

woman working on the farm of the German, after she married, when she grew old and when she died. She fed animal life in cows, in chickens, in pigs, in horses, in dogs, in men. Her daughter had died in childhood and with her one son she had no articulate relations. On the night when she died she was hurrying homeward, bearing on her body food for animal life.

She died in the clearing in the woods and even after her death continued feeding animal life.

You see it is likely that, when my brother told the story, that night when we got home and my mother and sister sat listening, I did not think he got the point. He was too young and so was I. A thing so complete has its own beauty.

I shall not try to emphasize the point. I am only explaining why I was dissatisfied then and have been ever since. I speak of that only that you may understand why I have been impelled to try to tell the simple story over again.

1926, 1933

EZRA POUND

(1885–1972)

Ezra Loomis Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, on October 30, 1885. He attended the University of Pennsylvania and then Hamilton College, from which he was graduated in 1905. He returned to the University of Pennsylvania for graduate study in romance languages. He took an M.A. in 1906, spent the summer abroad, and returned to Pennsylvania on a fellowship for another year of study. In 1908 he again went abroad, and by 1920 regarded himself as a permanent expatriate.

By 1912, he was the author of seven volumes which identified him as a distinct poetic personality, who combined a command of the older tradition with impressive and often daring originality. When Harriet Monroe in 1912 issued from Chicago the prospectus for her new magazine, *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, Pound characteristically proposed himself as its foreign correspondent.

He was a prolific essayist for the little magazines of New York, London, and Paris, which then constituted a large and exciting literary world. He unselfishly and persistently championed the experimental and often unpopular artists whom he approved—Antheil, the musi-

cian; Gaudier-Brzeska, pioneer abstractionist sculptor, killed in World War I; and James Joyce, among others. Most important of all, perhaps, was the advice and encouragement which he gave to T. S. Eliot, who candidly acknowledged the value of Pound's assistance in the final revision of *The Waste Land* and in connection with other poems of that period. Both poets of independent power and interests, they became the early leaders in restoring to poetry the use of literary reference as an imaginative instrument. Such referential figures of speech assume that poet and reader share a common cultural inheritance. In the present age of increasing complexity, diffuseness, and specialization of knowledge, both Pound and Eliot required of their readers a familiarity with the classics, the productions of the Italian and English Renaissance, and specialized areas of continental literature, including the works of the French symbolists. After *The Waste Land* (1922), Eliot's poetry became somewhat less difficult in this respect, while Pound's continued to draw fundamentally upon his formidably recondite culture. A large part of his work consists of "reconstructions" in modern

English of poems from earlier literatures, chiefly Greek, Latin, Italian, Provençal, and Chinese. He called the often-expanded volume of his poems his *Personæ*, or "masks," referring to the conventionalized masks of the Greek drama.

Final obstacles for the reader include the violence of Pound's distrust of capitalism, his anti-Semitism, and his allegiance to the utopian concept of "social credit." Nevertheless, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920), considered as a satire of the materialistic forces involved in World War I, is a masterpiece. In *The Cantos*, which he began to publish in 1917, the satire became intensified. The progressive series, exceeding the proposed limit of one hundred poems, are loosely connected cantos dealing with the wreck of civilizations by reason of the infidelity of humanity in the three epochs—the ancient world, the Renaissance, and the modern period. With *The Pisan Cantos* of 1948 and *Section: Rock Drill* (1955), Cantos I to XCV had all been published except for two. By 1959 they numbered CIX. By 1969 another eight "Drafts and Fragments" had appeared, and also a final canto, CXX. A considerable number contain lyrical passages of genuine power; they are in places supremely witty, and many of their topical references are shrewd and valuable. But their complexity renders them controversial. Somewhat resembling *Finnegans Wake* in structure, Pound's vast poem now has a position similar to that of Joyce's works as critical scholarship has developed a voluminous commentary concerning *The Cantos*, which employs a complex association of scholarly lore, anthropology, modern history and personages, private history and witticisms, and obscure literary interpolations in various languages, including Chinese ideograms.

In 1924 Pound left Paris for Rapallo, Italy, attracted by Mussolini's faithless promises of democratic state socialism. During World War II, Pound, on behalf of the Italian government, conducted radio broadcasts beamed at the Ameri-

can troops. He was returned to the United States as a citizen accused of treason, but on examination he was declared insane and committed to St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C. After the treason charges were dismissed in 1958, Pound returned to Italy, where he died in 1972.

Pound's early poetry, through 1912, is collected in Michael King, ed., *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, 1976. Principal earlier individual volumes are *A Lume Spento*, 1908; *A Quinzaine for This Yule*, 1908; *Personæ*, 1909, reprinted and enlarged, 1913 to 1926; *Exultations*, 1909; *Provença*, 1910, selected poems; *Canzoni*, 1911; *The Sonnets and Ballate of Guido Cavalcanti*, 1912; *Ripostes*, London, 1912, Boston, 1913, new edition, London, 1915; *Personæ and Exultations*, 1913; *Cathay*, 1915; *Lustra*, London, 1916, New York, 1917; *Quia Pauper Amavi*, undated, ca. 1919, containing "Homage to Sextus Propertius" and *Cantos I-III*; *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, 1920; *Umbra*, 1920, a collection from previous volumes; *Poems 1918-1921*, 1921; *Personæ: The Collected Poems*, 1926 (revised edition, 1949); and *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, new edition, 1934. T. S. Eliot first edited a *Selected Poems* in 1928, of which the newest edition is 1959; a New York *Selected Poems* was issued in 1949 and 1957. More early poetry appears in Norman Holmes Pearson and Michael King, eds., *End to Torment: A Memoir of Ezra Pound* by H. D., with the *Poems from "Hilda's Book"* by Ezra Pound, 1979.

Publication of *The Cantos* began when *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* printed one in each of three issues, June to August, 1917, collected as "Three Cantos" in the New York edition of *Lustra*, 1917. Their number was gradually increased, with revision and rearrangement, in several volumes: *The Pisan Cantos, LXXI to LXXXV*, 1948, the collection of the eighty-five in *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, 1948, and *Cantos*, 1954. *Section: Rock Drill*, 1955, brought the number to ninety-five, and *Thrones*, 1959, to one hundred and nine, collected in *The Cantos*, 1970. Pound's translation of *Sophokles' Women of Trachis* appeared in 1957. See also *The Translations of Ezra Pound*, ed. by Hugh Kenner (parallel texts), 1954, 1963. *Drafts and Fragments of Cantos CX-CXVII* appeared in 1969, and *Selected Cantos* in 1970.

Pound's voluminous prose contains some stimulating critical work. Typical volumes are *Gaudier-Brzeska*, 1910, a biography; *Pavannes and Divisions*, 1918; *Instigations*, 1920; *Indiscretions* (autobiographical), 1923; *The ABC of Reading*, 1934; *Culture*, 1938; *Money Pamphlets by Pound, 1950-1952*; *Pavannes and Divagations*, 1958; and *The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, 1954, edited by T. S. Eliot. *The Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907-1941* was edited by D. D. Paige in 1950. *Pound / Joyce: Letters and Essays* was edited by Forrest Read in 1967. *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship*, ed. Brita Lindberg-Seyersted, 1982, contains

And all arrogance of earthen riches,
 There come now no kings nor Cæsars
 Nor gold-giving lords like those gone.
 Howe'er in mirth most magnified,
 Whoe'er lived in life most lordliest,
 Drear all this excellence, delights undurable!
 Waneth the watch, but the world holdeth.
 Tomb hideth trouble. The blade is layed low.
 Earthly glory ageth and seareth.
 No man at all going the earth's gait,
 But age fares against him, his face paleth,
 Grey-haired he groaneth, knows gone companions,
 Lordly men, are to earth o'ergiven,
 Nor may he then the flesh-cover, whose life ceaseth,
 Nor eat the sweet nor feel the sorry,⁸
 Nor stir hand nor think in mid heart,
 And though he strew the grave with gold,
 His born brothers, their buried bodies
 Be an unlikely treasure hoard.

85

90

95

1912

A Virginal

No, no! Go from me. I have left her lately.
 I will not spoil my sheath with lesser brightness,
 For my surrounding air has a new lightness;
 Slight are her arms, yet they have bound me straitly
 And left me cloaked as with a gauze of æther,
 As with sweet leaves; as with a subtle clearness.
 Oh, I have picked up magic in her nearness
 To sheathe me half in half the things that sheathe her.
 No, no! Go from me. I have still the flavour,
 Soft as spring wind that's come from birchen bowers.
 Green come the shoots, aye April in the branches,
 As winter's wound with her sleight hand she staunches,
 Hath of the trees a likeness of the savour:
 As white their bark, so white this lady's hours.

5

10

1912

The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter⁹

While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead
 I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.
 You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,
 You walked about my seat, playing with blue plums.
 And we went on living in the village of Chokan:
 Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.

5

At fourteen I married My Lord you.
 I never laughed, being bashful.

8. *I.e.*, feel pain or sorrow.

9. Adapted from the Chinese of Li Po (700?-762), known as Rihaku in Japanese. Pound worked from

transliterations in the papers of Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), American orientalist.

In a Station of the Metro¹

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

1916

Hugh Selwyn Mauberley²

LIFE AND CONTACTS

Vocat Æstus in Umbram³

—NEMESIANUS EC. IV.

E. P.

Ode pour L'Election de son Sépulchre⁴

I

For three years, out of key with his time,
He strove to resuscitate the dead art
Of poetry; to maintain "The sublime"⁵
In the old sense. Wrong from the start—

No hardly, but, seeing he had been born
In a half-savage country, out of date;

1. The Paris subway.

2. Eliot called this "a document of an epoch"; it is also, in part, a summation of Ezra Pound's experience with the epoch climaxed by the First World War. The thirteen satiric lyrics of this poem reflect his alienation against the crass tendencies of the American *fin de siècle* and English Victorianism—especially its prudential morality in support of material "progress." He sought the creative freedom of the artist and originality, with due respect for the accumulated culture, both western and oriental. A good analysis of this poem in detail is John J. Espey, *Ezra Pound's Mauberley*, Berkeley, 1955. As Pound told Felix Schelling in a letter to this favorite teacher at Pennsylvania, "I'm no more Mauberley than Eliot is Prufrock. 'Mauberley' is a mere surface, * * * an attempt to condense the James novel." The five short lyrics of the 1920 "Mauberley" are less impressive than this first cycle. Several of the same motivations are carried over, but the action is reversed, since Mauberley, unlike Pound, is early done to death by age. The present poem, "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley: Life and Contacts," achieves independent unity for its purpose in the carefully ordered sequence of "contacts."

The text here reproduced is that of the first edition: The Ovid Press, 43 Belsege Street, London, 1920. This appeared in two hundred copies and in two forms with identical texts (confirmed by comparing one of each form in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania). Our footnotes show both the original text and the few revisions Pound authorized. For commentary on the text see, besides

Espey, *Modern Poetry*, edited by Kimon Friar and J. M. Brinnin (1951): "Pound's Notes on 'Mauberley.'"

3. Latin, meaning "Heat summons us unto the shadow." Of Nemesianus (*fl.* A.D. 283), the Roman author of this line, little survives except his four *Eclogues*. This epigraph was omitted in Pound's *Selected Poems*, 1949.

4. "E. P. Ode on the Choice of His Tomb." Cf. Pierre de Ronsard, *Odes*, Book IV, *L'Election de son sépulchre*. Ronsard's cool detachment and perspective were attractive to Pound. Cf. also Stéphane Mallarmé's "Le Tombeau d'Edgar Poe." But obviously, Pound's initials also are "E.P."; and in this first-edition text he printed them conspicuously on a line alone and off center to emphasize, as it were, that the letters just below each, in the title line, gave the "E. P." signature in lower case. Espey (see note 2) argues convincingly from textual evidence (pp. 16–20) that Pound himself is the subject *only* in the first poem, headed, "Ode": that the "Ode," written ironically in the third person as the age's judgment of Pound, ends with his literary death. Cf. ll. 18–19 and footnote. Mallarmé's poem contains the line, *Donner un sens plus pur aux mots de la tribu*, which Eliot paraphrased, in *Little Gidding*, as, "To purify the dialect of the tribe." Pound shared this aim and gave expression to it in the first two sections of "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley."

5. Achievement of "the sublime" (cf. Longinus or Kant) involved a choice of literary materials and style of exalted spiritual significance.