the mind of Pound

stretched into a broad black asphalt road
thinned into black brushstrokes
and covered his aunt with flyspecks

as she sat astride a mule
his aunt believed
travel broadened the mind

his mind grew and travelled
turned inside out became lava
stretched so thin it became transparent
and broke

near his aunt the mule
astride dollar signs
near sherid de la snubnose near idol eyes

if wishes were lepers
mules would ride aunts
across the sky of merano
at the pace of the sun on very hot days

1962

CONTEXT

In a country where all the babies are born ugly
the albino achieves a state of grace.
Amid roofs resembling India,
faces peer out toward water
bearing their ideas as veils. It moves thus,
a current to him, amid their constant questions:
a waterfall of oily upturned faces.
He has a way of moving among them
that justifies him to them, amid their constant questions, their gentle concern.
On his own roof, near corn, with his face
turned toward what he remembers as sad India,
the albino regards himself as
a man who completely understands.
This sky, in this form, sky full of bodies,
of falling negroes, he knows, he watches it.
Disclaiming it as newsworthy or
remarkable. It is only necessary for him to
note the color of his urine,
his skin, as he goes to the edge of his roof
and that sea of Cortes' ugly children
into which he leaves his own bright laden water.

1964