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## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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",<sup>2</sup> 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*,<sup>3</sup> 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 1970<sup>4</sup>) 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 Kistiakovskiy) with an introductory essay ("Chinese Improvisations of Ezra Pound") and notes by an outstanding sinologist, Vladimir Maliavin.

Ian Probststein has described in detail the efforts and achievements of the critics, scholars, translators, and publishers<sup>5</sup> of Pound in the

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<sup>1</sup> Pound, Ezra. *Kantos*, transl., ed., comm., introd. by Andrey Bronnikov. Saint-Petersburg: Nauka Publ., 2018. LX, 881 p.

<sup>2</sup> Vengerova, Zinaida. "The English Futurists." *Strelets [Sagittarius]* 1 (1915): 91-104.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, a comment on the Bollingen Prize controversy – Mendelson, Moris. "Amerikanskaia premiia fashistskomu poetu." ["An American Prize for a Fascist Poet."] *Kul'tura i zhizn' [Culture and Life]* (Aug. 31, 1949).

<sup>4</sup> Zverev, Alexey. "Ezra Pound – literaturnaia teoriia, poezia, sud'ba." ["Ezra Pound – literary theory, poetry, destiny."] *Voprosy literatury* 6 (1970): 123-147.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Freidkin, Mikhail Gasparov, Olga Sedakova, Keti Chukhrukidze, Vladimir Kucheriavkin, Vladimir Mikushevich and others.

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post-Soviet period.<sup>6</sup> Probstein, himself, has made an invaluable contribution 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 centenary 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 contributed 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 beginning of further Pound studies in the *LoA*.

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<sup>6</sup> Probstein, Ian. "I Have Beaten Out My Exile": The Perception of Ezra Pound's Poetry in Russia." *Make It New* IV: 3 (Dec. 2017). Online at <http://makeitnew.ezrapoundsociety.org/volume-iv/4-3-december-2017/pound-in-russia?start=1>.