1912*-1952, FULL CYCLE

I. LOVE SONG OF PRUFROCK JUNIOR
   Must all successful rebels grow
   From toreador to Sacred Cow?
   What cults he slew, his cult begot.
   "In my beginning," said his Scot,
   "My end;" and aging eagles know
   That 1912 was long ago.
   Today the women come and go
   Talking of T. S. Eliot.

II. INSCRIBED FOR YOUR BEDSIDE “GLOSSARY OF THE NEW CRITICISM”
   Here’s the eighth form of ambiguity:
   The new philistia loves “obscenity,”—
   And only we still dare to hate it
   Because a texte without a Muse in
   Is but a snore and an allusion.
   Well then, let’s turn the tables hard:
   The snobs all snubbed, the baiters baited,
   The explicators explicated,
   And avant-garde the new rearguard.

III. FROM THE SUBLIME TO THE METICULOUS IN FOUR STAGES
   DANTE: We were God’s poets.
   BURNS: We were the people’s poets.
   MALLARME: We were poet’s poets.
   TODAY (preening himself): Ah, but we are critic’s poets.

IV. EPITAPH FOR THE NOUVEAUX NEW CRITICS,
    HUGH KENNER, E TUTTI QUESTI
    "I will not yield
    To kiss the ground before young Malcolm’s feet."
    Cliché is dead, long live cliché,
    And in old fields new Georgians play.
    O miglior fabbro and O mandarin,
    You who skinned Georgians like a tangerine,

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*Events of 1914, the key year: New Age starts publishing Hulme’s essays; Imagist nucleus founded (Pound, H. D., Aldington); Poetry: A Magazine Of Verse founded by Harriet Monroe (to whom Pound in 1914 sends Eliot’s “Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” written 1910-11); October 1912, the American-verse number of Harriet Monroe’s Poetry Review (W. C. Williams, Pound); symbolic clash of the simultaneous 1912 publication of Georgians Poetry and Pound’s Hypostasis.
Two Heracles who on your natal day
Strangled these snakes of cliché-pandering,
These same that now through backstairs wander in:
Let not (while death-knells from Kinkanja¹ ring)
The pedant town of Alexander in.
From kitsch the nineteenth century banned her in,
You freed our Muse. For what? Was Queen Victoria
Primmer than précieux new "Prohibitoria"?²
Loving your ART and not your fleas, we pray:
May time protect you from your proteges.
Time's up when pupils' pupils school the school.
Cow? Bad enough! But sacred—calf?
Now that the cup of insolence is full,—
By God, who'll start a brandnew Nineteen Twelve?

² cf. Louis Rubin in Hopkins Review, summer 1950: "He has twice criticized the award of the
1949 Bollingen Prize to Pound's Pisan Cantos, on grounds both of form and content. Either he must
repent, and publicly, or resign himself to a prominent and permanent position in the Index
Prohibitorium of the New Criticism."