

XX CENTURY AMERICAN POETRY

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Poetry has been around for almost four thousand years. Like other forms of literature, poetry is written to share ideas, express emotions, and create imagery. Poets choose words for their meaning and acoustics, arranging them to create a tempo known as the meter. Some poems incorporate rhyme schemes, with two or more lines that end in like-sounding words.

Keywords: poetry,rhythm,Robert,Epic,free verse,rhyme,epic, Henry Adams,American poets

Today, poetry remains an important part of art and culture. Every year, the United States Library of Congress appoints a Poet Laureate to represent the art of poetry in America.

American poet Robert Frost said shrewdly that poetry was what got left behind translation, which suggests criterion, of almost scientific refinement: when in doubt, translate; whatever comes through is prose, the remainder is poetry. And yet to even so acute a definition the obvious exception is a startling and a formidable one: some of the greatest poetry in the world is in the Authorized or King James Version of the Bible, which is not only a translation but also, as to its appearance in print, identifiable neither with verse nor with prose in English but rather with a cadence owing something to both.¹It isn't in any respect to be inferred that the poet composed his poem inside the way of the above hard evaluation of its strands. The complete insistence, rather, is that he did no longer catalog 8 or 10 paperwork and collect them right into a poem; much more likely it "just came to him." however the instance may also serve to indicate how many modes of the mind go together on this articulation of an implied drama and the anxiety among many possible sentiments that would stand up in reaction to it.

on this way, with the aid of the accident of paperwork that locks within the poem, one might also see a way to answer a question that regularly arises approximately poems: even though their mind are common, they themselves mysteriously aren't. One can also solution on the basis of the example and the inferences made out of it that a poem isn't always so much a concept as it's miles a thoughts: communicate with it, and it's going to communicate returned, telling you many things that you might have concept for yourself but in some way didn't until it added them together. seemingly a poem is a miles simplified model for the mind. but it might nonetheless be one of the great models to be had. on

¹ Robert Frost/poetry Foundation

this fantastic topic, but, it will be excellent to continue not by way of definition however by means of parable and interpretation.

The term “American poetry” is itself something of an oxymoron, juxtaposing the idea of “America” as a new-found land of pure potential and the concept of “poetry,” a literary genre defined over hundreds of years of European civilization. One of the central projects for American poets – from the seventeenth-century Puritans to the twentieth-century modernists – was to determine their relation to English and other European poetic traditions.² Poetry in America has rarely been granted the cultural importance it enjoys in countries such as England, France, and Germany. For this reason, as Roy Harvey Pearce observed, the American poet has always felt a compulsion “to justify his existence as poet.”³

The years from 1880 to 1910 were something of a dark age for American poetry. During a time when the novels of Mark Twain, Henry James, William Dean Howells, Theodore Dreiser, Stephen Crane, and Edith Wharton established the undeniable importance of American fiction, poetry was pushed to the margins of the literary world. Not able to compete with novelists in terms of popularity, and not willing to risk moving beyond the familiar models of nineteenth-century verse, poets settled for an uncontroversial mediocrity of idea, form, and rhetoric. As Ezra Pound later put it in his harshly critical appraisal of the era, it was a time of “pseudo-artists” working under a stultifying system of control by the major publishers. Indeed, under the editorial reign of the large-circulation magazines that published poetry – such as Harper’s, The Century, and The Atlantic – the prevailing poetic style progressed little between the 1870s and the early 1910s. There was no room in America for a poet who sought to become, in Pound’s terms, a “serious artist.”

However, the number of American poets of the period who looked to the contemporary literature of London or Paris for inspiration was still relatively small. On the whole, younger poets embraced the dominant poetic mode of the American “genteel tradition.” The genteel poets – whom E. A. Robinson called the “little sonnet men” and Whitman derided as the “tea-pot poets” – wrote sonnets, odes, and dramatic monologues in imitation of English Victorian poetry, expressing what Pound would characterize as “nice domestic sentiments inoffensively versified.” According to Henry Adams – one of the more astute cultural commentators of his day – poetry had become so artificial and removed from social reality that it no longer served as a “natural expression of society itself.”⁴

As we approach the present day, however, there is far less consensus about who the major poets are. It is still difficult at this juncture to refer to a “canon” of postwar American poetry, although poets like Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop, and John Ashbery would certainly come close to qualifying. Not only are there more poets writing and publishing than ever before, but

² Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Poetry

³ Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Continuity of American Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 4.

⁴ Henry Adams, *The Life of Henry Cabot Lodge* (Boston, 1911), 9

there is also a far more diverse mix of poetic subcultures dividing the available attention of readers. No other country has produced a comparable range of poetry by writers with a greater diversity of backgrounds. Each region of the country celebrates its own school of poets, as does each ethnic and racial group. Poetry anthologies are now devoted to African American poetry, Latino poetry, Asian American poetry, and Native American poetry

American poetry has a complex heritage, deriving from both literary and popular sources. If the roots of American poetry can be found in Puritan meditative writing, eighteenth-century verse satire, and the Romantic lyric, they can equally well be discovered in slave songs, captivity narratives, and Protestant hymns. Lacking a ready-made literary tradition, American poets have gone far and wide in search of their influences and inspirations. Whitman sought material for his poetry in popular oratory, journalism, and street slang. The modernists found sources in Egyptian mythology, the Hindu Upanishads, and Chinese ideograms. More recently, eclectic sources have become the norm rather than the exception, as poets have found inspiration for their work in various forms of music (jazz, blues, rap), in the visual arts (Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art), and in alternative philosophical and spiritual traditions (Zen Buddhism, Native American mythology).

Summirising all about American XX century poetry ,it should be pointed out that,American poets tried to work on poetry deponding upon other counties methods and ways of depicting World War II. Both the range and the artistic achievement of American poetry in the twentieth century, the diversity of American poetic writing is necessary to include in American poetry studies

References

- 1.¹Robert Frost/poetry Foundation
2. Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Poetry
3. Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Continuity of American Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961),
4. Henry Adams, *The Life of Henry Cabot Lodge* (Boston, 1911).