A Tribute to Ezra Pound

Editor’s Note

The idea of a special issue dedicated to Ezra Pound occurred to us when *The Cantos*, translated by Andrey Bronnikov, appeared in Russian.¹ Such a notable literary and cultural event is clearly to be celebrated. Regular translations, publications and research on Pound in Russia actually began in the 1990s, although there was a hiatus after Zinaida Vengerova’s 1915 essay “the English Futurists”,² and the very first Russian translations made inside (Mikhail Zenkevich) and outside (Vladimir Dukel’sky, Ivan Elagin) the USSR. But other than several acid *ripostes*,³ nothing else appeared in the Soviet press until the 1980s. Two 1982 editions, in fact, marked the end of the “Brezhnev era”: a poetic anthology *American Poetry* compiled by Alexey M. Zverev (whose interest in the American *poète maudit* began as early as 1970⁴) with several poems and a fragment of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (transl. by Andrey Sergeev, Victor Toporov, Alexey Parin), and *Cathay* printed in an academic edition *Vostok-Zapad [East-West. Studies. Translations. Publications]* (transl. by Andrey Kistiakovsky) with an introductory essay (“Chinese Improvisations of Ezra Pound”) and notes by an outstanding sinologist, Vladimir Maliavin.

Ian Probstein has described in detail the efforts and achievements of the critics, scholars, translators, and publishers⁵ of Pound in the

³ See, for example, a comment on the Bollingen Prize controversy – Mendelson, Moris. “Amerikanskaia premiia fashistskomu poetu.” [“An American Prize for a Fascist Poet.”] *Kultura i zhizn’ [Culture and Life]* (Aug. 31, 1949).
⁵ Mark Freidkin, Mikhail Gasparov, Olga Sedakova, Keti Chukhrukidze, Vladimir Kucheriaevkin, Vladimir Mikushevich and others.
post-Soviet period. Probstein, himself, has made an invaluable con-
tribution to Russian Poundiana. For some thirty years, Russian periodicals
continued to publish Pound’s work, the Russian reader exposed to his
essays, several Cantos and a solid volume composed of his main poetic
collections (2003). The way was well-paved for the Russian translation
of The Cantos. The appearance of the full Russian translation of The
Cantos (although without the two Italian Cantos [72-73]) marked a cen-
tenary of literary Modernism. Roughly one hundred years ago Pound
started his lifetime literary work, while Joyce began to publish Ulysses
(with Pound’s assistance); together, they spearheaded the modernist
movement in both poetry and prose.

We are pleased that Poundians in Russia and the world have
welcomed this special Ezra Pound issue and are honored that both
world-renowned scholars and young, talented researchers have con-
tributed to the collection. We thank our generous colleagues for their
remarkable papers, enthusiasm and commitment. Special thanks go to
Andrey Bronnikov, Ian Probstein, John Gery, Ira Nadel, Roxana Preda,
and Karina Ibragimova for their assistance and dedicated support of
the project. We also thank the Ezra Pound Society and their marvelous
digital ventures: the online magazine Make It New and The Cantos
Project. We express our sincere gratitude as well to the New Directions
Publishing Corporation, Carcanet Press and, personally, to Declan
Spring and Michael Schmidt for permission to publish the new Russian
translations.

But the publication of this collection is not a farewell to Pound;
on the contrary, we anticipate that this special issue will spark the begin-
ning of further Pound studies in the LoA.

---

6 Probstein, Ian. “’I Have Beaten Out My Exile’: The Perception of Ezra
makeitnew.ezrampoundociety.org/volume-iv/4-3-december-2017/pound-in-
russia?start=1.