away and provides a text which gives the impression of a novel: "In the pinkish twilight of a September evening in 1904, after nearly twenty-one years abroad, Henry James was back in America, strolling along the brick streets of Cambridge" (302). The book is not a mixture of genres in a 3-in-1 way; rather, there is a mashing of genres due to the lack of consistency of the style.

Another problem is that the interpretation of certain poems is rather artificial and not convincing, as if interpretation was aimed solely at providing evidence for Higginson's influence on Dickinson's poetry. There are too many presumptions about the poems, as well as about Higginson's reaction to them. In connection with "As imperceptibly as grief," for instance, the author writes: "Her description of the summer may be her description of him: the guest that would disappear, if he ever came. . . . And he could assume that the diaphanous summer, making its light escape, is like Dickinson herself" (168). Certainly, Dickinson's cryptic poems often lend themselves to several possible readings; however, merely the notions of "guest" and "escape" cannot justify an interpretation that identifies them with the two characters.

Despite these shortcomings, *White Heat* is a remarkable work, interesting for scholars and non-academics alike. The author achieves her aim of providing a historical, political and artistic context for the poems, as well as throwing new light onto the work and friendship of Dickinson and Higginson. It is unique since it focuses on both personalities, not just the poet. Written with unusual intuition and empathy, the book reveals much about Emily Dickinson and creates a new image of Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

Judit Kónyi

Notes

1. Richard Sewall, *The Life of Emily Dickinson* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1974).
2. Sewall, p. 575.
3. Vivan R. Pollack, *Dickinson: The Anxiety of Gender* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 228.
4. Sewall, p. 573.
5. John Cody, *After great Pain: The Inner Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press & Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 21.

Genial Pound

A. David Moody, *Ezra Pound: Poet. A Portrait of the Man and his Work. Volume 1: The Young Genius, 1885–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

Being a Pound scholar may be an awkward position. All those questions about Pound's fascism and his confinement to an asylum are ample reason for embarrassment. And if this were not enough, we have Pound's extravagance on the one hand, and his works, often regarded as inaccessible or straight gibberish, on the other.

There could be a lot of issues to bother one. However, A. David Moody is not the man to give in to such worries. His biography of Pound is neither apologetic, nor negligent of facts. When he accounts for Pound's early prejudiced remarks on Judaism, Moody rushes ahead to face the problem and makes a committed statement: "Here it would be very easy to short-circuit our search for understanding by simply writing Pound down as antisemitic and so being done with the vexing problem; but the fact is that there is too little evidence in his writings up to 1920 to support such a heavy judgement at this stage. Just half-a-dozen prejudicial remarks don't make a case. . . . We will come to that [most grave failing of judgement in the 1930s and after] in its proper time and place. The troubling question won't go away" (370–71).

Moody's attempt to explain how Pound's much-commended literary philanthropy could give way to his irremediable politico-economical delusion will be presented only in the second volume, which will cover the poet's life and work from 1920 onward. However, at this stage Moody is more concerned with presenting Pound's works comprehensively: his responsibility is to sketch a portrait of the Man and his Work – without preliminarily touching on later political issues.

As the title page reveals, Pound and Moody agree on one point without hesitation: both of them are convinced of Pound's genius: the title of Moody's first volume is *The Young Genius*. Besides appearing twice on the title page (the second time in the epigraph from a letter of Pound), the word "genius" is also the very first word of the text (in the preface). Moody cannot emphasize enough his conviction of Pound's genius, since he, as a Pound scholar, must be painfully aware of how the reception of Pound's works has been overshadowed by a preoccupation with his politics, even with respect to the parts of his *oeuvre* that are untainted by fascist ideology. Moody's credo involves his respect for the man's literary accomplishment and his undeniable pity for Pound's monstrous ideological failure: "There is a great deal more to the full story of Ezra Pound than is allowed for in the received ideas which would make of him simply an outcast or an icon, or both. There is more of the human comedy; and in his end there is a tragedy to arouse horror, compassion, and awed comprehension. He was in his own way a hero of his culture, a genuine representative of both its more enlightened impulses and its self-destructive contradictions. And his poetry is prophetic, at once revealing something of the mystery of the contemporary money-dominated and market-oriented Western world, and envisioning a wiser way of living" (xi).

The title of the overall work (*Ezra Pound: Poet*) is not accidentally reminiscent of Moody's earlier monograph on Eliot. A. David Moody, Professor

Emeritus at the University of York, established his scholarly reputation with, among others, writings on T. S. Eliot's life and work. The first edition of his renowned biography, *Thomas Stearns Eliot: Poet*, was published in 1979, and has been in print ever since. Moody explains the choice of title in the introduction of his previous book. "The 'Thomas Stearns Eliot' of my title is a collection of writings, and the 'Poet' is the author within his poems. For his readers Eliot now is an *oeuvre*, just as Shakespeare is."[1] Thus man and work are so intertwined in the case of a poet that only a joint discussion can yield an authentic portrait. The subtitle of the Pound biography (*A Portrait of the Man and his Work*) indicates the double perspective of the biography more explicitly: the book, answering the challenge of the times, is a 2-in-1 package of biography and literary history. Not only does David Moody present the facts of Pound's life most meticulously but he also investigates his poetical output with vigorous critical skills. The early, formative volumes, including *A Lume Spento*, *A Quinzaine for this Yule*, *Personae of Ezra Pound*, *Exultations*, *Canzoni* and *Ripostes*, which are usually underrepresented in research, are covered by a roughly equally measured six to eight pages, while more acclaimed works like *Lustra*, *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, the Ur-Cantos and *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* are treated slightly more extensively. The discussion ranges from Moody's outlining of the perceived structure of each book (which is indispensable to a proper understanding of Pound's poetics in the case of volumes that even the informed reader knows only from selections), through explaining the poetic concepts, themes and inspiration characterizing the volume, to the analysis of major poems.

The fifteen chapters of the first volume span Ezra Loomis Pound's birth in Hailey, Idaho, on October 30, 1885, to his leaving London at the end of December 1920. The two major sections reconsider a chronological divide of Pound's life: while a 1978 essay collection edited by Philip Grover pronounced the years 1908–1920 the "London years,"[2] Moody departs from this tradition, describing only the years 1911–1920 as forming the era of Pound's London – since he spent most of the year 1910 and the first half of 1911 in France, Italy, the United States and Germany. The reader is first made familiar with the genealogy of the Young Genius. This is followed by a detailed account of his studies at the University of Pennsylvania and Hamilton College, both official and extracurricular, and by a satisfyingly compact description of his courtship of Viola Baxter, his romances with the poet H. D. or Hilda Doolittle and Katherine Ruth Heyman, his passing engagement to Mary Moore of Trenton and his friendship with Mary Moore Young at Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana (where he was appointed

as an instructor) – as well as his camaraderie with William Carlos Williams. The minutely precise narrative tracks Pound to Gibraltar and Venice, where he has printed his first collection of poems, *A Lume Spento*, ensuring that he could enter the literary circles of London a *poet*. Moody records events of Pound's days in London on the basis of diaries, memoirs, letters, prose and verse works; the biographer can rely on Pound's fiancée-to-be Dorothy Shakespear's jotting down of every minor incident as well as on his numerous literary friends' letters, including those of T. E. Hulme, Ford Madox Hueffer, W. B. Yeats – and later of Wyndham Lewis, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, T. S. Eliot and James Joyce. The book pays special attention to Pound's attempts to participate in – and re-conceptualize – literary reviews he came across, including *Poetry* in Chicago, *The New Freewoman* (later *Egoist*), *BLAST*, the *New Age*, and the *Little Review* in New York. The focus, however, is not on his prose contributions but on his poetry, if economic hardships did not hinder him from producing some.

While Noel Stock's earlier biography set out to discriminate the "luminous details" of Pound's life, especially prominent persons, emblematic places and works indicative of his literary progression, and to construct a coherent narrative around them, Moody's professed aim is to recover "a sense of the complexity of the man" (xii). His implicit, and undeniably ambitious, goal is to reconstruct the working of Pound's mind: what drove him to become engaged in certain activities, why he chose certain paths and how his pursued literary ideals were merged into each other. Moody comes to the conclusion that Pound's main motives included a quest for beauty (which implied both a fervent search for an earthly muse, and the adoption of classical and Renaissance aesthetic values), a conviction in the social, cultural and political power of artistic excellence (for this reason, he advocated fellow artists' work even more ardently than he did his own, and sometimes even let his talent be wasted in petty strife for money – for others) as well as a conscious effort to develop his craftsmanship and to find his proper form and themes through imitation and experimentation. However thorough Moody's notions are his effort to fit Pound's various moves into his scheme sometimes undermines his original aim of presenting the "complexity of the man."

While highly organized in its presentation of ideas, the biography is occasionally unbalanced in its reliance on citations. For example, readers receive the impression that they are informed about every message between Ezra and Dorothy during their long courtship. After their marriage, however, the discussion of their relationship stops abruptly. Probably, as there were fewer letters after they united in holy matrimony, Moody refrained from forming

an opinion based on unverifiable hearsay. The slightly disproportionate treatment of the couple's relationship, however, may leave readers with such puzzling questions as how intimate their wedlock was or how supportive they were towards each other's work.

Moody selects his anecdotes in accordance to their relevance to the overall picture, and his style is also at its best in these parts of the narrative. By strategically placing an old story he makes sure that after reading this volume, one remembers Pound by means of an iconic old pair of brown shoes: When Eliot first met Joyce in Paris, Eliot was commissioned by Pound, the already established American poet, to deliver a package to Joyce, who, Pound knew, was struggling financially. Unaware of the content of the parcel, and also of Joyce's conditions, Eliot handed over to the author of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Dubliners* and *Ulysses* what turned out to be the best-he-can-afford gift of the worrying parent-like Pound: a used pair of brown shoes. What could have been (at least with Pound's presence, Moody suggests) a rare constellation of modernist writers thus ended in sheer embarrassment.

Although the inviting orange and ochre cover hides a somber black block of a book, Moody is careful not to alienate a more general reading public, and specialists of the field will benefit from his book, too. Firstly, Moody's aim is obviously not only to provide authoritative answers but also to facilitate further research by giving tools to other readers of Pound. He generously provides samples of published and unpublished material alike, *and* references his sources thus enabling further enquiries on a subject. The endnotes, exceptionally detailed in this genre, run for more than sixty pages and identify the source of quotations, give suggestions for further reading and also carry additional comments. Secondly, while in Noel Stock's rather puritan but for a long time definitive *The Life of Ezra Pound*[3] there were no supportive devices to the text, Moody's book supplies the reader with a chronology at the beginning of the volume, high-quality illustrations embedded in the main text, and at the end "an outline of Pound's writing career" (411), the notes and finally the index.

Twenty years ago John Tytell, in his portrayal of Pound as an agent of the Risorgimento, dismissed the idea of a "behemoth biography, [a] nine-hundred-page loose and baggy monster in three volumes whose parade of facts would scatter like an army of ants in all directions."[4] With all respect to Tytell, this is exactly what the Pound community has been hoping for: a "behemoth . . . monster" of a biography that was relatively impartial (Noel Stock's biography has been subjected to cosmetic surgery carried out by Dorothy Pound), full (*The Last Rower* by David Heymann[5] and *The Caged Panther* by Harry Meacham[6] concentrated only on

certain problematic periods of Pound's life) and incorporated insightful literary criticism as well (unlike Carpenter's *A Serious Character*[7] or Tytell's own *The Solitary Volcano*). A. David Moody has answered the call, and, fortunately, is in the process of answering it some more – with his usual first-rate scholarship and insightful analyses.

Réka Mihálka

Notes

1. A. David Moody, "Introduction," *Thomas Stearns Eliot: Poet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 [1979]), p. xvii.
2. Philip Grover, *Ezra Pound: The London Years 1908–1920* (New York: AMS Press, 1978).
3. Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (London: Penguin, 1974 [1970]).
4. John Tytell, *Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano* (New York: Doubleday, 2004 [1987]), p. i.
5. David C. Heymann, *Ezra Pound, the Last Rower: A Political Profile* (New York: Viking Press, 1976).
6. Harry M. Meachem, *The Caged Panther: Ezra Pound at St. Elizabeths* (New York: Twayne, 1967).
7. Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988).

Bringing Conrad Closer to Us

Laurence Davies, and Gene M. Moore, (ed.), *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Vol. 8: 1923–1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008); and Laurence Davies, Owen Knowles, Gene M. Moore, and J. H. Stape (ed.), *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Vol. 9: Uncollected Letters and Indexes* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007)

Letters are a sensitive medium in at least two senses of the word. First, they reflect fairly directly and faithfully the writer's state of mind at the moment of composition, in a manner comparable, if only remotely, to some examples of lyric poetry. This quality makes them particularly valuable to scholars, especially when the letters are those of a major writer such as Joseph Conrad. As Frederick R. Karl points out in his general editor's introduction to Volume 1 of *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, letters "provide patterns and schemes which move beyond conscious planning," as opposed to journals, memoirs or diaries.[1] Yet the letter-writer can also choose to adopt a certain tone, depending on the nature of his or her relationship with the addressee. A trivial but amusing example of this is provided by Conrad's letters to his agent James Brand Pinker written between May 1910 and (probably) March 1912. The form of address Conrad chose when writing to Pinker in this period of time (after four months of silence) reflects his changing attitude towards the man with whom he had had a serious quarrel in January 1910. For well over a year Pinker was addressed simply as "Dear Sir." As time passed and Conrad's anger subsided,