

READING POUND : BACKGROUND

Internet Gopher Information Client v1.12 Beinecke Manuscript Collections,
Yale University: EZRA POUND PAPERS (YCAL MSS 43)

Ezra Loomis Pound, 1885-1972

- 1885** Born Oct 30 in Hailey, Idaho, a small mining town where his father was an official in the Federal Land Office. Only child of Homer Loomis Pound of Wisconsin and Isabel Weston of New York City.
- 1887** Moved East to Wyncotte, near Philadelphia, where he was raised.
- 1901** Entered the University of Pennsylvania and attended two years. Met William Carlos Williams during the second academic year (1902-03) and initiated a lifelong friendship. He also came to know Hilda Doolittle ("H.D.") who attended Bryn Mawr College (1905-06).
- 1905** Received bachelor of philosophy (Ph.B) degree from Hamilton College, New York. Returned to University of Pennsylvania for graduate studies, obtaining an M.A. in 1906. Worked another year towards doctoral degree, developing a talent for languages.
- 1906** First three articles were published in *Book News Monthly* (Philadelphia) from material collected during a summer trip to Europe. "Raphaelite Latin," focusing on the Latin poets of the Renaissance, and "Interesting French Publications," on the troubadours, were both published in September. The third article, "Burgos, a Dream City of Old Castile" appeared in the October issue.
- 1907** Joined the faculty of Wabash Presbyterian College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, as Professor of Romance Languages. Left after one semester and in February 1908 set sail for Europe, taking the manuscript of a book of poems which had been rejected by an American publisher.
- 1908** While staying in Venice, published *A Lume Spento* at his own expense. Settled in London, striking up a friendship with Ford Madox Ford, writer and editor of the *English Review*. Ford provided introductions to such prominent English literary figures as William Butler Yeats and Wyndham Lewis. Pound published several poems and articles in the *English Review*.
- 1909** *Personae*, a book of poems published by Elkin Mathews.
Exultations.
- 1910** *The Spirit of Romance*, a text based on lectures delivered in London (1909-10).
Provenca.
- 1911** Met Alfred Orage, editor of the *Socialist Weekly, New Age*, who began to publish articles by Pound.

Canzoni.

- 1912** Became London correspondent for *Poetry* (Chicago).
Named the "Imagist Movement."

Ripostes.

- 1913** Employed as Yeats' secretary (winters of 1913-14 and 1914-15), living at Stone Cottage, in the Ashdown Forest, Sussex.

- 1914** Edited *Des Imagistes*, the first anthology of Imagist poetry. Began correspondence with James Joyce.

Met T. S. Eliot. Pound subsequently encouraged Harriet Munroe, editor of *Poetry*, to print one of Eliot's poems.

Married Dorothy Shakespear, the daughter of Olivia Shakespear, a close friend of Yeats.

- 1915** *Cathay*, an English translation of early Chinese poetry, inspired by the work of the late Ernest Fenollosa.

- 1916** *Lustra.*

Certain Noble Plays of Japan and "*Noh*" or *Accomplishment*.

- 1919** *Quia Pauper Amavi.*

- 1920** *Hugh Selwyn Mauberly.*

Umbra.

- 1921** Moved to Paris where he met Ernest Hemingway. Other Paris associates included Joyce, Cocteau, and Brancusi.

Edited T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land." Wrote "Paris Letter" for the New York literary journal *The Dial*.

Completed work on a one-act opera, "Le Testament," based on poems of Francois Villon; the opera was first performed in Paris (1926) and later in London (1931 and 1962).

Other important works published during the period 1921-24 included *Poems, 1918-1921* (1921); *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, a translation from Remy de Gourmont's *Physique de l'amour*, (1922); and *Indiscretions, an autobiographical fragment* (1923).

- 1924** Moved to Rapallo, Italy.

- 1926** *Personae* (The Collected Poems).

- 1927** Edited his own magazine, *Exile* (1927-28).

- 1928** Draft of Cantos 17-27.

Ta Hio: The Great Learning.

- 1930** *A Draft of XXX Cantos.*

In the next ten years, there were three more publications of "The Cantos:" *Eleven New Cantos* (1934); *The Fifth Decade of Cantos* (1937); *Cantos LII-LXXI* (1940). A collection of essays, *Make It New*, was also published in 1934.

With Olga Rudge, arranged a series of concerts during this period which helped to lead to the twentieth century rediscovery of Antonio Vivaldi.

- 1933** Increasing interest in economic theory led to an intensive study of monetary reform and a series of publications: *ABC of Economics* (1933); *Social Credit* (1935); *What is Money For?* (1939).
- 1935** Involvement in politics resulted in an essay declaring his admiration for Benito Mussolini, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*.
- 1937** *Confucius: Digest of the Analects*.
- 1939** Visited United States for the first time since 1910. Received honorary degree from Hamilton College.
- 1940** Began 'Radio Broadcasts' from Rome. Openly condemned United States role in war effort.
- 1942** Attempted without success to join evacuation of United States nationals from Italy.
- 1943** Charged with treason, in absentia (Washington, D.C.).
- 1945** Arrested by United States forces, spending 6 months in the Army Disciplinary Training Center near Pisa. Later brought to Washington D. C. for treason trial.
- 1946** Found medically unfit to stand trial and committed to Saint Elizabeth's Hospital for the Criminally Insane in Washington, D.C.
- 1947** *Confucius: The Unwobbling Pivot and The Great Digest*.
- 1948** *The Pisan Cantos*.
- 1949** Received Bollingen Prize for *The Pisan Cantos*.
- 1954** *The Classical Anthology Defined by Confucius*.
- 1955** *Section: Rock Drill 85-95 de los cantares*.
- 1956** Sophokles *Women of Trachis*, a translation.
- 1958** Released from Saint Elizabeth's Hospital and returned to Italy, taking up residence in his daughter's home near Merano.
- 1959** *Thrones, 96-109 de los cantares*.
- 1960** *Impact*, economic, political and cultural essays.
- 1965** Travelled to London for funeral of T.S. Eliot. Visited widow of W.B. Yeats in Dublin.
- 1969** Briefly revisited United States.
- 1972** Died on November 1 in Venice.

For fuller but still succinct outline of Pound's life chronology see 'Chronology'

in Ira B. Nadel (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. xvii-xxxi, and, fuller still, *Ezra Pound; Poems and Translations*, ed. Richard Sieburth (Library of America; New York, 2003), pp. 1207-1234.

PDF file created on 8 September 2008