

**Submitted by: Imtiaz Ali**

**Submitted to: Ma'am Abeer**

**Course: Modern poetry**

**Section: B Afternoon**

**Roll No: SA19254**

**Ezra Pound lived and wrote in a swiftly modernizing world that, as time went on, placed less and less emphasis on art and beauty. Pound, however, was dissatisfied by this, and made it a point to celebrate art, literature, and beauty in his poetry. Pound agonizes over the most basic of questions—the value of life itself. Critically analyse the major themes of the following poems in light of the above statement:**

❖ **In a Station of the Metro**

❖ **A Girl**

❖ **An Immorality**

## **Modernism**

Modernism is an artistic and cultural movement that flourished in the first decades of the 20th. Century, about the time of WWI. It is the movement in visual arts, music, literature and drama which rejected the old Victorian standards of how art should be made. It was developed in Europe, especially in the Great Britain.

Britain suffered heavy losses in the war: thousands of people were killed; the economy was ruined; and almost all its former colonies were lost. People had economic and cultural problems.

## **Modernist movement;**

Modernism is a period in literary history which started around the early 1900s and continued until the early 1940s. Main aspects include Individualism, Experimentation, Absurdity,

Symbolism, disillusionment, meaningless, fear, wars, lack of faith. Modern prominent writers include Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Joseph Conrad, W. B. Yeats etc.

Modernist poets placed contradictory feelings and events side by side to portray the disconnectedness of modern life and challenge the reader to re-established coherent meaning from fragmentary forms. Modernist poets viewed the work of art more as an aesthetic object than as a representation of reality. Modernist poems reflected the complexity and pessimistic reflection of modern life. Ezra Pound did not care much for the modernist movement in American poetry. Rather, he became a proponent of the Imagist movement, which focused on and favoured concise language, unembellished imagery, and a strong connection between the verbal and lyrical qualities of verse and mood.

## **Ezra Pound's writing style;**

One of the characteristics of modern poetry is theme of isolation and preference to intelligence over emotions which can be seen in writing of many modern poets like T.S. Eliot. For example in poems like *The Waste Land* and *The Love Song of Alfred Prufrock*, Eliot has used themes of pessimism and tried to show the true picture of the society. He used realistic themes. He tried to portray real life and its difficulties. Eliot's poem is divided into sections and long poems. Ezra preferred emotions over reasons and logic. Relief only found in nature according to Ezra. Around 1912 Pound helped to create the movement he called "Imagism," which marked the end of his early poetic style. Imagism combined the creation of an "image"—what he defined as "an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" or an "interpretative metaphor" with rigorous requirements for writing.

All modern writers in his early verse shows the influence of the Victorian poet Robert Browning, and the late pre-Raphaelite poet Algernon Charles Swinburne, as well as Yeats and the medieval poets he'd studied at university: the Provençal troubadours, François Villon, and the Tuscan poets Guido Cavalcanti and Dante Alighieri.

## **The Importance of Imagism and Art**

Ezra Pound is known for his imagism. Ezra Pound's maxim is "Make it new". He has an art in his writing to deliver work in concise or in single sentence.

Imagist poems were influenced by Japanese Haiku, poems of 17 syllables which usually present only two juxtaposed images separated by punctuation. Haiku is the classical rhythm of Japanese poetry with seasonal references. Since Pound pioneered the Imagist movement, its overarching style and themes resonate throughout his poems. He placed significant value on clarity and economy of language. Pound felt that classic poetry, namely Greek and Roman, presented many model examples of Imagism, and frequently referred back to those ancient verses in his work. He also praised the verbal economy of traditional Japanese and Chinese poetry. A notable example of Imagism in Pound's work is "In a Station of the Metro." It is extremely short, only two lines long, and says only what it needs to say and nothing more. Pound originally wrote thirty lines for this poem, and then proceeded to whittle it down to 14 crucial syllables.

### **Nature;**

Pound often uses unexpected natural metaphors to reflect on people, business, and society. "In A Station of the Metro," he compares the faces on a subway platform to petals on a tree branch. In poem "A girl" he totally presents the nature with the help of tree that how one chooses a transformation of tree. In poem 'Immortality' he totally presents different phenomenon of nature that love is immortal.

### **Themes of above mentioned poems:**

#### **Immortality**

Theme of love and indolence.

Ezra Pound visited many places and share his experience of travelling that there is nothing without love and peace. His "immortality" lies in admitting that he values love and indolence over proving himself on the battlefield. He would rather win the hand of his lady than be a war hero in Hungary, even though the roses might wilt in grief to hear of his wickedness.

He was a kind of man who wants only love and peace.

Theme of selfishness.

From this simple poem, I can interpret that author, or character, is a selfish man that is only concerned with himself. He is unwilling to fight for, or defend his homeland, or his new land. It is easy to understand that the author simply wants love and peace.

A question is centred on the title. It is called an immorality, but love is not an immorality. If it is, then moral things must be hate and war; the opposite. The author must believe that immoralities for him are not the same for others. We all have our own personal views and beliefs that can affect ourselves as well as others.

In a station of metro

Based on Japanese haiku, “In a Station of the Metro” (1916) reflects Pound’s interest in other cultures, as well as his belief that the purpose of art was to “make it new.” This poem is the embodiment of Pound’s theory of Imagism,

Versions of Reality

The poem blends two images into one. In the process, it seems to downplay the reality of everyday life as an “apparition,” while the spiritual life of memory and the imagination is heightened. Pound thought that a great image could reveal the “higher” reality of something that already seems real to us, like people getting on a subway.

Man and the Natural World

In the poem, people and nature literally become one as the faces in the subway become flowers on a tree. The analogy between faces and flowers is not just a simile, which would say that one thing is “like” another. Rather, it is metaphor: the poem implies that the faces are petals on a tree.

The Supernatural

“apparition” word usually refers to ghosts or supernatural spirits. Pound seems to be comparing the beautiful strangers in the subway to ghosts who appear suddenly and then disappear from your life just as fast.

Modernization

If you were a person living in Paris near the beginning of the 20th century, there would be a lot of reasons to be afraid of the metro. The crowd of anonymous strangers pushing past one another, blank stares, the dirty wet ground. This poem, though, presents the new technology as the scene of a mystical experience, in which the poet and his readers are reminded of the serenity and calm of a Japanese garden.

Morality

The Importance of Aesthetics and Art

Ezra Pound lived and wrote in a swiftly modernizing world that, as time went on, placed less and less emphasis on art and beauty. Pound, however, was dissatisfied by this, and made it a point to celebrate art, literature, and beauty in his poetry.