p. 14.
7. Ibid., pp. 15-16. See p. 1387 for date of manuscript.
8. It was published by Dr. E. Bonniot in la Revue de France of January 1st, 1930; see M. O.C., p. 1387.
9. See Table, p. 100.
10. Cf. L.J. Austin, "Mallarmé disciple de Baudelaire: Le Parnasse Contemporain" in R.H.L.F., tome 67, 1967, p. 438.
11. Cf. M. O.c., p. 1387.
12. Ibid., pp. 28-30.
13. See ibid., p. 1405 and pp. 1408-1409.
14. See ibid., pp. 1406-1407.
15. See Table, p. 101.
16. A. Gill, "Mallarmé on Baudelaire", in Currents of Thought in French Literature, pp. 109-110.
17. See Part II, pp.
18. In M. O.c., pp. 32-40.

## NOTES TO PART III (Continued)

19. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 212.
20. M. O.c., p. 1424, Letter is dated April 15, 1864.
21. Cf. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 440.
22. Cited in A. Lagarde et L. Michard, XIXe siècle, p. 445.
23. M. O.c., p. 34.
24. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, pp. 30-31.
25. B. O.c., pp. 144-146.
26. See Table, p. 102.
27. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 31, Footnote 1.
28. M. O.c., p. 35; see p. 1424 for other titles of this poem.
29. See Table, p. 103.
30. See Table, pp. 104-105.
31. See Part II, p. 52.
32. B. O.c., pp. 290-292.
33. Ibid., pp. 88-90.
34. Cf. L.J. Austin, op. cit., p. 446.
35. G. Poulet, Etudes sur le temps humain. II. La Distance intérieure, p. 305; cf. H. Mondor, Autres Précisions sur Mallarmé et Inédits, p. 57.
36. See Part II, p. 54.
37. See Table, p. 106.
38. See Table, p. 106.
39. A different interpretation has been given by Charles Chassé in his work Les Clefs de Mallarmé; "... si on saisit que chez Mallarmé 'impuissance' et 'stérilité' doivent être tenus comme ayant une portée aussi bien physiologique qu'intellectuelle; on s'apercevra qu'ils conduisent à de très curieuses interprétations... Cette stérilité, c'est lui qui le déclare, se manifeste chez lui par des signes qui sont d'abord d'ordre physique et qui ont un profond retentissement sur sa sexualité." (p. 60)

## NOTES TO PART III (Continued)

40. G. Poulet, op. cit., p. 307.
41. Cf. L. Fiser, Le Symbole littéraire, p. 131.
42. M. O.c., p. 38.
43. See Table, p. 107.
44. B. O.c., pp. 355-356.
45. A. Lagarde et L. Michard, XIXe siècle, p. 95.
46. L. Lemonnier, "Baudelaire et Mallarmé", in La Grande Revue, juillet-octobre, 1923, p. 31.
47. M. O.c., pp. 35-36.
48. Cf. L.J. Austin, op. cit., pp. 448-449; for other interpretations of "Las de l'amer repos", see L. Cellier, Mallarmé et la morte qui parle, pp. 103-116 and C. Chadwick, "Mallarmé et la tentation du lyrisme", in R.H.L.F., LX, 1960, p. 188-199.
49. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 215.
50. M. O.c., p. 39.
51. B. O.c., p. 131.
52. M. O.c., p. 31.
53. B. O.c., p. 299.
54. M. O.c., p. 30.
55. See ibid., pp. 1410-1411.
56. Y. Park, L'Idée chez Mallarmé, p. 65.
57. M. O.c., pp. 41-48.
58. W. Fowlie, Mallarmé, p. 35.
59. B. O.c., p. 101.
60. Ibid., p. 100.
61. Ibid., p. 104.
62. M. O.c., p. 45, line 10.

## NOTES TO PART III (Continued)

63. J.-P. Richard, L'Univers imaginaire de Mallarmé, p. 235;  
cf. S. Mallarmé, Correspondance, p. 137, and O.c., p. 870.
64. M. O.c., p. 50.
65. B. O.c., pp. 210 and 212.
66. M. O.c., pp. 67-68.
67. B. O.c., p. 157.
68. Ibid., pp. 85-86.
69. Cf. E. Noulet, L'Oeuvre poétique de Mallarmé, p. 263.
70. Line 8 of Mallarmé's sonnet, "Le vierge, le vivace...."  
M. O.c., p. 68.
71. B. O.c., p. 154, line 14.
72. M. O.c., p. 69; poem published in 1887.
73. B. O.c., p. 171.
74. M. O.c., p. 67; published 1883.
75. B. O.c., p. 147.
76. W. Fowlie, op. cit., pp. 185-186.
77. E. Noulet, op. cit., p. 146.
78. Published May 1897.
79. M. O.c., p. 464, lines 15-16.
80. B. O.c., p. 193: "Les Litanies de Satan", line 22.
81. M. O.c., p. 467, lines 7-8.
82. B. O.c., p. 872.

### CONCLUSION

In this survey we have attempted to clarify some of the more outstanding aspects of Mallarmé's debt to Baudelaire. While the nature of this debt has been discussed by many critics, none of their findings can be considered as conclusive.

It is clear that Mallarmé's style underwent considerable change before reaching the complex perfection of his later poems. Mallarmé's encounter with Baudelaire's poems in 1860 (perhaps even in 1859) had a far-reaching effect on his thought and verse; this encounter pointed out the path he was henceforth to follow and gave him his first real impulsion which made it possible for him to ultimately achieve his originality. Mallarmé was influenced not only by Baudelaire's poetry, but also by his prose poems and his critical writings.

There is no doubt that it was the Romantic aspect of Baudelaire - the sinister and the macabre elements - that first appealed to Mallarmé. "Galanterie Macabre" and "L'Enfant prodigue", both composed in 1861, are very Baudelairean in subject, tone and expression. Yet, even in the latter poem, Mallarmé's originality is evident. In other poems written between 1862 and 1865 Baudelaire's influence becomes less and less apparent. However, Baudelairean reminiscences, though rare in later poetry, never completely disappear.

As early as 1862 Mallarmé expressed an original doctrine in "L'Art pour Tous", and in the same year, his poem "Le Guignon" contains a veiled criticism of the "master". Moreover, in this same year, Mallarmé gave a definition of poetry which diverged from that

of Baudelaire , namely that poetry should exist "par son propre rêve" rather than reflect "le lyrisme de la réalité". Mallarmé's poem "Les Fenêtres", composed in 1863, though containing several Baudelairian reminiscences, already goes beyond Baudelaire in his total rejection of the material world. Mallarmé's "Las de l'amer repos", composed 1864, may be interpreted as bidding farewell to anguished lyricism in favour of a more serene and impersonal poetry. In 1867, when Mallarmé declared he was detached from Baudelaire, his assertion was by no means a whim of the moment, for he really believed it to be a fact. He did not believe, as did Baudelaire, that the real could be linked to the spiritual or "le rêve". He felt that such an assumption would degrade the spiritual element. Mallarmé wished to eliminate the real or material. Language became all important to Mallarmé. His poetics were grounded on aesthetic concepts, whereas Baudelaire's were grounded on metaphysical correspondences between the visible and non-visible worlds. For Baudelaire, though matter was associated with sin, it was necessary as a starting point in order to be able to perceive glimpses of the world beyond. For Mallarmé, however, there was no question of morality involved; matter must be abolished because it destroyed the unity and coherence of the universe. Mallarmé's poetic world was situated in the non-phenomenal whereas Baudelaire's was never entirely separated from reality.

Other concepts held by the two poets, however, present certain affinities. For example, Mallarmé shared Baudelaire's disgust for the material, and both viewed Externality as a distortion of a transcendent Absolute. By his theory of correspondances Baudelaire

also made Mallarmé more aware of the existence of a world beyond, and helped clarify his notion of the Ideal. The contrast between this aspiration and what this world represented gave rise in both poets to a feeling of "ennui" or "spleen", and a desire to escape to a world that lay beyond. The "mal" Baudelairian, an intense form of "le mal du siècle", was bequeathed to Mallarmé and can be described as "l'angoisse". For Baudelaire this world offered certain pleasures, whereas for Mallarmé earthly happiness was "ignoble". Mallarmé's concept of the ideal was therefore more ethereal and transcended that of Baudelaire.

From Baudelaire, Mallarmé also inherited the concept of the poet's essential superiority, one whose very genius condemns him to a life of unhappiness in this world. Mallarmé carried Baudelaire's intellectual "dandysme" into his work: he dreamed of creating a sophisticated language that would render his verse incomprehensible to all but true poets.

Baudelaire also bequeathed to Mallarmé a certain conception of art as well as of life. It is the poet's exalted role to reveal Beauty, and poetry must have no other aim but itself. Both poets had an uncompromising devotion to their task. Mallarmé, like Baudelaire, was against didactic and descriptive poetry, and opposed to the lyric sentimentality of the Romantic poets. Like Baudelaire, Mallarmé used imagery and symbolic expression to evoke an "état d'âme". Baudelaire's concept of poetry as suggestion and as "sorcellerie évocatoire" became one of the corner-stones of Mallarmé's poetics. From Baudelaire, Mallarmé also inherited the concept of "artificiality" construed as superior to reality. No less than Baudelaire, he appreciated the



necessity of hard work and the need for a lucid intelligence to transform "le rêve" into a work of art. The impossibility of realizing the ideal gave rise to feelings of "spleen" and of anguish in the two poets.

The most durable element of Baudelaire's influence, and indeed that which constitutes the essential of Mallarmé's debt to his great predecessor, was the rôle that the theory of correspondances played in the development and formulation of Mallarmé's poetic thought, an element which contributed to his unrealized dream to create "le livre", a project which haunted him until his untimely death.

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