

*Retrieved from Blackboard Discussion (on Ezra Pound's "In a Station of the Metro")*

Thread: In a Station of the Metro Post: In a Station of the Metro

Author: [REDACTED] Posted Date: April 13, 2015 10:36 AM Status: Published

This poem was strikingly different than most of the other poems we have read and for that reason I really enjoyed it. Everything about this poem is hard to put into words because it describes a feeling about an event that happened. It's something you can't explain-- it just happens. I find it interesting that this poem doesn't have any verbs. The lack of verb allows this poem to just describe and paint a picture. I think that the description of petals on a wet black bough really allowed me as the reader to connect to this situation. I find it so easy to relate and to remember a similar past experience to seeing faces in a crowd. This happens so often...one day I am waiting at a subway station and there are just so many people passing by...I don't know. I just really liked how this poem invoked a sense of familiarity.

Thread: In a Station of the Metro Post: RE: In a Station of the Metro

Author: [REDACTED] Posted Date: April 13, 2015 12:47 PM Status: Published

In a Station of the Metro was different than all of the other poems we have read this semester, as [REDACTED] said, The most striking difference is the length: 2 lines. There is no rhyme or formal structure that I can see. It seems like a very emotionally heavy description of something mundane. "The apparition of these faces in the crowd" elicits ghost-like images of a large crowd of people passing by. It is very creepy and haunting. They are like "Petals on a wet, black bough" Likening the image, or connecting the image somehow, to petals hanging off a black tree-branch. [REDACTED] talked about how this poem invoked a sense of familiarity. I think to a degree this is very true because we have all felt this in a T-station. But I think its a lack of familiarity that is what is most important here. The idea that the mass crowds of people overwhelming the dark, gray, underground station are all faceless. They are anonymous and hold a ghost-like depression about them. I think this poet is touching on the blackness that can be felt in a crowd, being just a number, and therefore irrelevant.

Thread: In a Station of the Metro Post: RE: In a Station of the Metro

Author: [REDACTED] Posted Date: April 14, 2015 12:21 PM Status: Published

I want to first talk about Ezra Pound's poetry (or at least the given selection) in general. Walt Whitman, T.S. Eliot, and a few other poets that executed free verse up until these readings didn't really interest me. Pound's style on the other hand really brings me to think about the poetry in a different sense. The free verse form is different than others and it's so vague. It's left up for interpretation, and that's what I really like in poetry. Somebody correct me if I'm wrong, but it seems that Pound was one of the first to write in such a free, ambiguous style. The poem leaves the reader to think... why there random spaces between words and punctuation? Are all the spaces the same size? One thing is clear though: it's a pretty damn dark poem. Apparition is essentially a ghost or a ghoully figure. There is a crowd of these faces. He then uses a colon, which says that the next line will further explain the first. Petals on a wet, black tree branch. Maybe it means that everybody is just going through their day, miserable and unhappy, about to fall (or already have fallen) into something that they don't want. This poem is beautiful.

Thread: In a Station of the Metro Post: RE: In a Station of the Metro

Author: [REDACTED] Posted Date: April 14, 2015 11:49 PM Status: Published

I agree with [REDACTED] interpretation of this poem. I found this poem rather surprising because it is hard to expect a lot from two lines but this poem is able to contain so much meaning despite its shortness in length. It is very relatable because there are many times when you see people around you that you don't know. I feel the scenario of the poem could be applied to any situation even though the title specifies a metro station. Because the poem is short, other than for the title, there is no description of the situation itself, leaving the poem open for any kind of interpretation or setting.

Thread: In a Station of the Metro Post: RE: In a Station of the Metro

Author: [REDACTED] Posted Date: April 15, 2015 1:10 PM Status: Published

[REDACTED] makes an interesting point about how such a short poem has so much meaning. I think the key word here is not 'interpretation' but 'projection' of meaning. In many ways Pound perfectly executes his super-position of two images with the petals over the faces. But he doesn't explicitly compare them, just layers them. This more ambiguous relation between the two images, in addition to the scarcity of words, leads one to project a meaning onto the poem. I think that's why everyone has such different understandings of what the poem means- precisely because there is no meaning, we're creating one. This shift of the imaginative burden from the poet to the reader perhaps fits high modernism well. That is, an era of such institutional destruction countered by forced creation.

Thread: In a Station of the Metro Post: RE: In a Station of the Metro

Author: [REDACTED] Posted Date: April 15, 2015 3:47 PM Status: Published

I am still not sure if I liked this poem or not. From 'A few don'ts by an imagiste', it seems that the poem has to evoke a very specific image that can be interpreted or projected (Patrick I like how you put that) with meaning. The problem for me though, I can relate to a scene or image of a station of a metro, and the faces of the crowd, however for some reason I could not illustrate in my mind what the black bough was until we saw a picture of the flower branch in class. The way that the two lines are not tied together also adds to the ambiguity. Does Pound want us to associate the faces of the crowd, in the metro to the petals on the wet black bough (as we are obviously inclined to think), or does he want us to take them for what they are separately (less likely)? For me, I need more here - I realize that the beauty of the poem is in its simplicity however after reading ALL Pound had to say about the Do's and Don'ts, I feel like that turned me away from the poem a bit. Sometimes when the reader tries too hard to dissect the poem, the essence is lost, and after trying to feverishly decipher it based on Pound's Don'ts, it is more difficult to associate or project independent and individual meaning onto the poem, and appreciate it that way.