

# PAIDEVMA



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## Chêng Ming: A New Paideuma

... Frobenius uses the term Paideuma for the tangle or complex of the inrooted ideas of any period ... The Paideuma is not the Zeitgeist, thou I have no doubt many people will try to sink it in the latter romantic term ... I shall use Paideuma for the gristly roots of ideas that are in action ... Mencius Epistemology starts from this verse: the men of old wanting to clarify and diffuse throughout the empire that light which comes from looking straight into the heart then acting, first set up good government in their own states; wanting good government in their states, they first established order in their own families; wanting order in the home, they first disciplined themselves; desiring self-discipline, they rectified their own hearts; and wanting to rectify their hearts they sought precise verbal definitions of their inarticulate thoughts (the tones given off by the heart); wishing to attain precise verbal definitions, they set to extend their knowledge to the utmost. This completion of knowledge is rooted in sorting things into organic categories. When things had been classified in organic categories, knowledge moved toward fulfillment; given extreme knowable points, the inarticulate thoughts were defined with precision (the sun's lance coming to rest on the precise spot verbally). Having attained this precise verbal definition (aliter, this sincerity), they then stabilized their hearts, they disciplined themselves; having attained self-discipline, they set their own houses in order; having order in their homes, they brought good government to their own states; and when their states were well governed, the empire was brought into equilibrium. From the Emperor, Son of Heaven, down to the common man, singly and all together, this self-discipline is the root—i.e. the paideuma.

*Cover: "Ezra Pound da Montin" a painting by Rinaldo Frank-Burattin.*

# PAIDEUMA

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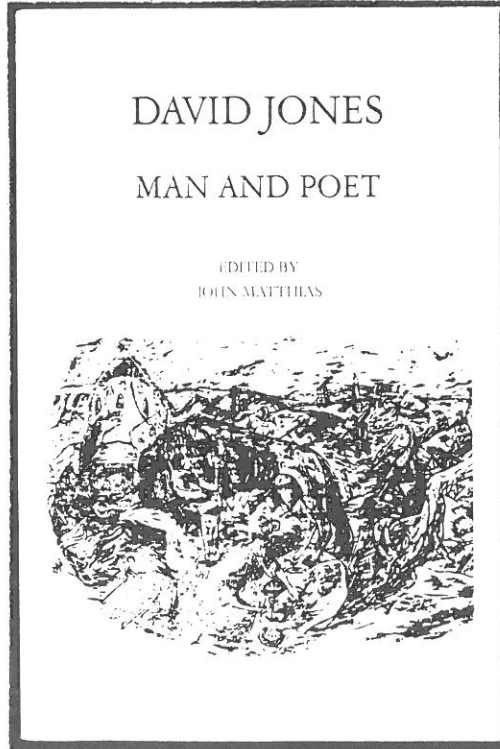
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STEPHEN J. ADAMS

*IRONY AND COMMON SENSE:  
THE GENRE OF MAUBERLEY*

Among Pound scholars, two traditions have grown up around *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, traditions that seem mutually exclusive. One--advanced by Thomas E. Connolly, Donald Davie, and Jo Brantley Berryman--declares that the speaker of the first part of the poem is not Pound but Mauberley; the poem is thus a dramatic monologue, Mauberley is the persona, and his judgments are to be taken ironically or even turned upside down. Yet no two proponents of this view have been able to agree which poems should be assigned to the persona. The other tradition--advanced by John Espey and others--understands the poem, or at least most of it, as spoken by Pound's poetic voice; this voice too is ironic, but flexible, even radically discontinuous, yielding to no simple reversal. Proponents of this view do not usually trouble to argue against the other: as Michael Alexander notes, the presence of a speaking Mauberley is "a possibility which cannot be disproved."<sup>1</sup> So the notion of *Mauberley* as a dramatic monologue persists.

This way of reading the poem has long struck me as insupportable, and I once assumed it would die a natural death. An encouraging sign was a *Paideuma* article by Jo Brantley Berryman demonstrating that the last poem in the sequence, "Medallion," is not supposedly written by Mauberley as often thought, but a poem in Pound's voice.<sup>2</sup> (The Mauberley authorship theory had been advanced by Espey in his pioneering monograph on the poem; it has been accepted even by many of the straight interpreters, including Witemeyer, Alexander, and Froula.<sup>3</sup>) So when

1. *The Poetic Achievement of Ezra Pound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 115.

2. "'Medallion': Pound's Poem," *Pai* 2-3, pp. 391-98. E. A. B. Jenner's reply to Berryman is another attempt to sort out the persona tangle; see "'Medallion': Some Questions," *Pai*, 8-1, pp. 153-57.

3. Hugh Witemeyer, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound: Forms and Renewal 1908-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 163; Alexander, *Poetic Achievement*,

Berryman's dissertation was published in 1983, I turned to it with anticipation--and was dismayed to find the most uncompromising argument yet that "the first twelve poems of the sequence, from the 'Ode' through Poem XII, are meant to be regarded as spoken solely by the fictional Mauberley."<sup>4</sup>

Berryman's book is exhaustively researched, and it is nothing if not consistent; it has the merit of pushing its arguments to their conclusions. But it is a work of scholarship *manqué*. Its existence can only perpetuate the needless confusion about the speaker of the poem and so continue the obfuscation of one of Pound's most brilliant works. Theoretically, there is no way to *prove* the poem is not spoken by Mauberley. But one may examine the way in which this assumption arose, and the conclusions to which it leads.

In the critical history of Pound's poem, the earliest hint that Mauberley might be the speaker is found in Hugh Kenner's first book on Pound. Kenner is not primarily interested in the speaker; he is mainly intent on refuting F.R. Leavis's influential analysis, which sees *Mauberley* as Pound's single important success and the Mauberley character as a Poundian self-portrait; the speaker of the poem does not occur to Leavis as an issue. Kenner's purpose is to insist on the separation of Mauberley from Pound; but in the process, almost inadvertently it seems, he creates a Mauberley who speaks as in a dramatic monologue. Contrasting Pound with Eliot, Kenner writes, "J. Alfred Prufrock is not Mr. Eliot, but he speaks with Mr. Eliot's voice . . . . Hugh Selwyn Mauberley, on the other hand, does not speak with Mr. Pound's voice, and is more antithetically than intimately related to the poet of *The Cantos*" (HK, *Poetry* 166).<sup>5</sup> Yet Kenner's analysis nowhere implies another speaker, except in the opening "Ode," where the point of view is already indicated by the title as some kind of comment on Pound's career. "As soon as we see that this epitaph is not . . . being written by Pound," says Kenner, "the entire sequence falls into focus" (171). Kenner also seems responsible for the notion that "Medallion" is

115; Christine Froula, *A Guide to Ezra Pound's 'Selected Poems'* (New York: New Directions, 1983), 103.

4. *Circe's Craft: Ezra Pound's 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley'* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), xii. Berryman's work is accepted by Ian F.A. Bell, "The Phantasmagoria of Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," *Pai* 5-3, 361-85.

5. Kenner later states clearly that all the poems of the first sequence except "Ode" are spoken by "E. P." See *The Pound Era*, 287. For Leavis, see *New Bearings in English Poetry* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1932).



Mauberley's poem, though again he hints rather than develops this view: "To present the series / Of curious heads in medallion' was, we remember, Mauberley's ambition, and this sample Medallion in its very scrupulousness exemplifies his sterility . . . . Mauberley cringed before the age's demands; he wrote one poem and collapsed" (181).

John Espey's 1955 monograph advocates this view of "Medallion" explicitly, but otherwise offers an excellent straight reading of the entire poem, demonstrating in the process that Mauberley can be differentiated from Pound without turning him into a speaking persona. This book, however, evoked a review-essay by Thomas E. Connolly that not only insisted on the whole first sequence as a dramatic monologue, but built its case on a statement by Pound which Connolly thought settled the matter for good. "The worst muddle they make," wrote Pound in a letter to Connolly, "is in failing to see that Mauberley buried E.P. in the first poem; gets rid of all his tiresome energies." Espey himself, in a later edition of his book, describes Connolly's review as "penetrating"--but he does not alter his reading.<sup>6</sup>

Pound's statement is one of the few pieces of external evidence we have of his intentions, and it has been offered as irrefutable proof that he intended his poem to be dramatic monologue. But it has never been scrutinized. One could recall conventional wisdom: do not trust the author, trust the tale. One could point to the thirty-six years, and the events in them, separating Pound's poem from his *obiter dictum*. One could speculate about the context of the letter, which Connolly does not supply. One could inquire into ambiguities in the statement itself--for example, when Pound wrote "Mauberley buried E.P.," did he mean the name of the character or the title of the poem? (Pound's epistolary typography is not a safe guide.) But what does Pound's sentence really say? "Mauberley buried E.P. *in the first poem.*" He is most likely objecting to Leavis's confessional interpretation of the "Ode." But from this, Connolly decides that he cannot agree "with Espey and others who see Pound as the speaker of the first thirteen poems and Mauberley as the speaker of the last five. The

6. "Further Notes on Mauberley," *Accent* 16 (Winter 1956), 59. See Espey, *Ezra Pound's 'Mauberley'*, Preface to the paperback edition. Espey is now reported to feel that "the entire controversy about the 'voice' problem in the poem is somewhat misleading since most of the views in 'Mauberley' are repeated elsewhere in both Pound's poetry and prose and therefore presumably represent his views." Quoted by Terri Brint Joseph, "The Decentred Centre of Ezra Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*," *Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature*, 1 (1982), 125.

whole sequence falls into better focus if it is clearly seen that Mauberley is the speaker of the first thirteen poems.<sup>7</sup> The logic of this escapes me. It is certainly not a necessary conclusion from Pound's sentence, which refers to the first poem only. The extension to the subsequent poems is Connolly's alone.

But Connolly has been followed, most notably by Davie and Berryman. It is hard to imagine a greater embarrassment to a more eminent critic than Davie's backpedaling career as a *Mauberley* commentator. In his first and most detailed treatment of the poem in 1961, Davie accepts Connolly's view, though his honesty forces him to express serious reservations. Quoting Pound's letter to Connolly, Davie rightly objects that if the "Ode" is supposed to be spoken by someone other than Pound, "there is no way of knowing that the speaker in fact is Mauberley." Moreover, he continues, "Pound's comment implies, what is not easy to discover within the poetry itself, that subsequent sections of the poem are also understood as spoken not by Pound himself but by the imaginary Mauberley." In the course of his essay, Davie faults Pound for obscuring the point of view, then for making "ironic detachment and slight shifts of tone do more than they can do, by way of directing the reader's attention," and then for attempting to speak through a persona who is not "sufficiently differentiated from the poet himself." Furthermore, he complains that, although the first sequence reads better if taken as spoken by Mauberley, yet many of the poems "can be read as if spoken directly by Pound."<sup>8</sup> In this essay, evidently, Davie feels that he has been instructed to read Pound's poem as a dramatic monologue but finds the process distressing.

Davie has since retreated from this position, but he has not given it up. In *Ezra Pound: Poet as Sculptor* (1964), he wonders whether a temperament as idiosyncratic as Pound's can sustain an unsympathetic persona like Mauberley. He again cites the sentence from Pound's letter to Connolly, and again complains that the persona is not clear or consistent. He concludes surprisingly--but most

7. Connolly, 59-60. Connolly, incidentally, misrepresents Espey, who does not see Mauberley as speaker of the last five poems. Another version of this statement, in a letter to Sister Bernetta Quinn, is equally inconclusive about the poems after "Ode": "Don't it SAY *whose* sepulchre? . . . Can't see why you bury the wrong man (HSM) in 1st poem" (Quoted by Joseph, 125). William Harmon also has Pound burying Mauberley; see *Time in Ezra Pound's Work* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), 83.

8. "Ezra Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*," in *The Modern Age*, vol. 7 of the Pelican Guide to English Literature, ed. Boris Ford (1961; Harmondworth: Penguin, 2nd ed., 1963), 321-23.



persuasively--that "hardly anything is lost, and much is gained, if the poems are read, one at a time, as so many poems by Pound, and if the Mauberley persona is dismissed as a distracting nuisance" (Davie, *Sculptor* 101). Yet Davie still refers his readers to his 1961 essay.

In his 1975 book, however, Davie formally disowns that essay. He does not give reasons, however; and despite his insight that the Mauberley persona is a distracting nuisance, he clings to it still. "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley is a mask that continually slips," he charges. "More distractingly still, since we are advised of the mask in the very title, how are we to know in which poems Pound speaks through the mask, and in which he doesn't?" (Davie, *Ezra*, 55). The persona theory that served Yeats so well "seems only to have confused Pound and led him to confuse his readers" (Davie, *Sculptor* 101). Yet Davie's objections lose their force when the persona theory is abandoned. The confusion, I suggest, is not Pound's but Davie's.

Davie has been the most visible victim of Connolly's *non sequitur*, and his confusion has been widely disseminated. It is now perpetuated by Jo Brantley Berryman's book, which originated as a University of Southern California dissertation under the supervision of Davie himself. Berryman completed her work in 1973; Davie disowned his *Mauberley* essay in 1975. Except for her clarification of "Medallion," he does not endorse Berryman's reading. Is it possible that Davie was moved to retract when he saw the logical consequences of the persona theory pushed to their extremes by his pertinacious student?

For as Davie sees, evidence in the text of the speaker's identity is faint. Pound's poem is far more perspicuous if it is assigned to Pound's voice. How then--aside from Pound's one sentence about the first poem in a private letter to Connolly--did dramatic monologue conventions come to seem appropriate at all?

The opening of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* does contain a few features that suggest dramatic monologue; but the deictics of the poem do not ultimately point to a specified, dramatized speaking character. Because Pound often worked with dramatic monologue, a poem bearing the name of a fictitious character might seem to invoke the genre. But many poems have such titles without becoming dramatic monologues--the ballad-oriented poems of Wordsworth ("Simon Lee") or the narratives of Crabbe ("Peter Grimes"); Pound's heritage in Mauberley is probably the classical epigram, which he imitated in poems like

"Arides" or "Phyllidula," and sometimes grouped into sequences. When Pound does work with dramatic monologue elsewhere, his intentions are not obscure. No one mistakes the early "Cino" or "La Fraisne," nor the *Cathay* poems. Despite Davie's claim, Pound shows little difficulty sustaining personae. There is, of course, the peculiar stance of the "Ode," probably the single most misleading feature of the opening of *Mauberley*. This I will return to, and simply assert here that its point of view is plainly different from what follows.

Although "dramatic monologue" is notoriously difficult to define precisely, a rough definition is useful here. Alan Sinfield, discussing the concept in Methuen's Critical Idiom Series, tries two approaches. First, he draws up a list of common features derived from Browning examples: a first-person speaker different from the poet; an auditor; a specific time and place, usually remote from the poet's own; colloquial language; a mixture of sympathy with, and detachment from, the speaker.<sup>9</sup>

Of these specifications, the first and last--the speaker's difference from the poet, the mixture of sympathy and irony--in one sense beg the question, being items under dispute in *Mauberley*. No one has claimed that the *Mauberley* persona has an auditor. Pound's language is colloquial, but this conforms to his poetic generally; it proves nothing, though it may support readers who desire to find a persona. The poem has a specific time and place--London 1919 and 1920--but this is identical to Pound's own. According to Davie, this is a fault because the proximity of the "persona" to Pound is confusing. But the time and place of *Mauberley* just as plausibly arise from Pound's poetic of the concrete, although the sequence makes virtually no attempt to evoke a *mise en scène* in the manner typical of dramatic monologue (at least until Poem VII, "Among the pickled foetuses and bottled bones").

But on examination, all of these features function as signals of some kind of difference between the speaker of the monologue and the reader's knowledge of the poet--clear differences of time, place, language, or situation. One might add race, sex, age, or nation of origin. Now Pound--admittedly of all poets least likely to be bound by narrow conceptions of genre--might well have attempted a monologue by a white male thirtyish Anglo-Saxon poet living in 1919 London and speaking its dialect. If he had

9. *Dramatic Monologue* (London: Methuen, 1977), 7.

tried such a delicate experiment, however, is it not likely that he would have provided some better cue that he is not speaking for himself?

Alan Sinfield, however, sets aside his itemized definition of dramatic monologue as too narrow and offers instead "the broadest definition of dramatic monologue as simply a poem in the first person spoken by, or almost entirely by, someone who is indicated not to be the poet" (9). In *Mauberley*, not only are such conditions feeble, but the poems fail to establish even the single salient feature needed to qualify as dramatic monologue: the grammatical first person.<sup>10</sup>

Thirteen of the eighteen sections of *Mauberley* are firmly third-person. This includes the opening "Ode," admittedly a special case, plus poems II, IV, V, VI, VIII, X, XI, and the entire second sequence. Only poems III, VII, IX, and XII employ first person in any form, plus the "Envoi," which is another special case and an instructive one. Readers who imagine a dramatic speaker must therefore construct an "implied speaker" for the third-person poems and then assume that this is Mauberley. But such an "implied speaker," like a third-person narrator in a novel, is as likely to be a sympathetic projection of the author as otherwise: the reader must still judge from other cues the nearness or distance between the "author" and the narrating voice. Also, given the tendency of third-person discourse to throw attention from the speaking voice onto the subject, the reader must also judge how much attention to give the speaker and how much to what is being said. If Pound intended the speaker of *Mauberley* to be a dramatized character, he has not proven very successful: he is either blamed by Davie for failing, or praised by Berryman for most exceptional subtlety. The speech of this "implied speaker" certainly shows nothing like the continuous and

10. The only commentator who considers grammatical point of view is William V. Spanos, who arrives at conclusions opposite from mine. Spanos sees three categories: poems in the third person ("Ode" and Poem X) "describe the weakened and ineffectual condition of the poet;" poems in the first person (III, VII, IX, and XII) "constitute the poet's contacts with the exploiters and victims of the age's demands;" and poems "projected without reference to a speaker" (II, IV, V, VI, VIII, and XI) are direct attacks "on the age or on individuals who are symptomatic of it." Spanos' reading is subtle, but his third category is dubious, and he must appeal to several exceptions and inexact orderings to make it work. He is the only critic to read the second sequence as also spoken by Mauberley, and opines that "Mauberley deliberately employs the third person to mask his weakness from the reader and to protect himself from his own sentimentality, a conclusion considerably strengthened by the experiment of reading 'I' for 'he' in these poems." Spanos' case for a speaking persona rests solely on Connolly's letter and the italics used in "Envoi" (taken to signal a speaker different from the rest of the poem). See "The Modulating Voice of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*," *Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature* 6 (1965), 73-96.

spontaneous self-revelation of Browning's Fra Lippo or Eliot's Prufrock. This speaker directs attention not on himself but on his subject. And his subjects are those of Pound elsewhere at this time: alienation from the London establishment, rage at the war, frustration at neglect of his favoured traditions and the trivialization of art.

Curiously, one poem in *Mauberley* that does employ the first person, the much admired "Envoi," is almost universally agreed to emanate from Pound's own lyric voice. "This is one place where there is no doubt who is speaking," writes Davie. "It is Pound himself . . . ." Berryman too sees "Envoi" as Pound's. Only Connolly reads it as Mauberley's poem, and produces an auditor: it is Mauberley's "farewell to London," he says, "a farewell taken in terms of an address to Lady Valentine."<sup>11</sup> Such disagreement, playing on the ambiguous relationship between the "I" of lyric and the "I" of dramatic monologue, exposes the arbitrariness of trying to assign different speakers to these poems.

The occasional presence of first person in the first sequence fails to support any illusion of a characterized speaker. Poem III, the earliest occurrence of first person, begins with third-person statements contrasting present with past:

The tea-rose tea-gown, etc.,  
Supplants the mousseline of Cos . . . .

First-person forms emerge only in line 9, unobtrusively and in the plural ("Shall outlast our days"), speaking not from an individual viewpoint but for the age collectively. The contrast of present and past continues, and attention remains on the speaker's statement, not his personality:

Even the Christian beauty  
Defects--after Samothrace;  
We see το κάλον  
Decreed in the market place.

The "I" of poems VII, IX, and XII is more palpably dramatized, appearing in the company of Monsieur Verog, Mr. Nixon, and Lady Valentine. But his appearance comes too late in the poem to alter the point of view, and no commentator claims that he does. The "I" in each case is more observer than characterized speaker. He pronounces one stanza of comment on Monsieur Verog but spends three paraphrasing his conversation, so attention focusses on Verog

11. Davie, in *Pelican Guide*, 325; Berryman, *Circe's Craft*, 143-5; Connolly, 63.

more than the speaker. "Mr. Nixon" is especially interesting: we hear Nixon's speech directly transcribed, set in conspicuous quotation marks, a genuine little soul-baring dramatic monologue within the sequence and the only direct speech we hear. The "I" of the poem remains observer and auditor, Gigadibs to Nixon's Blougram, not the focus of attention. In all three poems, he acts as a Jamesian *ficelle* to help realize a scene, provoke acts of self revelation, and occasionally comment on them. But there is nothing to separate this "I" from the Poundian voice that dominates the whole sequence.

Because any poem is a form of dramatized speech, of course, these arguments prevent no one from reading *Mauberley* as a dramatic monologue who insists on doing so. They do, I think, make the Mauberley persona theory less plausible. The interpretive and critical consequences of the theory bear this out further.

Donald Davie's querulous dissatisfaction is one consequence. If Mauberley is speaker, Davie is right to complain that Pound's cues are unclear, that the character is poorly realized, that the speaker makes no difference to most of the poems, and that shifts from one speaker to another cannot be determined. A.L. French, in his hostile assessment of the poem, raises another consequence: "It makes Part I of *Mauberley* into a series of admittedly slight poems, elaborately exposing the sensibility of an unimportant writer."<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, Jo Brantley Berryman's solution is sweeping and dogmatic: there is no inconsistency because Mauberley speaks everything in poems I through XII, and everything must be read with an ironic reversal. This makes for consistency, to be sure, but it forces Berryman into pages of tortuous argument to construe not only a character for Mauberley but an implied author for Pound--a Pound who becomes unrecognizable.

To illustrate the extremes to which Berryman is driven, let us consider her reading of poems IV and V. These have long been admired as Pound's fervent and eloquent invective against the Great War. Not so, says Berryman. She offers two reasons, both outrageous.

The first rests on an ironic use of poetic form. The reader must begin by recognizing the rhetoric and cadence of Poem IV as an allusion to a specific source: Edgar Lee Masters' introductory poem to his *Spoon River*

12. "'Olympian Apathein': Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* and Modern Poetry," in *Ezra Pound: A Critical Anthology*, ed. J.P. Sullivan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 334.

*Anthology*. But Berryman, unlike Ian F.A. Bell who suggested the borrowing, does not believe that Pound used this cadence "to underscore his own feelings, to voice his own disgust at the war waste" (61). Instead, the reader is then expected to divine Pound's disaffection from the Masters he once admired, and conclude that the borrowing only betrays the speaker's inadequate sensibility: "Pound has Mauberley imitate Masters's rhythm in order to suggest that Mauberley lacks the poetic ability to create his own distinctive cadence" (62).<sup>13</sup> The subject of the poem, then, is not World War I as we all supposed, but Hugh Selwyn Mauberley's poor taste in verse.

What becomes of Pound's invective against the War? Well, his feelings on the subject have, it seems, been grossly exaggerated. When the Mauberley persona expresses "bleak disillusionment" in the face of the Great War, we ought to see him as one of the cynics, one of "those who only criticize and complain." Pound, on the other hand, "is concerned with presenting not the flaws in, but the values of, civilization;" he believes in "concentrating his energies on positive achievements" (62). Everywhere, Berryman's analysis depends upon massive use of selective quotation from Pound's prose; in this case, the Pound who wrote in 1920 "I trust an American publication about as far as I wd. trust a British government" (*L* 152) ends up sounding like a Chamber of Commerce booster. Apparently, when we hear the speaker of *Mauberley* comment on

usury age-old and age-thick  
and liars in public places,

we should regard him as a deluded victim of negativism.

The roseate Pound portrayed by Berryman would never describe civilization as nothing more than "two gross of broken statues" or a "few thousand battered books." Davie too was disturbed by these lines, which seem to reduce the value of European civilization "in a way that doubtless Pound would not endorse."<sup>14</sup> Such comments reveal how the Mauberley and Pound personae that emerge from such a reading are flat, one-sided characters. Much of Berryman's

13. Given the enormous vogue of *Spoon River*, the Masters borrowing is in itself possible. Bell, however, makes it seem more plausible than it is by silently omitting Masters' elegiac refrain ("All, all, are sleeping on the hill"). Pound's rhetoric is much more intricate than Masters' simple anaphora; and of course, as Espey notes (pp. 42-48), Pound claimed his model as Bion. See Ian F.A. Bell, "In the Real Tradition: Edgar Lee Masters and *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*," *Criticism* 22 (1981), 141-54. Pound's recorded readings of these poems (Caedmon TC 1122) do not to my ear suggest ironical equivocation.

14. Davie, in *Pelican Guide*, 321.



argument against Pound as speaker depends on some narrow presupposition about what an implied "Pound" might say. The implied Pound in this case is more committed to purely aesthetic ideals, despite the carnage, than any fictitious Mauberley was ever imagined to be. A reading that places the entire poem within the poetic voice of Pound is both simpler than Berryman's, and more complex: simpler by eliminating the specious sleuthing after fictitious personae; more complex by returning the well modulated ironies of the text to a "Pound" capable of a full range of human feelings and attitudes, from rage and disgust to social comedy or lyrical nostalgia.

Berryman's faith in the persona theory forces her everywhere into dubious judgments and an over-simplified view of Pound. The speaker of "Yeux Glauques," for example, cannot be Pound, she says, because he is more interested in the lives of the Pre-Raphaelites than in their art; yet Pound, despite certain statements which Berryman dutifully produces, was concerned all his life with the treatment of artists by society. Berryman decides that the allusion to Ruskin in the same poem is negative, the Ruskin who libelled Whistler; Hugh Witemeyer, in a recent *Paideuma* article, counters with a positive Ruskin, champion of aesthetic values in a philistine society.<sup>15</sup> Witemeyer's essay, illustrating a problem so frequently caused by Pound's antonomasia, is a good example of the kind of evidence that could be massed on the opposite side of all of Berryman's. Yet the exercise would be beside the point: Berryman's reading begins from inappropriate assumptions. It is wrong, wrong from the start.

A reading that discards the persona theory, as many good commentaries have shown, suits most of the poem without difficulty. There are many disagreements over detail, naturally, but in general we can assume "Pound" as speaker throughout: in the first sequence he comments on the London milieu and its immediate history, and in the second he comments on the fictional Mauberley. The only problematical sections are "Ode," "Envoi," and "Medallion."

As the subtitle of "Ode" indicates, this poem is spoken *about* Pound in third person. It apparently represents Pound as he appears to the literary London analysed in the rest of the sequence. It is natural, then, to assume a speaker who is not Pound, and perhaps little is lost in this one poem

15. "'Of Kings' Treasuries': Pound's Allusion to Ruskin in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley,'" *Pai* 15-1, 23-31.

if he is called Mauberley. The poem remains an ironic dismissal of "E.P." But as Davie notes, nothing indicates that the speaker is in fact Mauberley. "Ode" is just as easily taken as Pound pronouncing his own epitaph and mimicking the lofty tone of reviewers who had rejected him. This peculiar third-person stance towards oneself places the poem in the satirical tradition of Swift's "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift." In both cases, the reader knows the author's name and can be trusted to figure out the irony.

A poem that seems to be Pound's immediate model, Tristan Corbière's "Epitaph," raises a further point:

Il se tua d'ardeur, ou mourut de paresse.  
S'il vit, c'est par oubli; voici qu'il se laisse:

--Son seul regret fut de n'être pas sa maîtresse.--

Il ne naquit par aucun bout,  
Fut toujours poussé vent-debout  
Et fut un arlequin-ragoût,  
Mélange adultère du tout....

Coureur d'idéal,--sans idée;  
Rime riche,--et jamais rimée;  
Sans avoir été, revenu;  
Se retrouvant perdu.

This model, noted long ago by Kenner (HK, *Poetry*, 169), has not been investigated further. If accepted, it raises the question why Pound--who at the time he wrote *Mauberley* considered Corbière "the greatest poet of the period," bracketed him with Villon, and produced him as evidence that all French poetry does not "smell of talcum powder"<sup>16</sup>--would place a poem in Corbière's quirky and sardonic manner in the mouth of a persona who is supposed to embody aesthetic passiveness.

With the exception of Connolly noted above, the speaker of "Envoi" has not been disputed; the poem is generally taken as Pound's monitory example of English traditions that England has allowed to die. But its relation to "Medallion," and the provenance of that final poem, have

16. *Instigations* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1920), 19-29. Espey (pp. 62-63) curiously minimizes Corbière's presence, believing that "to support this Villon-Corbière echo as *Mauberley's* primary one, it would ... be necessary to insist that somewhere in the second section the ironic voice of the opening "Ode" speaks again, that Mauberley himself offers an obliquely personal commentary on Pound." This might be arguable if one took the speaker of "Ode" to be Mauberley; but Espey himself does not, and my point stands.

caused much controversy. The suggestion of Kenner and Espey that "Medallion" is Mauberley's single poem has been widely adopted, even by those who otherwise reject the Mauberley persona, and there is no formal indication that this construction is not possible. But this reading requires that "Medallion" be seen as a deliberately inadequate or bad poem, somehow *worse* than "Envoi" (to which it is clearly related) rather than different in kind. But as Terri Brint Joseph remarks, "critics who look for flaws in the poem are oddly troubled by it, finding it difficult to dismiss the poem even after pointing out its severity and highly disciplined surface" (128). Returning "Medallion" to Pound's voice excuses us from having to discover in it subtle violations of Pound's poetic, without destroying the deliberately flattened closure of the last lines.

The Mauberley authorship theory also requires that Mauberley's artistic medium be verbal, not visual. The text is ambivalent, but the balance tips slightly to the visual. In one place, Mauberley's passion is said to be

to convey the relation  
Of eye-lid and cheek-bone  
By verbal manifestation.

Yet his tool in one poem is the engraver's, and his aim in another is

To present the series  
Of curious heads in medallion.

"Medallion" makes sense to me, then, as a third-person description in Pound's voice, like all the rest of the poem, of a medallion engraved by the fictitious minor artist Mauberley. It is not an example of Mauberley's work, but Pound's poem *about* Mauberley's work. This construction is more economical, it does not require a suddenly hyper-critical reading of the poem, and it does not rule out any of the number of relationships between "Medallion" and "Envoi" that have been suggested.

There is, then, no necessary reason to summon a speaker other than "Pound" at any point in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*. The entire controversy--this essay included--has resulted from a critical wrong turn by the earliest commentators. This does not mean that we should return to F. R. Leavis's confessional reading. The relation of Mauberley to Pound is a separate issue. Nor does it significantly alter readings like those of Joseph Riddell<sup>17</sup> or

17. "Pound and the Decentered Image," *Georgia Review* 29 (1968), 465-91.

Terri Brint Joseph, who find "radical discontinuities" in the poem. Differences of interpretation will doubtless continue. But the question of the speaker should be allowed to become again, what it was for Leavis, a non-issue.

In terms of genre, *Mauberley* belongs not with Pound's dramatic monologues; it belongs instead with the satirical epigrams, which Pound had been for several years experimentally grouping in sequences, like "Xenia" (1913). The poem in Pound's canon most like *Mauberley*--even perhaps a sketch for *Mauberley*--is the witty and neglected "Moeurs Contemporaines." But the articulated double sequence of *Mauberley* is far more intricately organized than its predecessors, and its satire, ranging from ironic analysis to direct invective, cuts deeper. It stands as the best example outside *The Cantos* of Pound's logopoeia.

