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At Home In Exile: Ezra Pound and the Poetics of Banishment

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At Home In Exile:
Ezra Pound and the Poetics of Banishment

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English

by

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Abstract

Ezra Pound is one of the most important poets, critics, and writers of the 20th century. Through his literary efforts, and his work on behalf of many other writers, Pound changed the way we read and write poetry today. His cultivation and support of other writers and poets like T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Robert Frost, Marianne Moore, etc. created the basis for what we refer to as Imagism, Modernism, and other important literary movements of the early 20th century. Pound's use of fragmentation, pastiche, and bricolage laid the foundation for post-modern writers of the latter half of the 20th century, but it is the nexus between Pound's poetry and his exiled status, which culminates in his critical work, *The Pisan Cantos*.

The focus of this project is the intersection of Pound's life as an exile, and the conflation of that estrangement into his poetic technique seen in "Canto 74," the beginning of the *Pisan Cantos*. This section starts much differently than it later appeared, and it is the transformation seen in "Canto 74", which is a product of his years of exile, his imprisonment, and lays the groundwork for Pound's poetry as the poetics of banishment. "Canto 74" provides the underpinning for the rest of the *Pisan Cantos* within this critical sequence by highlighting the consequence of Pound's DTC experience.

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Dedication

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intellectual tradition: Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz, granddaughter, Patrizia de Rachewiltz de Vroom, and grandson, Walter (Sizzo) de Rachewiltz, whose "acts of beauty / be remembered" (824).

Thanks, too, to all those unnamed scholars and supporters along the way – the librarians, baristas, IT support technicians, officemates, and coworkers who endured more than a few conversations about Pound. Furthermore, to those who I failed to list, but want to thank, I couldn't have done it without you all.

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Andy K. Trevathan, 2015

"ubi amor, ibi oculus"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction: What Leads to Pisa	1
	a. ISMs: Realism, Symbolism, Imagism, and Modernism	6
	b. Brothers, Sons, and other Inheritors	10
	c. Essendo Stranieri in Zona Vietata, Or Bein' Aliens in a Prohibited Area.....	19
	What Leads to Pisa: Works Cited	26
II.	The Difference Deference Makes	27
	a. Explaining Exile (and Why It Applies to Pound)	30
	b. The Oddity of Homer's Odyssey	34
	c. I Am No Man	51
	The Difference Deference Makes: Works Cited	63
III.	Pound's Stranger in a Strange Land	65
	a. What God, Man, or Hero	68
	b. Inciting Humanity to Continue Living	76
	c. Omnia Quae Sunt Lumina Sunt	81
	Pound's Stranger in a Strange Land: Works Cited	89
IV.	Who Will Wear My Feathery Mantle	91
	a. The Sun has Gone Down	96
	b. Between NEKUIA and the Charybdis of Action	103
	c. Vai Soli, Woe to Him Who is Alone	110
	d. Beauty is Difficult	122
	Who Will Wear My Feathery Mantle: Works Cited	147
V.	Implications of Pound's Poetry: An Epilogue	149
	Implication of Pound's Poetry: Works Cited	154

Appendix 155

I. Introduction: What Leads to Pisa

The poetry of Ezra Pound was profoundly influenced by his exile, and his status as an expatriate. In 1908, Pound leaves the United States for Europe, and later, after staying in Venice for a little while, he decides to settle in London. Pound begins what would become a long period of self-exile partly because of what Pound saw as the "impossibility of publishing his poetry in America" (Eder 24). While Pound tries to publish in the U.S., he did not have much success¹. As T.S. Eliot wrote in *Poetry* magazine in 1946, "...there was no poet, in either country, who could have been of use to a beginner in 1908. The only recourse was to poetry of another age and to poetry of another language" (Eliot 326). This is what precipitated Pound's plunge into the poetry of another time. Pound's use of Provençal, and his well-known statement that he would by age thirty know more about poetry than any living man² forces him to embark upon what was to be his greatest journey – to change not only his own poetry, but to change the nature and form of English language poetry.

1908 was a year of great change for Ezra Pound. He secures an academic post, but is dismissed after only a few months; he obtains a doctoral research fellowship, and was supposed to be fulfilling the requirements of such by traveling abroad to perform research on his

¹ See Noel Stock's biography, *The Life of Ezra Pound*, 1970 where Stock writes that Pound tried unsuccessfully to publish about forty poems before he left the United States" and eventually settled (for a time) in London (45).

² This quote is paraphrased, but originates from Ezra Pound's "How I Began" in *Ezra Pound*, ed. Grace Schulman (24 – 25).

proposed PhD dissertation topic, Lope de Vega³. Instead, Pound would immerse himself in the poetry and language of another age, using Provençal and the medieval sentiments, to make his own commentary via poetics. One might ask, what is it about Provençal that serves as an impetus for the evolution of Pound's poetry? As Richard Sieburth writes in his 2005 introduction to *The Spirit of Romance*, the "poet must turn away both from Latin and from his mother tongue in order to accede to the ideal deracination of literary eloquence, could only have occurred to someone who, like Dante, had been forced into exile — a lesson not lost on lifelong expatriate Pound" (viii). Ezra Pound, as an exile and emergent Imagist and Modernist, evolved out of the medieval tradition to re-create himself and his poetry in the modern sense.

With Pound being born in 1885, and growing up amidst the influence of the Victorians, his early poetry shows the lingering effects of Romanticism. Most scholars would concede that Victorian poetry is greatly influenced by the Romantic tradition. It is the trinity of Tennyson, Byron, and Shelley who were very much revered by the Victorians. Alfred, Lord Tennyson is often considered the most important poet of the Victorian period, and *Idylls of the King*, his preeminent work, represents the tradition that young Ez was familiar with. Tennyson draws inspiration and substance of his *Idylls* from the legend of King Arthur, which forms an extensive body of medieval literature. Tennyson uses *Idylls* as a platform to convey how he feels people should behave, particularly the government.

³ Lope de Vega (1562 – 1635) was a playwright and poet, and like Miguel Cervantes, was a key figure of the Spanish Golden Age.

Idylls of the King represents a trope that emerges from a pseudo-historical, Welsh tradition which later spread to the continent during the Middle Ages. Intricate and sophisticated forms of metrical and prose romances developed out of these romantic tales, and Arthurian themes frequently provided the most popular subject matter. The rough basic material of the Arthurian legends was softened and polished by exposure to the new literary conventions of chivalry and courtly love. The most well known of the Arthurian metrical romances are those composed by the French poet Chretien de Troyes (1160-1185), and probably the most famous of the Arthurian prose romances is the *Morte D'Arthur* of Sir Thomas Malory (published 1485). Malory's is the most far-reaching of the legends, and ostensibly the one from which Tennyson drew most of his material.

The recurrence of the Grail legend as a trope and poetic ideal is synonymous with Pre-Raphaelites in the nineteenth century, when various figures including Alfred, Lord Tennyson began using it as an artistic subject. The fact that this reemergence of the Grail legend coincides with the Industrial Revolution is no accident, but can be seen as a matter of cause and effect. With the Industrial Revolution came a scientific revolution comparable to that of the fifteenth century, the time of Francois Villon (1431 – 1463), another significant influence for Pound.

Villon, like Pound, had some difficulties with the law, but is considered a great reformer in terms of the leitmotifs of poetry and, through these leitmotifs, a great innovator of the forms. Additionally, it is during the 19th century that the theory of evolution was introduced to the larger world, and with that came a

questioning of religious beliefs. At the same time, there were the devastating effects of industry on both the working class and the countryside.

These devastating effects of industry and industrialization prompted the reactions of the Romantics. Yet, out of the Romantics came the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the first group to utilize the Grail legend as a political and social tool. For them, the Grail represented the lost order, which has been lost in the chaos of the Industrial Revolution.

The Grail resides in a mythic landscape, a Garden of Eden, which had been lost to the effects of industry. The Pre-Raphaelites were nostalgic for an age that never was, represented by Camelot and the Grail (as well as many other myths). Pound also longed for an idyllic place and age. This poetic nostalgia also figures prominently in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. While Tennyson heavily influences Pound, there were others in the 19th century that also served as formative stimuli. Rossetti, Swinburne and Yeats are most notably examples of the late Victorians that were important for the development of Pound's poetics.

Yeats is, of course, the one who is best known to Pound. Through their three years together at Stone Cottage, both men's poetry took a turn, some would say, for the better. When revolutionizing himself from out of the Victorian era, Pound also pulled W.B. Yeats into what would become the modern movement. As Richard Ellman writes, Pound boldly remarked that "Uncle William, as he was sometimes called, was making good progress but still dragging some of the reeds of the 'nineties in his hair" (Ellman 215). Prior to the Stone Cottage years

of 1913 – 1916, Pound would write in the essay, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" that literature should reflect an accuracy of sentiment. Pound states, "Accuracy of sentiment here will make more accurate the sentiment of the growth of literature as a whole, and of the Art of poetry" (Pound 23). Pound believed that if he used the French Symbolist model for what he would later deem Imagism that it could be used to renew the art of poetry in the English language and bring the past into the [his] present. William Pratt writes that it is the "the Imagist attack [which] used French Symbolism as a weapon against English Victorianism" (Pratt 23). Pound asserts that symbolism is "in its profoundest sense is a belief in a sort of permanent metaphor"⁴ and eventually regards the image as more substantive than the symbol.

Because Symbolism is an evocative art of oblique expression, and syllable count is less important in English than in French, free verse is more logical in English rather than French. This premise is the starting point for Pound's shift. As Mallarmé would suggest, "the ideal is to suggest the object" or what filmmaker Billy Wilder would say, "show don't tell"⁵. Pound would later argue that he wanted Imagism to have much in common with Symbolism. William Pratt writes that for Pound, "Imagists didn't paint, they named [and] French Symbolists developed what they called vers libre as a more flexible verse form than meter or rhyme" (21 – 22). Free verse is the primary poetic form

⁴ While this quote is originally from the 1916 publication of Gaudier-Brzeska, it was taken, for this purpose, from Boris de Rachewiltz's "Pagan and Magic Elements in Ezra Pound's Works" which appeared in Eva Hesse's *New Approaches to Ezra Pound* (1969).

⁵ From Billy Wilder: *The Cinema of Wit 1906-2002* by Glenn Hopp.

in *The Cantos*, but free verse is not what Pound is writing in prior to his Symbolic reckoning.

a. ISMs: Realism, Symbolism, Imagism, and Modernism

If, as William Pratt suggests, Gustave Flaubert is considered the father of Realism, Charles Baudelaire the father of Symbolism, then Ezra Pound is the father of Modernism. It is Pound's intellectual journey through the poets of Provençal, by way of: Baudelaire (1821 – 1867); Mallarmé (1842 – 1898); Laforgue (1860 – 1887); and Rimbaud (1854 – 1891), which leads him reform his own poetry. The French symbolists are dead by the time that Pound discovers them, but it is in his association with T.S. Eliot, which began in 1915 when Pound is asked to take a look at a group of poems that Eliot said had languished in drawers unpublished, that Pound's poetry takes a turn toward the modern. Until then, Pound was also stuck in that 'muzzy old stuff'. Not only did Pound's poetry evolve, but also he had a profound influence amongst those with whom he would collaborate, consult, and conspire.

In trying to 'make it new,' Pound has, what Boris de Rachewiltz calls, a "tendency to restore to intellectual, objective symbols some of their original subjective content, and this is the real reason why he [Pound] holds the concrete quality of the image and ideogram to be superior to the abstract cut-and-dried symbol" (de Rachewiltz 175). Pound develops, at this point in his early career, an inclination towards a "symbol-in-the-making rather than a fixed symbol which can be used outside of its original context" (175), and this is part of the reason for Pound and Yeats' early association during Pound's

London years. Yeats wrote of the differentiation between intellectual and emotional symbolism in *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1903), which pre-dates Pound's association with Yeats. Yeats' book is, in essence, a primer of sorts for much of Pound's poetic (and art-inspired patriotic) idealism. Yeats wanted to create poetry unlike the poetry he associated with the 'middle class' wherein they could

create a little tradition of their own, less a tradition of ideas than of speech, they had been divided by religious and political changes from the images and emotions which had once carried their memories backward thousands of years (Yeats, *Ideas of Good and Evil*, 7).

Like Yeats, Pound regarded Arthur Symons' ideas vis-à-vis Symbolism, as shown in his book, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899), instrumental in what would become his move out of 'symbolisme' and into 'imagisme'.

Yeats references his support for Symons when he cites him in his 1903 book, "Symbolism, as seen in the writers of our day, would have no value if it were not seen also, under one disguise or another, in every great imaginative writer" (Yeats, *Ideas of Good and Evil*, 237). The feeling between Symons and Yeats was very much mutual and Symons dedicates his book to Yeats. Symons writes that Yeats will sympathize with what he says in it, because he sees Yeats as being "the chief representative of that movement in our country" [Ireland] (Symons xix).

Symons goes on to state that France is the country of movements, which is spreading [Symbolism] throughout other countries, and that he sees Symbolism as a transcendental philosophy of art, which creates "beautiful things, as beautiful, it seems to me as anything, that is

being done in our time" (xix). Pound, like Symons and even Yeats, looks to France, for much of his influence during the early years.

Pound found himself greatly influenced by the work of another Frenchman – the symbolist Rémy de Gourmont. For Pound, de Gourmont was unparalleled. Pound writes that he thinks, "... every young man in London whose work is worth considering at all, has felt that in Paris existed this gracious presence, this final and kindly tribunal where all work would stand on its merits" (Pound, "Rémy Gourmont" 420). He adds that he feels that "this sense of absolute fairness – no prestige, no over-emphasis, could work upon it" (420).

In reading de Gourmont's *L'Idéalisme* (1893), Pound really takes to heart de Gourmont's argument that symbols "will be imagined or interpreted according to the special conception of the world morphologically possible to each symbolising brain" (de Gourmont, as quoted by Sanford Schwartz, 81). Natalie Barney, who would later become a close friend of Ezra Pound's, met de Gourmont in 1910 while Pound was still languishing in London. Pound would write in the *Fortnightly Review* (1915) after hearing of his death, that de Gourmont "was absolutely independent, that he was not tied to any institution, that his position was based on his intelligence alone and not on his 'connections' (as I believe they are called in the 'literary world')" (Pound, *Fortnightly Review*, 1915⁶). Pound's written account of de Gourmont seems ironic and foreshadows his own intrepid use of literary 'connections' to get both his own work and the work of others published.

⁶ This 1915 *Fortnightly Review* article also appears as a short essay in Pound's *Selected Prose: 1909 – 1965*.

Pound views de Gourmont as a sort of kindred spirit – a bright reflection of his own poetic and professional aspirations. He especially delighted Pound because the freedom that de Gourmont fought for was not really radical, though it might have seemed so, at least to his more conventional challengers. Richard Aldington, who translated de Gourmont, later wrote in *The Little Review* (1915) that he had an influence, especially over the younger and more adventuresome spirits, which few writers possess. Pound wrote Sarah Perkins Cope in April of 1934 that his generation needed Rémy de Gourmont.

De Gourmont represents for Pound an “active intelligence” which was, for him, too rare, and he adds that “the intelligence of the man behind the writing is a great comfort” and that he hopes “intelligence, in writers, is coming back into fashion, at least into favour with a public large enough to make certain kinds of books once more printable” (Pound, “Rémy de Gourmont”, 414). Pound saw de Gourmont as a man, like him, who struggles against the prevailing literary, intellectual, and political establishment. Unfortunately, Pound’s hope that intelligence in writers (or in society in general) is coming back into fashion had not yet materialized. In Pound’s day, students typically studied Latin and Greek and read more difficult selections like Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*⁷ long before entering university, IF they had a chance to go to college. Part of what has kept Ezra Pound from being studied in many high schools or

⁷ According to the Fort Worth Historical Society’s Log Cabin Village and School, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as well as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver’s Travels*, *Arabian Nights* were required 4th grade reading at most Pioneer schools.

universities is that he remains, more than 40 years after his death and 60 years after his imprisonment, difficult and controversial.

While most may not know Pound's poetry, many 'average citizens' are familiar with Pound's reputation as an alleged fascist, traitor, or anti-Semite. The other 'favored sons' of American poetry – Eliot, Frost, Williams – were not charged with treason, especially in an era where political sentiment and rampant ethnocentric Americanism ran high. Pound suffered for his choices like no other American-born poet; he represents an extreme version of the role of expatriation within twentieth-century literature. The reason that his work appears neglected, in favor of other poems or poets, is complicated and is intrinsically tied to his status as an exile.

b. Brothers, Sons, and other Inheritors

Thomas Stearns (T.S.) Eliot is typically seen as a model of respectable American expatriation, in part because he maintained a sort of quiet sensibility, and his politics and personal sentiments were flaunted less overtly than Pound's. Eliot, a St. Louis, Missouri native, converted to Anglicanism, patrolled the streets of London during WWII air raids, and became a British citizen. Most within literary circles know of Pound's '*il miglior fabbro*' status as it relates to Eliot's modernist masterpiece, the long poem in five parts, *The Waste Land* (1922). It seems that no one with any critical knowledge can dispute the claim that it is Pound's editorial artistry that helps to establish *The Waste Land* within the canon.

Admittedly, many readers also perceive *The Waste Land* as a difficult poem. Its multi-layered construction, and the juxtaposition of different voices/personas, which seem to come and go without clear

indication of just who is speaking, is, in many ways, a model of what would develop into 'high modernism'.

We see similar techniques throughout Pound's *Cantos* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*, another iconic Modernist work that Pound edited and promoted. While Eliot eventually became famous for his long poem, *The Waste Land*, it was his earlier, self-conscious narrative poem that helps to establish him within literary circles. Pound met Eliot in London around 1914. After their meeting, Eliot showed Pound a draft of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", and Pound started pushing "Prufrock" (1917) on Harriet Monroe. Pound was involved with Monroe's *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* from its inception in 1912 until 1919, and his irascible influence got many of his fellow poets, including Eliot, published.

Robert Frost, like Eliot, benefitted greatly from the meeting and editorial efforts of Pound. Pound, according to one critic, "bullied Monroe" into publishing Frost (Marsh 42), and while this seems a harsh assessment of Pound's efforts, it is entirely plausible that Pound used his 'swagger' to get what he wanted, or who he wanted, published. Harriet Monroe lauds Pound as "the best critic living, at least in our specialty [poetry], and his acid touch on weak spots as fearsomely enlightening as a clinic" (43). Despite his annoying tendencies, even Pound's harshest critics concede his brilliance as editor, and promoter of the arts.

Pound's status as a brilliant poet is still under-recognized within various literary circles. I believe it is Pound's politics; his charge of treason; his reputation as a supposed Fascist and anti-Semite; his long confinement to a mental institution (in lieu of a

conviction for treason); his 'ply over ply'⁸ pervasive technique; and the perceived difficulty that has kept *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* in a 'place of general neglect'. Yes, he was the first to win the highly regarded Bollingen Prize for his "The Pisan Cantos" in 1949, but because of the hullabaloo against a 'crazy, treasonous, Fascist' winning the prize (and its money) the rules for the Bollingen award were forever changed.

Paradoxically, several poets associated with Pound went on to win the Bollingen Prize for Poetry⁹. Those poets include: Wallace Stevens (1950), Marianne Moore (1952), e.e. cummings (1958), and Robert Frost (1963). While Eliot never won the Bollingen, he did receive The Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948 for his contributions to poetry. One doubts if Eliot would have received this honor without Pound's editorial efforts and/or assistance.

An even more respectable American-born poet than Eliot, Robert Frost was U.S. Consultant in Poetry¹⁰ to the Library of Congress from 1958 to 1959 (Library of Congress). Often seen as an icon of American poetics, Frost won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry an unprecedented four times in his lifetime in 1924, 1931, 1937, and 1943 (The Pulitzer Prizes). Frost recited from memory, "The Gift Outright," at John F. Kennedy's 1961 inauguration, and upon Frost's death in January of 1963, JFK said, "His death impoverishes us all; but he has bequeathed

⁸ The term, "ply over ply" used to describe a type of layering, and is taken directly from Pound's Canto IV and XVII. Pound took it from Robert Browning's long poem, *Sordello*. Pound's *Cantos* has much in common with Browning's *Sordello* and the tradition that Browning emerged from.

⁹ C.f. Beinecke Library at Yale website: <http://brbl-archive.library.yale.edu/programs/bollingen/>

¹⁰ The title was later changed to 'United States Poet Laureate.'

his nation a body of imperishable verse from which Americans will forever gain joy and understanding" (*The Poetry of Robert Frost* 611). Understanding is a word not often associated with Pound's *Cantos*.

Unlike Pound, Frost's poetry is regarded as accessible, 'user-friendly', and its frequent depictions of rural New England settings, more relatable. Frost's use of these bucolic images to address social and/or philosophical issues like death, depression, or duty seems a safer choice than Pound's rather complicated use of history, myth, occultism, realism, and symbolism (et al) to critique politics, governments and economics. Then there is Pound's use of several languages like Latin, Greek, and/or Italian.

Frost writes solely in English. This is an important consideration in light of many Americans' generalized anxiety regarding the other, particularly during WWII when Americans could be arrested for speaking German, Japanese or other foreign languages. Additionally, Frost's practice of using many of the formal, traditional forms explains, in part, why his poetry is read more, anthologized more, and is more available to the general public instead of Ezra Pound's.

Many American students have some experience with Frost's "The Road Not Taken" (1916) or "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" (1923). Frost's poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," was featured in an episode of HBO's *The Sopranos*, and this serves as an example of how Frost's poetry has reached 'pop culture' status and infiltrated the American collective cultural consciousness. This poem is written in iambic tetrameter with an AABA (BBCB, CCDC) rhyme scheme with the last strophe as DDDD. Hardly one of Pound's poems could be

explained this easily. While the meaning in "Stopping by Woods" varies with individual interpretation and explication, many critics assert something of a somber tone to the poem because of the repeating words, dark and sleep. Likewise, one struggles to describe Pound's tone in the Cantos because it varies so much from canto to canto, and section to section.

Another American, William Carlos Williams, like Frost, was assisted and promoted by Pound. Williams met Pound in 1902/03 while they both attended the University of Pennsylvania (aka UPenn). Pound heard that Williams wrote verse, and Williams later remarked, "although older he found the other [Pound] more advanced in literature, [Pound was] the liveliest, most intelligent and unexplainable thing he had ever met" (Stock 15). Upon his parent's advice, Pound left UPenn in 1903 to finish at the smaller, more personal Hamilton College in upstate New York, but remained life-long friends with Dr. Williams.

Williams publishes verse while working as a physician; although, he frequently travels abroad, he was not part of the famous expatriate communities in London or Paris and maintains residence in New Jersey until his death. It was in 1914 that Williams' poem "The Wanderer" is published. This poem, according to Hugh Kenner, and especially the 85-line poem, "Paterson"¹¹ published in *The Dial* in 1927, gestures towards what is probably his most famous work, the five-volume *Paterson*. Williams' experimental work, *Kora in Hell*¹² (1920), was not

¹¹ Much of this 1927 version of "Paterson" published in *The Dial* would later appear in the multi-volume *Paterson*.

¹² Williams' use of 'Kora' comes from the Greek myth of Persephone (also referred to as the maiden, *Kore*,) who descends into Hades.

met with much enthusiasm from Pound, other poets, or the general public. While Williams concedes that *Kora* "could not by any stretch of the imagination be called verse" (Williams 6), several of his other shorter poems, like "The Red Wheelbarrow" (1923), appear regularly in textbooks and popular anthologies. The sparse construction of "The Red Wheelbarrow" seems, upon an initial reading, simplistic and easy to understand; it is in this sparseness and 'boiled-down' imagery that we see Williams' fluid use of Pound's Imagist influence. The focus is solely on the images and how they serve Williams' purpose to capture the ordinary and turn it into the extraordinary rendering of concrete imagery within just eight lines.

Pound's definition of 'the image' (in an Imagist context) is something that presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time. Relatively speaking, Imagism is, for Pound, a rather short-lived experiment. Other poets after about 1917 (including Williams) tend to take up the Imagist cause while Pound defies his own 3 rules of Imagism in his ensuing poetry. The focus on the Image is in many ways a safe choice that Pound abandons in favor of something he felt was more dynamic and edgy. This choice for something harder is ostensibly part of the reason for why much of Pound's poetry is neglected. Pound writes Williams in 1917 (just after the apex of Imagism) and tells him, "The thing that saves your work is opacity, and don't you forget it" (Kenner 510). Pound continues by saying, "Opacity is NOT an American quality. Fizz, swish, gabble of verbiage, these are echt Amerikanisch" (510).

Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Williams writes, "offered to reprint it [*Kora*] in the Pocket Poet Series" and he was "glad to see the book

again in a cheap form this time in which my friends can make the most of it" (Williams 6). Williams explains that *Kora* "remained more or less of a secret document for my own wonder and amusement known to few others" (6). In *Kora*, we see Williams' opacity as well as his use of classical references such as Odysseus and myth (similar to Pound's use of myth and the classics in *The Cantos*) when he writes, "A man's desire is to win his way to some hilltop" (12). Williams' lines on page 16 seem to invoke the historical, "That which is past is past forever and no power of the imagination can bring it back again" (16).

Williams experiments with what he calls the variable foot; writes important essays such as "The Poem as a Field of Action" and "Measure"; mentors (and is inspired by) other great poets like Allen Ginsberg and Marianne Moore; however, it is his long poem, *Paterson*, which (like Pound's *Cantos*) employs a complicated look at history. As Williams writes in *Kora*, "Of course history is an attempt to make the past seem stable and of course it's all a lie" (23). *Kora in Hell* is an interesting, albeit not-so-successful experiment, but for many it is *Paterson* that serves as Williams' legacy. Hugh Kenner describes Williams' opus as "Pound's 30 years' war applied to a local case" (Kenner 515). History is a shared theme between the old friends, Williams and Pound.

Dr. Williams has his own brand of 'suburban' prejudice for which, in large part, (unlike Pound's) goes unpunished. One reason that explains why Williams is read (taught, anthologized) more than Pound is that his subjects, especially in *Paterson* are both more modern and, for the most part, American (as opposed to Pound's worldwide and time traveling tendency in *The Cantos*). Additionally, it is Williams'

assertion, "No ideas but in things," which reoccurs throughout Paterson that, ostensibly, has a broader appeal to both critics and ordinary readers of poetry.

The imagistic simplicity of "The Red Wheelbarrow" is a fine example of Williams' "No ideas but in things." Perhaps it is in Pound's cantankerous personality, eccentricities, and dubious reputation that keep many from reading and enjoying his work. Williams admits that, even during the early years at UPenn, Pound had difficulty with others. He describes Pound as a "fine fellow and just the man for me. But not one person in a thousand likes him, and a great many people detest him..." (Williams letter to his mother, as quoted by Stock 17).

While many may have detested Pound, Allen Ginsberg acknowledges the formidable influence of Pound in a letter to him in May 1951. Ginsberg also commiserates with him on the difficulty of writing poetry and in making a "long(ish) narrative poem in which new meter [can be summed up] of metrical or measurical progress, applied to clear narrative line full of deep intense American imagery" (Ginsberg). This letter, Ginsberg's first of many attempts to communicate with Pound, is where he confesses to Pound his vaguely similar experience with spending "8 months in NY bughouse [and in] trying to find place in society, work" (Ginsberg).

During Pound's incarceration at St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital he was first housed in an old, run down section of the hospital, Howard Hall, which he called alternatively "bughouse" or "hellhole." Pound and Ginsberg's work are influenced by the 'bughouse' experience and it clearly appears in both of their work.

Ginsberg saw an association with Pound early in his career. Ginsberg wrote a series of unanswered letters to Pound during the incarceration and exile at St. Elizabeth's, and continued to write to him after his release and return to Italy. He attempted to visit Pound in Venice, and was at first turned away. He later returned and brought a record player and Beatles records. In October 1967 [Pound] told Allen Ginsberg in Rapallo that his poetry was, "A mess ... my writing, stupidity and ignorance all the way through," and told him later in Venice, "... I found after seventy years that I was not a lunatic but a moron ... I should have been able to do better..." (Ginsberg).

Pound laments many of his professional choices toward the end of his long, brilliant career and apparently what became for him a tarnished life-in-exile. Within the last canto and fragments of *The Cantos*, it is evident that Pound knows that his "errors and wrecks lie about me" (Pound, "CXVI") and for many, including Pound, the idea of *tempus loquendi, tempus tacendi*¹³ is what helps one 'deal with the wreckage' and make peace with the past. In his repatriation to Italy, Pound, with advancing age and infirmity, becomes more withdrawn and eventually enters a period of silence that many attribute as a response to idealistic and professional banishment – his pain of exile and exclusion.

¹³ "There is a time to speak, there is a time to be silent,' the personal motto of Sigismundo Malatesta similarly appears in Ecclesiastes 3:7 as "There is an appointed time for everything...a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build..." (King James version) and in Pound's *Cantos*. Terrell's *A Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound* states that Sigismundo has "tempus loquendi, tempus tacendi inscribed on the tomb of Isotta degli Rimini, a reversal of the Vulgate's "Tempus tacendi et Tempus loquendi."

c. Essendo Stranieri in Zona Vietata, Or Bein' Aliens in a Prohibited Area

Contrary to Pound's harsh self-criticism, his exile and the subsequent poetry, which it produced, positively impacted many others. Many of the details concerning Pound's effect upon other poets explain his influence within and upon poetry and especially Modernism; however, it is his seemingly disagreeable nature, sullied reputation, and more importantly his multi-layered meaning and complicated references that account for why many still avoid reading Pound. His status as a great poet is, for some, unquestionable, but the complex and convoluted nature of his greatest work, *The Cantos*, is misleading to the casual observer.

Many base their opinions regarding the complexity of Pound on the flawed assumption that if they have little to no knowledge of Greek and/or Latin, that they cannot fully comprehend or appreciate the beauty of *The Cantos*. This is patently untrue. Of course, reading Greek and/or Latin helps one understand the written words on the page, but Pound's variant use of language, and the meaning behind the words, is a little more complex. Then there are Pound's notoriously 'creative' translations, which do not always faithfully reproduce the original text(s).

True to the developing Modernist credo, Pound looks to the past in order to rewrite (or remake) both the present and the future. Pound scholar, William Pratt, equates Pound's emergent Modernism as his attempt to create a new beginning. It was Pound, Pratt reminds us, who most of all promoted a new Renaissance, and it was he who had the "critical discernment and creative imagination to be both a shaper

of and a contributor to Modernism as a movement" (Pratt 1-2). Pound's real legacy is his creativity, but the popular notion is that his politics, economic theories, and tarnished reputation are what remain in the public consciousness. "What thou love'st well, shall not be reft from thee¹⁴" and, sad as it is, it seems that the American public loves to hate controversy in its literary tastes.

Pound's 1945 arrest and subsequent internment at the U.S. Army's Disciplinary Training Center (DTC) north of Pisa results in a mental breakdown and his long confinement at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington D.C. The internment and breakdown, ironically, culminate in what many deem as his best poetry, "The Pisan Cantos" (or "Pisani Canti"). While Pound's "Pisan Cantos" won the Bollingen Prize in 1949, he receives little public acclaim, especially in the post-WWII red scare era. Many 'mainstream' American scholars during this period choose to not teach, or to publish on Pound because of the political implications; however, Marshall McLuhan of the University of Toronto had a wonderful student by the name of Hugh Kenner who helps to reestablish Pound to critical acclaim and inquiry.

McLuhan and Pound were in contact throughout his time at St. Elizabeth's, and McLuhan introduces Kenner to Pound the summer of 1948 just before Pound was awarded the Bollingen. It was Kenner's second book, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound* (1952) that "was the beginning, and the catalyst, for a change in attitude toward Pound on the American literary and educational scenes," as Laughlin states in the introduction to Kenner's game-changing book-length publication.

¹⁴ From Canto 81 of Pound's "Pisan Cantos".

Although Kenner managed to effect a change of attitude toward Pound, in certain circles, it hasn't changed enough.

Suburban prejudice is still a widespread issue when one attempts work on old Ez. Consequently, Pound is avoided in many high schools and undergraduate or graduate-level university courses¹⁵, and little (beyond "In the Station of the Metro" or "River-Merchant's Wife") appears in anthologies. What can be done to reestablish Pound? Esteemed scholar, Marjorie Perloff, places Pound's 'sins' in a different perspective by exploring the political views of many of his contemporaries. She argues that we have to try to understand why anti-Semitism and other variant forms of hate were such a widespread problem in the early twentieth century, and not to simply erase Pound from the canon.

The remedy for restoring Pound's importance sounds like a simple one, at least in theory: Get people to read and understand Pound. University of Arkansas Professors Kimpel and Eaves suggest that it was, in effect Hugh Kenner's *Poetry of Ezra Pound* that did more "than any other book to teach us how to read P[ound]," but according to them it also "denies the poem unity in this sense ... of a structure like tragedy with rising action, climax, falling action or any recognizable

¹⁵ While completing my Master's degree at the University of Tulsa, courses offered in Modernism and 20th century literature purposely avoided the use of any Ezra Pound works in materials or readings. It took a great deal of effort to find anyone on faculty who would work with me on my M.A. thesis that addressed Pound and feminism. TU Faculty member, Dr. Grant Matthew Jenkins, who wrote on H.D. for his M.A. thesis at Notre Dame agreed to supervise my Master's project after every other faculty member declined.

progression with clearly marked sections, from one plan to another" (Kimpel and Eaves archive)¹⁶.

The goal of the following project is to read and discern the effect that Pound's status as an expatriate – an exile – has upon his poetry, especially "Canto 74" in the *Pisan Cantos*. While this is the most accessible section of Pound's epic *Cantos*, it begins in tragedy. I will trace that effect of exclusion and exile within the poetry by close reading and explication. When we explicate, we perform a short analysis – an autopsy of sorts – on the words, symbols, allusions and other figurative language used that add and create meaning within a poem or group of poems.

My attempt to see what others have not is daunting. *O muses, o high invention, aid me now.* I call upon the experts in the field, and ghosts of the Modernist past, like Pound invokes memories of his London days and friends alive and dead while in the 'gorilla cage,' to help in my analysis.

The Kimpel and Eaves archive housed in the Special Collections at the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville helps shed some light on this daunting project. On page five of the introduction to the unpublished manuscript Professors Ben Kimpel and T.C. Duncan Eaves write, "We are committing the intentional fallacy in looking at Ezra Pound's non-fiction and letters for evidence of what he might have been thinking about when he wrote his poetry" (Kimpel and Eaves, "Introduction", 5). They add, with a hint of drollness, "Writers, like other people, often use words as masks to disguise their

¹⁶ Box B – Folder marked "Intro – Canto XXXVII beginning with "Over inserts" appearing as clipped-together yellow legal sheets.

thoughts. Certainly writers do not always say what they mean to say" (5).

Kimpel and Eaves cite William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley in "The Intentional Fallacy"¹⁷ because they take issue with the approach deemed as "New Criticism" which was prominent during the mid-20th century and beyond. Wimsatt and Beardsley posit that the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art. The author, they argue in this article that emphasizes New Criticism, is unable to be reconstructed from the writing, and the text is the only source of meaning; therefore, any details of the author's desires or life are merely superfluous.

In response, Kimpel and Eaves suggest that since "writers cannot be judged solely by what they intend since they do not always accomplish their intentions" (5 - 6), and many call for invoking the "words-on-the-page" doctrine. Similar to Kimpel and Eaves, my goal is to poke holes in the "New Criticism", [Old Criticism] approach to looking at "Canto 74" of the *Pisan Cantos* because, like them, this approach fails to address or reveal certain meaningful (meaning-full) elements, especially in regard to a poet like Pound or a work like his very complicated *Cantos*.

Additionally, by adopting an idiomatic notion of 'meaning' we [seem to have] "departed from another important critical trend: we have not been greatly concerned with" (9). The real question in such

¹⁷ The article by William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley was published in the *Sewanee Review*, vol. 54 (1946): 468-488. It was later revised and republished in *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*, U of Kentucky P, 1954: 3-18.

a case as Ezra Pound's is whether meaning manufactured by the reader is more or less interesting than that manufactured by the writer or poet. Kimpel and Eaves state that there "is real difficulty in using words to convey 'meaning' (in any sense) from one mind to another (though not as much difficulty as some critics of the last forty [now seventy] years have said there is" (13). They add, "the more abstract the meaning, the greater the difficulty" (13), and such is the difficulty in explicating Pound under the lens of expatriation and exile.

While other scholars have analyzed *The Cantos*, few, if any, have performed a close analysis under the specific lens of exile. What effect does living in a state of separation have upon Ezra Pound's poetry, specifically the poetry resulting in "Canto 74" of his epic? Like the Biblical story of Adam and Eve cast out of the Garden of Eden, Pound makes subtle references to his perceived status as an expatriate and émigré. Knowing much of his difficult personal and professional history helps in the following close reading, but we are often called upon to remove the historical and political when evaluating poetry. The artist is not the art; the poet is not the poetry. In Pound's case, however, this is easier said than done; politics and history ARE part of his poetry.

It is almost impossible to look at Pound's work without also having a short course on World History. His poetry is famously multi-layered and riddled with allusions, metaphors, and veritable 'shout-outs' to people and places of the past. Pound's present, of course, is now our past; much of what Pound considered current events have been filed away as bygone antiquity.

The historical, political, cultural and the personal implications of being imprisoned are much of what permeates "The Pisan Cantos" section of *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*; moreover, it is his status as an exile, a foreigner even in his own home, which helps to account for his ply-upon-ply technique of rendering the outside and inner worlds Pound, *il miglior fabbro*, knew so well. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to evaluate any section of *The Cantos* without taking into consideration the implied importance of Pound's references. Pound's bricolage, aside and apart from the postmodern association as it relates to pastiche and nostalgia, is complicated. Pound wrote to Otto Bird that "Names are the consequences of things¹⁸" as if trying to argue with future structuralists and post-structuralists (14). We should remember Pound's advice that "Good writers are those who keep the language efficient – that is to say, keep it accurate, keep it clear" (Pound, *ABC of Reading*) and refrain from trying to 'name' the approach used to evaluate Pound's work. We are not Adam in the Garden of Eden, nor do we wish to be; consequently, my approach to this pivotal poem is eclectic and varied.

¹⁸ From the Otto Bird archives and letters housed at The University of Arkansas Library, Special Collections.

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II. The Difference Deference Makes

The first line of "Canto I" in *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* opens beautifully in medias res with what seems a clear, lyrical reference to Homer's *Odyssey*. The first line of "Canto 74" – the first in the Pisan Cantos" sequence – however, opens with what appears as the end: "Ben and la Clara a Milano / by the heels at Milano" ("LXXIV"). Clearly this loaded reference to the "enormous tragedy of the dream" and the demise of Benito Mussolini is intended to inspire pathos, but does not.

In retrospect, much of the world looked at the death of Mussolini as less than tragic. Unlike the *Cantos*, most academics/scholars and/or poets would not shun *The Odyssey* on a vague assumption of its implied difficulty. The importance of *The Odyssey* cannot be denied, and scholars in the field hold it in great respect. Yet, the controversy associated with equating Fascism with 'a dream' is problematic and cause for many to reject Pound. Add to this, is Pound's implied difficulty.

Part of Pound's problem within both the canon and the classroom is that he is considered arduous, and, at times, too contentious for 'mainstream' audiences. Nevertheless, his use of history, literature, art, and culture to write a preeminent epic poem is obvious. What is less obvious is how Pound's status as an exile influences what appears in *The Cantos*.

The opening of his epic work, *The Cantos*, begins simply – a personalized retelling of Odysseus' voyage. Pound writes, "And then went down to the ship, / Set keel to breakers, forth on the godly sea, and / We set up mast and sail on that swart ship" (lines 1 – 3). In

Robert Fitzgerald's translation of *The Odyssey*, those same lines from the Nekuia passage read as, "We bore down on the ship at the sea's edge / and launched her on the salt immortal sea, / stepping our mast and spar in the black ship" (Book XI, 1 – 3). While Pound did not use Fitzgerald's 1961 English translation of *The Odyssey*, his experience with Latin, and the early exposure to Homer, leads him to consult a much older and different source for his poetic purposes.

Hugh Kenner suggests that it was the Andreas Divus 1538 translation of Homer's Greek epic into Latin that was more familiar to Pound. Kenner writes in "Pound and Homer" that Cantos I's resonant opening, "'And then went down to the ship' follows Divus's 'Ad postquam ad navem descendiums,' which in turn follows Homer's" original Greek version more faithfully (Kenner 4). William Cookson in his *A Guide to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* also concludes that Pound relies upon the Divus translation for "Canto I". Then we see Pound's validation in a clear reference to both Odysseus and Divus after the strophe break in the last part of "Canto I" when he writes, "...Odysseus / 'Shalt return through spiteful Neptune, over dark seas, / 'Lose all companions.' And then Anticlea came. / Lie quiet Divus. I mean, that is Andreas Divus, / In officinal Wecheli, 1538, out of Homer" (lines 64 – 68).

Anticlea marks where the Homer of this epic stops. 1538, of course, is the year in which Divus translates/publishes his Latin translation of Homer. It is a bit ironic that the references to Homer dispersed throughout *The Cantos* not only serve to imply a sort of hero's wandering looking for home, like Pound did, but it also alludes to the fact that Pound's own father was also named Homer. Pound's

status as an exile – a poor, banished child of Eve¹⁹ – pervades these lines.

Pound certainly saw his work as a poet influenced (or fathered) by the Italian poet, Dante Alighieri (another exile who did his own fair share of wandering throughout Italy, Hell and Purgatory) as well as the Greek poet, Homer. Pound's ply-upon-ply technique in "Canto I" also invokes Dante. Dante's second canto begins with "All ye, who in small bark have following sail'd, / Eager to listen, on the advent'rous track / Of my proud keel, that singing cuts its way, / Backward return with speed, and your own shores / Revisit..." which is thematically akin to Dante's journey through Purgatorio and is reflected in Pound's work.

What I see as the palimpsest, and what William Cookson deems a series of overlaying components, reflected in "Canto I" are somewhat simple according to Cookson's guide. These overlaying components "consist of only four main elements: Greek foretime translated via Renaissance Latin into a twentieth-century form of Anglo-Saxon heroic verse" (Cookson 4). Greek foretime would be Homer's *Odyssey*, the Renaissance Latin is Dante's *Il Commedia Divina*; therefore, Pound's use of palimpsest is implicit.

"Canto I" chronicles a descent into Hell, ritual and sacrifice, and the quest of the hero as Odysseus/Pound to find how man can return to his own realm the archetypal idea of civilization that is destroyed by the hero (or everyman), yet it is to be rediscovered or founded anew. Regarding this canto's thematic elements, there is the possibility of, in retrospect, seeing the hero as both Mussolini and

¹⁹ From Salve Regina/Hail Holy Queen

Pound. Of course, "Canto I" was drafted before the Fascist ascent to power and before Pound chooses to permanently reside in Italy; however, the theme somewhat suggests, in hindsight, what many see as the problem with Pound.

Pound begins the *Cantos* while he and W.B. Yeats winter together at Stone Cottage from 1913 - 1917. "Canto I" and much of the early *Cantos* clearly shows what Surette calls the "period's obsession with historical process" (Surette 67). Rather than presenting what some may deem the cyclical nature of history, Pound uses the past as a narrative structure in his *Cantos* to illustrate the "capricious flourishing of genius" - both his genius and what he felt were the 'movers and shakers' of history (Surette 67). His perspective in regard to heroes and ideal society is largely influenced by his status as an exile.

a. Explaining Exile (and Why It Applies to Pound)

Similar to Edward Said's use of the term 'exile' in his theories of colonialism, Pound's status as an outsider also serves as "a metaphor to describe his [the poet's] vision of the role of the modern intellectual, who needs a critical, detached perspective from which to examine his culture" (Barbour, quoting Said, 293). This critical, detached perspective is intrinsic to Pound's work, his extensive canon, the *Pisan Cantos*, and especially "Canto 74." While the original meaning of exile is "banishment, [a] political action that forces a person to depart from his country, [Pound's] exile resembles but is not the same as being a refugee, expatriate or member of a diaspora" (294). In practice, Barbour suggests, these terms are now often used interchangeably to refer to people displaced from their original home,

even when they leave it willingly. Pound willingly leaves the United States, but even before his 1908 banishment, per se, he was in exile and an outsider.

One sees things differently when in it, but not of it. However grandiose the idea, the hero portrayed as one who can return to his own land and create a 'paradise on earth' out of the world that he destroys is an enthralling notion, which applies to both the dream of Il Duce and Pound's *Cantos* and career. Joseph Campbell refers to this 'departure, struggle, and success' idea as the hero's journey, or monomyth; it is represented throughout *The Cantos* and in Pound's life and status as an exile.

Pound departs from his homeland, where he felt that he never fit in, and struggles with becoming part of the literati community abroad. He first tries Venice in 1908, then leaves for London. After London proved frustrating and cliquish, his wife and he depart for Paris. After Paris, the Pounds move to Rapallo in Northern Italy. His success in Rapallo varies according to prevailing sympathies, but it definitely impacts Pound's career and subsequent work.

There is also the added influence of the female presence in "Canto I" and throughout much of the *Cantos*. Persephone, Aphrodite, and Circe appear in their dual function of death-dealing and life-giving powers, and as inducement and threat to the hero's quest. Leon Surrrette suggests that in the "*Pisan Cantos*, Aphrodite draws all the goddesses to herself. She becomes *Dea*, the Goddess, and it is her theophany²⁰ that is celebrated at Eleusis... [in the "*Pisan Cantos*"] the

²⁰ Θεοφάνεια, or theophaneia, meaning "appearance of a god" refers to the appearance of a deity to a human or other being.

Goddess appears in various aspects. Aphrodite is her most sublime aspect, and Circe is a more threatening and chthonic aspect" (Surette, *A Light From Eleusis*, 48 – 49). Pound sees several women during his time abroad, but marries Dorothy Shakespear in 1914.

Dorothy is the daughter of Olivia Shakespear, the former lover of W.B. Yeats. Pound is also working on early parts of *The Cantos*, and had just published *Cathay* during this same period. Pound receives Fenollosa's notes from his widow, and translates the Chinese into what eventually becomes *Cathay*, beginning what would become part of his later work on ideograms, Confucious, and the Chinese characters in poetry.

Pound says in an interview with the *Paris Review* that he met Fenollosa's widow at "Sarojini Naidu's and she said that Fenollosa had been in opposition to all the profs and academes, and she had seen some of my stuff and said I was the only person who could finish up these notes as Ernest would have wanted them done. Fenollosa saw what needed to be done but he didn't have time to finish it" (*Paris Review*). It is this association with yet another woman who encourages Pound's career and subsequent work is no coincidence. It is in the "Pisan Cantos" that we see an increase in Pound's use of the goddess, or feminine to invoke the appearance of the divine aspect.

While it is relatively easy to see the influence of the feminine in Pound's work and life, Pound writes in the introduction to Rémy de Gourmont's, *The Natural Philosophy of Love* "spermatozoid is precisely the power of exteriorizing a form..." (Pound, "Introduction," 1). Later in Pound's introduction he states,

There are traces of it in the phallic religions, man really the phallus or spermatozoid charging, head-on, the female chaos; integration of the male in the male organ. Even oneself has felt it, driving any new idea into the great passive vulva of London, a sensation analogous to the male feeling in copulation (2).

Pound's corresponding use of sex and creation to represent creation of ideas – thoughts, poetry, art – is not merely a racy gimmick but characterizes his ingrained belief that creative energy manifests in images, music, poetry.

Sex for Pound is creative energy. It is sacramental fucking" (Ezra Pound, *Selected Letters*, 303). Conversely, there is the risk that sex can be a threat to the quest; invariably, it can alter one's work habits and perspective. Carl Jung writes that "the world of the gods is made manifest in spirituality and in sexuality" and Pound contends that sex is "of a double function ... a source of illumination, or of religious experiences centered solely in the philo-progenitive instinct" (Surette, *Birth of Modernism*, 147 – 148). In the preceding quote, Surette draws directly from both Jung's *Seven Sermons* and Pound's "Psychology and the Troubadours" which, in part, explains the appearance of the duality of the feminine in "Canto I". It also shows Pound's tendency for equating sex with genius and, perhaps, his own 'wandering eye'.

Pound did not subscribe to gynocentrism, unlike Jung and prevailing occult attitudes during the early 20th century, and he writes in *Physique de l'Amour*, "there is a certain correlation between complete and profound coition and cerebral development" (Makin 116). Pound writes in French, "Il y aurait peut-être une certain correlation entre la copulation complete et frofonde et le developpement

cerebral" ("Ezra Pound, "Introduction", 1). Pound's essay on de Gourmont helps to formulate his ideas toward sex that would eventually appear in *The Cantos* and other parts of his later works.

In his essay on de Gourmont, Pound adds a quote from Propertius, *Ingenium nobis ipsa puella fecit* – 'our genius is made by this girl' to indicate the link between what he saw as sex and the feminine influence as a basis for transformation. Pound writes in his introduction to his translation of de Gourmont's "The Natural Philosophy of Love" that the "single spermatozoid demands simply that the ovule shall construct a human being, the suspended spermatozoid ... [results in] incarnation, enmeshment" (6 – 7). In this introduction, Pound constructs his idea of the correlation between sexual energy and creative energy, and adds, rather humorously, "man really cannot work until he has relieved the pressure on his spermatic canals" (7). Pound's invocation of his belief in the creative power of sex hearkens back to the old, pagan, earth-based myths and religions.

b. The Oddity of Homer's Odyssey

In Kenner's discussion of Pound and Homer, he relays by way of anecdote an interesting incident in Pound's education that speaks to the early, influential exposure of *The Odyssey* and its link to Pound's work. This influence is buried within "Canto LXXX" as a reference to his teachers and formative years in the United States. "Canto LXXX (80)" acts as a bridge in "The Pisan Cantos" to link the past and present for Pound. Pound, perhaps at a low point in his exile while incarcerated at Pisa, thinks about his early education and life back before 'the enormous tragedy.'

Canto 80 was written after Pound's internment in Pisa when he began reflecting on what had led to this point in his life. Pound writes, "and it was old Spencer (, H.) who first declaimed me the Odyssey / with a head built like Bill Shepard's / on the quais of what Siracusa? / or what tennis court / near what pine trees" (LXXX, lines 361 – 365). While Spencer exposes Pound to Homer when Pound is a young student of 12 – 13 years of age at Cheltenham Military Academy; however, it is Shepard that is responsible for introducing Pound to the troubadours and Provençal. Both would remain life-long influences.

Siracusa is, of course, an obvious reference to the town on the island of Sicily that has a long Greek history and association. Tennis is mentioned, in part, because it was supposedly after a game of tennis that Spencer recites Homer to Pound. Tennis would remain a regular activity for Pound, that is, until he is remanded to the Disciplinary and Training Center (DTC) at Pisa.

Even though LXXX is written while Pound is at the DTC, it is the longest within *The Cantos* at 26 pages and 434 lines. This elegant canto is often referred to as the London sequence, and a vital part of "The Pisan Cantos" opening with Pound's appeal for why he is incarcerated. Pound laments, "Ain' committed no federal crime, jes a slaught misdemeanor" (LXXX, lines 1-2). In line 5, Pound makes a very intimate statement regarding his life and work. He writes, "Amo ergo sum, and in just that proportion" (5) which translates to "I love therefore I am..." Again, love is a featured element to Pound's Cantos. This very personal sequence is resplendent with frequent references to Pound's 'old life,' friends and memories of London. It is marked with

a kind of quiet sadness, but it seems that no historical event, personal experience or memory is ever lost on Pound.

A number of associated 'Poundians' suggest that *The Cantos* are representative of Pound's personal odyssey. Carroll Terrell writes that he views Pound's great work as a "religious poem ... The tale of the tribe [a]s an account of man's progress from the darkness of hell to the light of paradise" (Terrell viii). Homer's Odysseus and Dante's descent are just two of the masks (personas) that Pound employs throughout. Arguably, this use of personas/masks is, in part, to blame for *The Cantos* perceived difficulty and neglect. Like Eliot's *The Waste Land*, these voices/masks/personas tend to confuse conventional readers.

I use this reference to Homer and the *Odyssey* as a defense of Pound's knotty poetics, and to justify the necessity of using a guide and/or other texts to negotiate *The Cantos* multi-layered complexity. Even Dante had Virgil, his guide through Hell. Pound's *Cantos* make much more sense if one, as Cookson recommends, "get used to the book, to live with it and make it familiar to us" (xx). Multiple readings are also advised. *Labor Omnia Vincit*.

The Odyssey, and other numerous, miscellaneous references, appears throughout *The Cantos*. Its presence is powerful, and especially relevant to the first three, 'Ur', cantos. It is Pound's "passionately held beliefs" which becomes "the power in the shape of the poetic line and the great harmonic rhythms of the poem as a whole," according to Carroll Terrell, the author of the *Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (Terrell xiv). It is Terrell's reference to U of A's own Ben Kimpel and Duncan Eaves which first shows the

importance of their unpublished special collections manuscript. Terrell's pivotal *Companion* uses Kimpel and Eaves' text for the three Leopoldine cantos (XLII – XLIV), and they were also responsible, according to Terrell, for checking the glosses for Cantos XXV – XXX against the original (mostly Italian) sources.

Canto XLII deals with Pound's idea of social credit, the causes of the present war²¹, and the founding of what Pound considered a "damn good bank" (XLII, line 11), the Monte dei Paschi di Siena. While Pound begins this Canto with a rather opaque reference to British and Union politics/policies during the American Civil War, "We ought, I think, to say in civil terms: You be / damned" he then continues his palimpsest layering with a reference to a post-WWI (1918) conversation between Pound and H.G. Wells on why the monument to Queen Victoria was "still allowed to stand in front of Buckingham Palace" (Terrell via Kimpel and Eaves, 170). After the mention of his conversation with Wells, Pound leads the reader into a brief reference to the law in France which prevents women from succeeding to the throne, the "Lex Salica! lex Germanica, Antoninus / said rules at sea" (XLII, lines 7 & 8).

The Germanic law (lex Germanica) adopted by England and other countries allows women to reign. Then we get a sort of red herring in the form of Antoninus, a Roman emperor²² of whom Pound credits with confirming, "at sea the customary law of Rhodes, designed by commercial interests rather than Roman law, should be followed" (Terrell 170 – 171). Another reference to law serves to drive home

²¹ WWII

²² His service as emperor was from 137 to 161.

Pound's point that laws are not always concrete, but often rely upon the context, the time period, and individualized interpretation. Clearly, this is important if we consider Pound's latter trouble with law in the period surrounding the creation of the Pisan sequence.

While most of this explanatory information may seem at unrelated, there is a continuity of thought behind Pound's use of four abstruse references within less than a dozen of the first lines in XLII. Remembering Pound's statement about opacity to WC Williams, one sees a rather clever attempt to purposefully obscure or layer meaning in this particular Canto, as well as throughout the entirety of his *Cantos*. In this instance, Pound makes sly commentary about what he sees as both the role of politics/politicians and the role of women as leaders while simultaneously critiquing what was the current banking or economic systems at work during the first half of the twentieth century.

Cookson's *Guide* incorporates Pound's prose justification for, and the history of, the Sienese bank²³, most of which I will forego here except to say that Pound asserts that there are two kinds of banks: good ones and bad ones which prey on the people. Pound claims that very basis of solid banking can be seen in the Sienese model which relies ultimately on the abundance of Nature, and what he saw as the growing grass that can nourish the living sheep. Nature, like economics, can be fickle.

²³ Il Banco Monte dei Paschi di Siena was founded in the 1400s, and was still in operation at the time of Pound's incarceration at Pisa. It is still in operation today as the world's oldest bank. I photographed the Milan branch while visiting in July 2015 for the Ezra Pound International Conference, Brunnenburg.

In "Canto 74, the opening to "The Pisan Cantos," Pound's invocation of misfortune is clearly evident. Nature is not to blame, but the "enormous tragedy of the dream [is] in the peasant's bent shoulders" (74/445), and is the sadness born out of desolation that defeat and failure bring. While Pound laments the end of his dream, which was the representational building of the city of Dioces, the more extant intimation, which appears, is what Pound thought would be the "social good [that] Fascism would accomplish" (Terrell 362). Pound, as an expatriate living in Italy since 1924, holds some small degree of faith in Mussolini's promise of an idealistic society where every peasant would have a house of his own.

Dioces is an allusion to the first king of Medes in the late 8th century B.C. who built a "visionary city" which Pound compares to Mussolini's intent to "create a paradisal city" (362). Of course, in referencing Deioces, Pound is relying upon his memory of reading Herodotus who probably, according to some scholarly accounts, mistakenly used the Deioces' name to describe a local chieftain who simply acted as a mediator between clans. Nevertheless, Dioces represents for Pound, and in this Canto, an ambitious man of great power and duty who lived in a time where there was no effective central government who could intercede in local disputes – perhaps much like he viewed Il Duce, Benito Mussolini.

Dioces and Duce are not too dissimilar in spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. Whether the City of Dioces is meant to be Milan or Rome, we are uncertain. Pound offers a graphic account of what happens to Mussolini and his mistress, Clara, in Milan after being captured by partisans and attempts to frame Mussolini as one of "the long list of

martyrs in the struggle against church and kings" (Surrette 99). Again, this elevation of the Fascist leader and an invocation of religious martyrdom do not help Pound's cause.

Pound rightly fears suffering the same fate as Ben and Clara a *Milano* when he is taken by partisans from Rapallo and handed over to American authorities. Later biographical accounts verify that Pound sincerely feared for his life, and thought that he would be killed, as many had, after being taken by the partisans. He quickly grabs a copy of Confucius and a Chinese dictionary with which he had been working. The exile was in custody while writing "Canto LXXIV", and the image "that maggots shd/ eat the dead bullock" (LXXIV) was entirely too real for Pound to contemplate in the cage.

Death, destruction, and desolation surrounds Pound at the DTC. Maggots also refer to the common slur for "the Partisans, [the] anti-Mussolini political group which took responsibility for the execution" where Mussolini is also seen by Pound as the dead bullock (ibid). Bullock, in this sense, means a castrated bull, but it also appears in the Old Testament book of Leviticus as offerings one makes for repentance of sin.

The King James version states that "the bullock [is] for the sin offering... whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung (Leviticus 4:12). Later in Leviticus 4:21 bullock appears again as, "he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it *is* a sin offering for the congregation." If Mussolini is the bullock, Pound then assumes the persona or mask of

the martyr, and of Mussolini, who is the sin offering. The biblical camp, in this case, would be the DTC.

While Mussolini was not burned in the literal sense, the dream has 'gone up in smoke.' Pound's banishment, or status as an exile, at the DTC is obvious, and his arrest in May of 1945 is just after Mussolini's death. The image of Ben and Clara *a Milano* is grotesque, and made more gruesome by the fact that the image was promoted in postcards, newspapers, and throughout media outlets across the world.

What is even more ironic, and prophetic, is Pound's use of Dionysus in the next line of "Canto LXXIV". Pound writes that "DIGONOS, Διώνυσος, but the twice crucified / where in history will you find it?" Perhaps at the time, Pound implies that because Mussolini, was first shot then hanged, this would be similar to Dionysus' "twice-born" status. Dionysus, like Mussolini perhaps, has a dual nature. On the one hand, Dionysus is seen as bringing joy and divine ecstasy, but on the other vicious, mindless rage. Mussolini could be painted similarly. The joy he inspired was his promise for every peasant to have a house, and to build a paradise on earth – a new society that Pound also hoped for and the rebuilding of Sigismundo's temple.

If we look at events that happened after April/May 1945, this reference to Mussolini/Dionysus becomes more macabre. After Il Duce's execution, public hanging of the corpse, and eventual burial, his rotting body is dug up, carted away, and hidden by pro-fascista members. Pound is cognizant of this 'resurrection' of Mussolini. Nothing in archives or published documents disputes that notion. Considering the rumor mill, 'scuttlebutt,' and talk amongst both prisoners and Army personnel at the DTC, Pound is reasonably aware of

events inside and outside the perimeters of the DTC, and he incorporates these occurrences into the "Pisan Cantos."

Pound invoking the 'twice crucified' in line 7 of "Canto 74" could mean Mussolini being shot then hung or it suggests the twice-interred status of the former dictator. Nonetheless, I favor that it implies, in all likelihood, how Il Duce was shot, dumped in the Piazzale Loreto²⁴, then hung for the crowds to shoot, stab, and desecrate. The effect of this gruesome act on Pound's state of mind as he writes the Pisan sequence is categorical. His question of "where in history will you find it?" (line 8) is irrefutable: It is not to be found in any other modern war.

History is layered throughout Pound's work, as are references to those in his literary circle. Pound's address to his friend and fellow poet, T.S. Eliot, in the next line, "yet say this to the Possum: a bang, not a whimper / with a bang not with a whimper" alludes to Eliot's "Hollow Men" but also to what Pound probably saw as the end of the most recent war and his work as a poet, writer, and critic.

His notion of going out with a bang and not with a whimper is equated to how Mussolini died – with the bang of a gunshot – and the end of the dream of an ideal society. Additionally, it reinforces Pound's state of mind as he worries if he will be executed. Ecbatana,

²⁴ While visiting the Piazzale Loreto in July 2015, it is now an area populated by fast food franchises, hotels, billboards, and other 'modern conveniences' and leaves little trace of the gas station, which served as the site for Mussolini's gruesome public display. The Cornell library maintains an exhibit of these print and audio materials. c.f. "*Death of the Father-Mussolini & Fascist Italy: the 'infamous' exhibit*". Cornell Institute for Digital Collections. 1999.

or as Pound writes, as "Dioce, whose terraces are the colour of stars" is part of that ideal society that ends with a bang, and he correlates both the possibility of his demise and the 'end of the dream' into this line.

The following line "What you depart from is not the way" in "Canto 74" signals Pound's attempt to explain, in part, the defeat of 'the dream' and the exile's subsequent disillusionment regarding the proposed establishment of a more ideal and just social, economic system. The only major government that Pound did not oppose was Mussolini's, which many other artists and intellectuals in and outside Italy supported. Similarly to Wayne Pounds, I believe Pound supports it because it promises things he had long believed were good: a systematic "modernization of production, creation of a just system of distribution, opposition to the exportation of Communism outside Russia, and [most importantly for Pound] patronage for artists" (Pounds 13 – 14).

While Pound might have supported the idea of Mussolini's Fascist government, he never joined, advised others to join, or worked for the Fascist party. He had no written contract for the radio broadcasts, which are, for many, tantamount to treason. Pound declines to return an employment application that the Republican Fascist Ministry of Popular Culture (RFMPC) sent to him. When sending the checks for his radio broadcasts, the RFMPC would write "enclosed is your salary for the month" and Pound would cross out these words and insert the words: for services rendered²⁵. Nevertheless, *nomina sunt consequentia rerum*

²⁵ From Ezra Pound's statement of 7 May 1945 in Genoa to Mr. Amprim (FBI) and Arrizabalaga (CIC – later the CIA) at the University of

– names are the consequence of things. The name most frequently associated with Pound is fascist.

Fascism was, in many ways, for Pound and others living abroad, a social experiment gone horribly wrong. It then colors the way the world reacts to the poetry and literature that was born out of that experiment. While exile significantly affects Pound's poetry and the way he views the world, the man and his poetry longs for another, better time. Idealistic, instead of fascist, would be a more accurate association for those interested in the influences of Pound's work. Starting with a not-so-subtle nod to end of fascism, "Canto LXXIV" continues as the second longest in the *Pisan Cantos* (next to "Canto LXXX") at 23 and a half pages.

This section of Pound's masterwork begins with the end of a dream, both the ending of the dream of an idealistic society, but also the ostensible end of Pound's personal dream and "belief in the power of poetry to communicate revelations of ultimate reality" (Surrette, *Birth of Modernism*, 45). When Pound is held at the DTC, he is, at first unable to write properly as he is used to and uses scraps of toilet paper to pen the beginnings of *Il Canti Pisani* (See appendix, Figure 1) in the 'gorilla cage'. He is eventually given certain privileges and some leniency, and is allowed to use the camp's superintendent's office for typing and reading.

"Canto LXXIV" originally begins much differently. Pound changes the opening to invoke the death of the dream and Mussolini. Massimo Bacigalupo writes that *The Pisan Cantos* (cantos 74-84) "originally

began with 'The suave eyes, quiet, not scornful', now line 12 of canto 74, and that only at the very end of composition, in Autumn 1945, Pound decides to add the 11 opening lines about Mussolini and the City of Dioce" (Bacigalupo 169). This, according to Richard Sieburth's account in the "Introduction" to the 2004 annotated edition of *The Pisan Cantos*, is what he calls "a revision that completely reframed the eleven Cantos, explicitly transforming the entire sequence into a requiem for Italian Fascism" (Sieburth xxxvi). Pound composes the ten lines that now open *The Pisan Cantos* ('The enormous tragedy of the dream...') very early in the writing of the sequence, during his first weeks of detention in Genoa (3-24 May 1945), according to Bacigalupo.

These lines are far from being 'stray' lines that were nearly forgotten on a piece of toilet paper, but are preserved in three different manuscript versions: The torn 'toilet paper' manuscript reproduced in Sieburth's annotated *Pisan Cantos*; A draft of the same lines inside the front cover of Legge's²⁶ *The Four Books*, a volume that Pound had with him in Genoa and Pisa and reproduced in *Ezra Pound: A Selected Catalogue*; a draft in *Pisan Cantos Notebook* written in late July of 1945).²⁷ Clearly, the revised opening makes a strong case for Pound's elegiac response to the end of Fascism.

²⁶ James Legge (1815 – 1897) was a Scottish missionary and scholar who, in addition to being the first Professor of Chinese at Oxford, and later Chair of Chinese Language and Literature, published what was, at that time, the definitive collection of Chinese translations. His works include translations of Confucius, Mencius, as well as works on Taoism and other Chinese literature and religions. Pound's version of Legge's book, with his notations, can be seen at his daughter's castle in Brunnenburg, Italy.

²⁷ Transcribed in Ronald Bush's, 'Remaking Canto 74', *Paideuma*, xxxii (2003), 184.

Throughout "The Pisan Cantos", it is obvious that Pound makes other political and historical invocations. Pound's reliance on his memory is, at times, flawed as he confuses some things; however, what remains in "Canto 74" is a long canto that incorporates "morality, history, poetry, and mathematics not ideas, entities, abstractions and transcendentalists," according to Kimpel and Eaves (14)²⁸. While I would argue that ideas and entities are invoked throughout the *Cantos*, Kimpel and Eaves assertion is over thirty years old, and is perhaps justified by their opposition to the prevailing literary theory of the time. Adding to Kimpel and Eaves assertion is their acknowledgement that "there is real difficulty in using words to convey 'meaning' (in any sense) from one mind to another" (13). Certainly, this can be seen as the case with Pound who has been dead for over forty years while scads of academics have made their careers out of his bones.

The meaning behind much of "Canto 74" can be seen as subjective and open to interpretation; however, in continuing this attempt at a close reading or explication, one can definitely acknowledge Pound's clear opposition to having 'the establishment' create one concrete meaning for anything appearing in his masterwork. Pound, in a letter to ²⁹Otto Bird³⁰, writes that professional scholars have been reduced to

²⁸ From the Kimpel Eaves "Introduction" in the unpublished manuscript held in the archives at the University of Arkansas, Mullins Library Special Collections.

²⁹ Otto Bird (1913 - 2009) was the "founder and first director of the General Program of Liberal Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Bird came to Notre Dame in 1950 to establish a program of studies which would avoid narrow academic specialization while exposing students to the so called "Great Books," the most important and formative intellectual products of Western civilization and thought" according to *Notre Dame News*.

"such a state of specialization that the idea of ANY text having a meaning is almost in itself heresy" (Pound, 1932). Justifiably, just about any scholar would readily admit that Pound's work takes some unpacking.

Pound's use of 'periplum' suggests that even when reading his *Cantos* we should look for the landmarks contained within the pages. He writes, "the great periplum brings in the stars to our shores" (74/445). A periplum, in this instance, is not using a map or other navigating device, but steering along the course of the voyage by sight.

Pound uses periplum to indicate the voyage Odysseus and his crew make in the *Odyssey*, according to both Pound's *ABC of Reading* and Carroll Terrell, "not as you would find it [in a book or map, but] as a coasting sailor would find it" (Terrell 362 – 363). Because most maps appear as if one were to take a 'birds-eye,' or overhead view, periplum indicates what Pound is calling the point-of-view of the one making the voyage.

'Periplum' is a word that Pound uses in the *Cantos* to suggest a voyage, yet this is one instance where his memory gets things a bit askew. Periplus, not periplum, is a combination of the Greek words 'around' or 'about' and 'voyage,' and some read this line as simply alluding to the daily voyage of the Sun god (Helios) as referenced in the *Odyssey*. Yet, considering that Pound is often on his belly or back while in the 'gorilla cage' and looking at the landscape and other things from that slightly unusual perspective, it suggests that

³⁰ From Ezra Pound's letter to Otto Bird on Il Mare letterhead as it appears in the Otto Bird archives at the University of Arkansas, Mullins Library Special Collections.

in reading his poetry we should look for the landmarks, as we would see them from *our* viewpoint or perspective.

"The Pisan Cantos" are resplendent with Pound's many references to landmarks and personal/public views. Many of these allusions are, of course, not always in English, which might add to the perceived difficulty of his work. This use of other languages represents more than 'code switching' for someone, like Pound, who makes use of the different languages familiar to him, but it also represents Pound's status as an exile. He is frequently surrounded, at many points, in his life by language(s) other than his native tongue. Pound's use of other languages within the *Cantos* is explained at the end of "Canto LI" when he writes, "Other foreign words and ideograms [...] in [the] cantos enforce the text but seldom if ever add anything not stated in the English, though not always in lines immediately contiguous to these underlinings" (Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, 316).

The line in "74, "You who have passed the pillars and outward from Herakles / when Lucifer fell in N. Carolina" alludes to the idea of a periplum, and making a voyage by through the straits of Gibraltar by using the landmarks instead of navigation. Terrell indicates that it denotes "the cliffs on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar" (Terrell 362), but I would also suggest that Pound cleverly alludes to play by Euripides. After all, the word Pound uses is spelled 'Herakles,' not Hercules.

In *Herakles*, the protagonist is in Hades and worries about his family while Thebes is being ruled unlawfully. Considering the situation in Pisa, Italy, at the time Pound writes this line, it is very possible that like Herakles, Pound is in Hell worrying about is

family. Pound, similarly to Herakles, is unable to help his family. Also, it points to how Pound possibly sees Italy as being ruled unlawfully by conquering forces and influences, especially when we consider the revised opening of "74" with its lamentation for the failed Fascist dream. This allegorical use of Herakles (not Hercules) suggests that Pound is using his status as an exile, a prisoner in his foreign homeland, to create a subtle nod to his own personal situation at the DTC.

The next line after the reference to Herakles invokes Lucifer which would support that the use of Herakles is probably more akin to what Pound was experiencing – his personal Hell of the gorilla cage. Additionally, as Carroll Terrell alludes to in his *Guide*, this reference to Lucifer has some occult significance going back to Pound's London days and his association with G.R.S. Mead and Helene Blavatsky. As mentioned before, the London years are some of the most prevalent references that occur in the "Pisan Cantos". Pound's occultism as seen in the Cantos is purposely understated.

The use of Lucifer in this sequence also suggests a reference to the publication, ³¹*Lucifer* that publishes an article on Plotinus in April of 1895. Pound is familiar with this article and it is said to have introduced Pound to Thomas Taylor, who wrote *Select Works of Plotinus*, and "reinforced his interest in all the Neoplatonic light philosophers" (363). This reference to Lucifer and the line "when Lucifer fell in N. Carolina" in "Canto 74" remains a point of

³¹ This publication ran from 1887 to 1897, and was edited by Helene (H.P.) Blavatsky (until her death in 1891) and others such as Annie Wood Besant, Mabel Collins, etc. Madame Blavatsky also appears in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, as the tarot-reading Madame Sososttris.

contention within the circle of Pound scholars. Nevertheless, Pound's interest in Neo-Platonism and Plotinus is well documented. Peter Liebrechts, a Pound scholar and author of the book, *Pound and Neo-Platonism*, makes clear Pound's explicit and implicit use of elements of the Neoplatonic tradition in his poetry particularly in the way it describes his poetics as well as his political and social-economic views.

Plotinus is, for Pound, seen as the expression of the superior godhead and the self-expression of the individual soul, but it is his view which offers explanation and expression of a cosmos that involved a gradual development from all but static unity toward eventual *alienation* -- a moment at which the active soul must make the profound decision to renounce autonomous existence and re-merge with the source of all Being, or else remain forever in the darkness of forgetfulness and error³². Pound writes in *The Spirit of Romance* that "Abandon all hope all ye who enter upon any extended study of this period [Provençal] without some smattering of scholastic philosophy" (Pound, *SoR*, 104), so it is indeed evident that Pound, long before he writes "Canto 74", considers the philosophical element part of the troubadour tradition and of poetry.

This idea of the intersection of the poetic and philosophic is of special importance when looking at the subtle inference of Plotinus in Canto 74. When Pound writes this line, it appears that he was considering renouncing his views so he could hopefully re-emerge from the confines of the Pisan cage, or the one, the intellect, and the

³² c.f. Edward Moore of the St. Elias School of Orthodox Theology, who writes on Plotinus and spirituality.

soul reemerging out of darkness, so to speak. As T.S. Eliot writes in his 1921 essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," transcendence can come about through the use of words. Eliot speaks of poetry in a metaphysical sense with alchemical ability, but it is Pound's poetic-alchemic transcendence occurring in "Canto 74" and throughout the Pisan section, which reinforces the notion of Pound's status as one transformed by banishment.

c. I Am No Man

Transcendence never really occurs, but after the line, "when Lucifer fell in N. Carolina" Pound writes, "if the suave air give way to sirocco / OY TIE? OY TIE? Odysseus / the name of my family." This develops initially as a fragmented form of what was the initial opening of "74," including one of the many layered Homeric references embedded in Pound's cantos. Though the surface meaning of OY TIE or 'outis' translates to no one or nobody, it also signifies Pound's status as a prisoner, exile, traveler – a nobody – much like how the 'nobody' Odysseus battles the cyclops, Polyphemus, as he makes his way home to Ithaca.

Throughout this sequence, Pound continues to portray himself as an Odysseus of sorts, and depicts his life as an exile and poet/traveler under the familiar guise of OY TIE's hero journey. His use of this Odyssean trope³³ to epitomize the situation at hand is well documented, but I posit that this use of Odysseus, who was also an outsider of sorts, also represents Pound as an exile.

³³ C.f. Book IX of Homer's *Odyssey*.

Correlating this idea are the letters written by Ezra Pound between 1934 and 1940 to British classicist W. H. D. Rouse where Pound represents the *Odyssey* as a guidebook for the modern ruler and Odysseus as a proto-Fascist leader. These letters, asserts Leah Culligan Flack, present Pound's position

that is a far cry from his better-known, earlier understanding of the *Odyssey* as a storehouse of poetic technique and of Odysseus, in an interpretation shaped by reading Joyce's *Ulysses*, as a cosmopolitan wanderer who embodied the ideals Europe needed to hold up in order to heal the wounds opened by the Great War (Flack, 2).

These archives³⁴, which feature unpublished letters between Pound and Rouse, also account in part for Pound's politics and that his reading of Homer changes considerably over the course of his rather long career.

The letters to Rouse were written before Pound's incarceration and the reworking of the opening to Canto 74. The full archive, according to Flack, makes legible the historicity of Pound's interest in the classics and invites us to reassess his complex debt to Homer in defining and redefining his influential modernist project in relation to the Western literary tradition and his contemporary society. Flack posits that these neglected letters show that, "far from serving as a touchstone or a source of stable coherence for his project in *The Cantos*, the *Odyssey* was as a dynamic interlocutor that accommodated the full range of his evolving political and aesthetic

³⁴ The Rouse archives are held at Christ's College, Cambridge and are documented by several Pound scholars including Leah Culligan Flack and Svetlana Nedeljkov.

ambitions" (Flack, 106). Pound owes more to Homer than we initially supposed.

Pound, like Odysseus in his voyage, is a wanderer of sorts. He is an exile and foreigner who feels the devastating effects of war and is blown off course by elements beyond his control. The sirocco, a potentially devastating Mediterranean wind, in line 16 represents the forces responsible for blowing the hero off course. Is 'nobody' to blame, or is that nobody Odysseus/Pound? The later fragments of Pound's cantos can attest more clearly to that notion.

Continuing in Pound's Canto 74 is the wind as featured in the following line as, "the wind is also of the process" and followed by "sorella la luna." Clearly Pound struggles with the fate that is to come – the 'winds of change' – which end the dream and result in his imprisonment. Sorella la luna, or sister moon, echoes St. Francis' prayer, "Canticle of the Creatures." And, again we see another emergence of the feminine in the first part of "Canto 74," yet Pound cloaks the spiritualist and pagan associations by wrapping it in what appears as the Catholic, Christian reference. Much of Pound's 'alternative spirituality' is shrouded this cleverly with his ply-up-ply technique.

Pound's alternative spirituality pervades his work, but like much of the occult tradition it is never explicitly stated. It remains, for the mainstream audience, a hidden influence documented by several scholars including Leon Surette, Demetres Tryphonopolous, and Pound's (now deceased) son-in-law, Boris de Rachewiltz. As we know from biographies and Pound's own writing, Pound was "born into a Presbyterian family of earnest and evangelistic tendencies," according

to Herbert Schneidau (Schneidau 256). Some of his mother's family was Quaker, and he was raised as a regular Bible reader and churchgoer. Pound asserts in his *Guide to Kulcher* that his "Christian beliefs were eroded by the truly filthy racket of some Kensington³⁵ church bells" (Pound 300) and his ensuing work is rife with his continued interest in pagan mysticism and the occult.

By occult, I do not mean the typical Hollywood or mainstream Christian smear of the word to insinuate demonic, satanic, or evil. Rather, I employ Demetres Tryphonopolous' definition, when it comes to Pound's oeuvre. Tryphonopolous defines the occult, as it pertains to Pound, as the "revival of Hellenistic religious speculation together with the discovery or fabrication of a 'tradition' by means of which ancient wisdom has been handed down from high antiquity" (Surrette quoting Tryphonopolous, "Preface," xiv). Tryphonopolous extends his definition by stating that the "occult signifies anything hidden or secret in the sense of being mysterious to ordinary understanding or scientific reason"; as G.R.S. Mead writes, "occultism points to the limitations of normal senses and advances the belief that 'the range of the senses can be enormously extended psychically ...'" (Tryphonopolous 19 – 20).

Of course, after Pound moves to London and becomes well acquainted with Yeats, Olivia and Dorothy Shakespear, his familiarity with spiritualism and the occult increases. Yeats was a powerful influence for Pound, and it is in his association with the elder statesman that Pound is also exposed to English society's Theosophy,

³⁵ During Pound's London years, he lives, at one time, in a small apartment in very close proximity to a church in the Kensington district.

Rosicrucianism, The Order of the Golden Dawn, etc. It is the Yeatsian Order of the Golden Dawn which, after Aleister Crowley's³⁶ split, becomes the Ordo Templi Orientis, and eventually the modern-day Thelema or OTO³⁷.

This preceding explanatory boondoggle helps to clarify Pound's deliberate incorporation of spirituality in the context of his use of Saint Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of the Creatures." Pound layers elements of Christianity, paganism, mysticism, mythology, and the occult into this poem. While Pound is writing "Canto 74," he has little access to outside materials and uses familiar Christian themes; moreover, it is in his use of familiar Christianity to cleverly disguise his rather unique beliefs that we see the development of Pound's self-aware status of an exile. These beliefs, while popular in a small percentage of society during periods of the 19th and early 20th century, are not those typically expressed by the mainstream. Pound's status as an exile is also profoundly informed by his alternative spirituality, which makes him even more of a 'banished child of Eve' amongst certain conventional elements of intellectualism and the study of literature.

The line in "Canto 74," "Fear god and the stupidity of the populace" seems even more pertinent in light of what is going on in

³⁶ Aleister Crowley (1875 – 1947) an English poet, novelist, magician, and occultist founded what we now refer to as Thelema. He "was the *enfant terrible* of the Edwardian avant-garde of London and Paris. Witty and flamboyant, and an early champion of the aesthetic and inspirational virtues of drugs, sex, music and dance, he gravitated to the cultural exile communities," according to the US Grand Lodge of Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO).

³⁷ OTO is a neo-pagan spirituality that incorporates Egyptian mythology, paganism, and Christian/Catholic ritual into its unique dogma and practices.

Pound's world. We see a subtle nod towards Pound's separation from mainstream Christianity with the use of the lower case 'g' and his fear/realization that it is the populace who has incarcerated him. Pound was never one to 'go gently into that good night,' and it could be that he grasps how certain members of the populace in and around Rapallo were responsible for having him picked up by Partisans, turned over to American forces, and subsequently incarcerated at the DTC. Moreover, it is Pound's awareness of being an outsider, one outside of the general public opinion, which make him fear the populace.

Looking at the next lines, as they are grouped together, we see a furthering of Pound's ideas regarding politics and patronage. Pound writes, "but a precise definition / transmitted thus Sigismundo / thus Duccio, thus Zuan Bellin, or trastevere with La Sposa / Sponsa Cristi in mosaic till our time / deification of emperors" (74/445). Here we see Pound's invocation of his deep-seated belief that art deserves patronage, and the central reason why Pound favors many of Mussolini's ideas.

One of the fundamental parts of Fascism is support for the arts. Italian nobleman and military leader, Sigismundo Malatesta (1417 – 1468), is what Pound alludes to here. Malatesta was, like Mussolini in many ways, a military-style leader who was condemned for certain acts, but also supported the arts. In the Malatesta Cantos (Canto 8 – 11³⁸) Pound lauds this Italian *condottiero*³⁹ while in this passage,

³⁸ The 'Malatesta Cantos' were first published in 1923 after Mussolini came to power in 1922.

³⁹ An Italian term for a general or mercenary leader

Duccio⁴⁰ and Zuan Bellin⁴¹ are Pound's references to Italian Renaissance artists who receive patronage and thus are able to create their art. Duccio and Bellin also represent for Pound some of the artists and works of art that had not been subjugated by the market.

Pound's use of the "La Sposa / Sposa Cristi," or the Bride / Bride of Christ, veils his alternative spirituality again with reference to a Christian trope in the mosaic at the chiesa di Trastavere. This is Pound's reference to the Santa Maria di Trastevere church in Trastavere, a Roman district across the Tibur river. The goddess, in the form of the Bride of Christ, is invoked in the same line as "deification of emperors" and alludes to the Chinese practice of deifying their emperors. Remember, that at the same time Pound is composing "Canto 74" he is also reading and working on Chinese translations.

The next line, "but a snotty barbarian ignorant of T'ang history need not deceive one" is a not-so-veiled allusion to Franklin Roosevelt, or Ooze as Pound often refers to him. The "T'ang history" refers to the Chinese 13th dynasty whose emperors issued its own state notes, and did not rely upon the gold standard of currency. So here we see Pound taking issue with American economics, and more specifically Roosevelt's economics during his rather long presidency.

More importantly, Pound refers to the Chinese method as an example of non-gold based system of economics like he hopes the U.S. would adopt. He sees the gold-based system as unsuccessful and

⁴⁰ Duccio (di Buoninsegna) was a Sieneese artist living in the 13-14th century.

⁴¹ Reference to Venetian Renaissance artist who lived (approximately) from 1430 to 1516. Zuan Bellin represents Pound's 'phonetic spelling' of Giovanni Bellini.

unfair, particularly to the working class. Pound writes, "by returning to gold, Mr. Churchill forced the Indian peasant to pay two bushels of grain in taxes and interest which a short time before he had been able to pay with only one" (Terrell, quoting Pound's *Gold and Work*, 364).

As we know from history, the gold standard is often linked to economic depression. This incident occurs in Pound's lifetime when Churchill as "chancellor of the exchequer returned" India to the gold standard in 1925 (Terrell 364) which subsequently creates a severe depression not only in England but also across the Empire. We see this specific issue of the gold standard linked to usury and referenced again by Pound a few lines later when he writes,

and in India the rate down to 18 per hundred
but the local loan lices provided from imported bankers
so the total interest sweated out of the Indian farmers
rose in Churchillian grandeur
as when, and plus when, he returned to the putrid gold
standard as was about 1925 ("Canto 74).

Even while suffering dishonor and incarceration at the DTC, Pound uses his status as an outsider, and his unorthodox poetics, to take issue with the prevailing system of economics.

This is probably not the wisest thing to do, but dear ol' Ez was never one to make a hasty retreat. This section regarding returning to the gold standard is also mentioned in one of Pound's radio speeches. Pound says,

Can you ever understand that the return to gold under Lloyd George and Churchill meant that 73% of the population of India had to pay up twice as much grain or farm products to meet taxes and interest charges? Seventy-five percent because that is the percentage of Indian population that depends upon agriculture (*Radio Speeches*, 272).

Usury, Pound's principal issue with modern finance and economics is blasted throughout his *Cantos*, but falls on deaf ears. The incorporation of his economic theories further alienates him and makes his exiled status more pronounced. His interloper status is magnified especially as in "Canto 74" he continues to discuss England and Stalinist Russia.

When Pound writes, "Oh my England / that free speech without free radio speech is as zero / and but one point needed for Stalin" he equates the lack of free speech as one step (or one point) closer to the Communist system. Pound was convinced that if he had just 20 minutes with Stalin that he could "explain that all he had to do was control the money and he would solve the problems" (Terrell 364). Pound never got that opportunity, of course, especially in light of his failed attempts to 'talk sense' to his own American government.

One of the primary precepts of Marx-Leninism is that the workers should own the means of production. Pound makes this association between Marxism and economics in the next lines when he writes, "you need not, i.e. need not take over the means of production; / money to signify work done, inside a system / and measured and wanted" (74). Pound wants the artist/worker to be sustained by the system – 'inside the system' – and not have the system taken over by those who would not act as patrons to artists and support to workers. Without going into a long diatribe concerning Marxism, suffice to say that Pound acknowledges the negative influence and prodigious significance of economic systems and bankers, which prey upon the population in an unequal distribution of goods and power.

Later in "74" when he refers to " 'I have not done unnecessary manual labour' / says the R.C. chaplain's field book," Pound is making reference to one of the few books he had access to at the DTC – the Roman Catholic missal, which, in this instance, was a sixteen page concise summary of the Catholic missal printed and distributed by the Paulist fathers for soldiers to use during Mass. Pound, according to Terrell and Kenner, "kept his copy and drew in the margin next to some of the Latin phrases Chinese characters taken from Legge which were evoked by the missal" (Terrell 364). "Legge" is Pound's nod to the first professor of Chinese at Oxford University during the mid-to-late 1800s that worked laboriously on Chinese translations.

The 'field book' used by Pound while at the DTC is kept with other assorted Ezra Pound memorabilia by Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz, at Brunnenburg castle, and was examined by Hugh Kenner for this anecdotal detail by Carroll Terrell. Additionally, I had the chance to briefly examine this 'field book' in 2008 and again in 2015 while at Brunnenburg.

Pound takes issue with the traditional 'Sunday is a day of rest' restriction that prohibits working on 'the Lord's day.' Pound aligns himself against what he sees as the American mawkishness regarding Sunday as he and his fellow prisoners are sitting in "death cells [as] militarism progressing westward / im Westen nichts neues [all quiet on the Western front]" ("74"). Pound suggests that priests hearing confession and other priestly duties are exempted, in theory, from the Sunday-Sabbath day constraints because their work is not considered manual labor, but it is in this ostensible hypocrisy that Pound takes issue. For Pound, it was the larger political duplicity, rather than

religious hypocrisy, that he addresses when writing that "the Constitution in jeopardy / and that state of things not very new either" (74).

Pound's status as an exile gives him a different perspective to observe and write on what he saw as America's essential problem – the Constitution (and thus the United States) being threatened by an unequal and morally corrupt financial system perpetuated by greedy, usurious financiers. Pound longs for a change in the worldwide banking system, to a system that supports art and does not prey upon the workingman. The enormous tragedy of the dream is that Pound's politics and his wish for a more evenhanded monetary structure is part of what alienates him from much of the world.

Similar to the assertion by Heraclitus that character is fate⁴², Pound's eventual fate is made more problematic by his alleged support of Fascism, his cloaked, alternative views of religion and spirituality, and his appeal to revise worldwide banking and financial systems. Furthermore, it is his outspoken criticism of the U.S. that lands him in the DTC and subsequent incarceration at St. Elizabeth's. Pound subscribed to the Jeffersonian view of government in that the government can only do that which is explicitly enumerated in the Constitution of the United States.

Pound's harsh criticism of the U.S. involvement in WWII, American politics, and America's 'flawed' financial system, is cause, especially during wartime, to equate his views and his poetry with subversion. The deference that Pound's work, which has not been fully

⁴² ἦθος ἀνθρώπου δαίμων, (or character is destiny), as referenced in Fragment 119 by Heroclitus. Translation by William Harris, Professor Emeritus, Middlebury College.

realized, makes all the difference in seeing his poetry as that of exile, and of banishment; it also helps to explain the ongoing difficulty in explicating the most lyrical and beautiful of Pound's cantos, the "Pisan Cantos." Character is destiny, and the difference that deference makes is implicit to understanding Pound's poetics.

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III. Pound's Stranger in a Strange Land

Pound uses another exiled poet, Dante Alighieri, when he writes, "‘of sapphire, for this stone giveth sleep’ / not words whereto to be faithful / no deeds that they be resolute / only that bird-hearted equity make timber / lay hold of the earth" (Canto LXXIV, 446). The sapphire here in this line represents Pound's earlier translation of Dante's idea of the gem, as he wrote in the *Spirit of Romance*, which he published during the London years before WWI. Pound remembers this allusion from so long ago and uses it to evoke what he views as Dante's "idea of a paradisaic blue in the sky into which he will rise to come as near as possible to the vision of Beatrice," according to Terrell (364). Pound spends much of his time in the 'gorilla cage' at the DTC in Pisa staring at the landscape, the sky, and remembering people and places from long ago while noticing the minutiae presented in nature. Additionally, in an article by Anne Conover titled "Olga Rudge: Pound's Muse and the Circe/Aphrodite of *The Cantos*⁴³," 'the stone that giveth sleep' reference is where Pound confesses his love for Olga first in the Pisan Cantos. It is in a later sequence, Cantos 96 and 97, that Pound makes reference to Olga's periwinkle-blue, or *pervenche*, eyes.

References to color appear throughout the Cantos, but especially in the "Pisan Cantos" where Pound has little to occupy his time besides looking at things from his periplum, or point of view, in the cage and working on what would become the "Pisan Cantos." The color

⁴³ Anne Conover's paper was presented at the 26th Ezra Pound International Conference in Brunnenburg, Sud Tirol Italy on 11 July 2015. Ms. Conover was, unfortunately, unable to attend; however, Diana Collecott of the University of Durham (UK) read her paper.

of the sapphire gemstone is such a beautiful blue that Pound asserts in his first book of literary criticism, *Spirit of Romance*, "Nature herself's turned metaphysical, / Who can look on that blue and not believe" (*SoR*, 64). Colors, especially blues and greens appear and reappear throughout the "Pisan Cantos."

It is in the essay, "How to Read", however, that Pound describes 'Phanopaoeia,' and connects bedposts and sexual imagery to this gemstone, or so Carroll Terrell writes in his *Companion to the Cantos*. Phanapaoeia, as in the poem, "Phanapaoeia," from the "Poems of 1917 – 1920" section of *Personae*, is Pound's word to describe a poem that relies upon throwing a visual image on the mind. He states that this concept is particularly exemplified by Chinese poetry because the Chinese language is composed of pictograms. Pound writes that "The swirling sphere has opened / and you are caught up to the skies, / You are englobed in my sapphire / Io! Io!" (*Personae*, 167). Color is, for Pound, a way of throwing a visual image on the mind; hence, his frequent and multipurpose use of color throughout the "Pisan Cantos."

The allusion to the stone sleep in "74," also exemplifies Pound's recurrent use of Homer, but more specifically Tyro's daughter, Salmoneus, as mentioned in Book XI of the *Odyssey*. Conover asserts this reference also leads back to Pound's muse wherein Salmoneus is a stand-in for Olga Rudge. The stone sleep theme also comes from another multi-layered reference Pound makes in Canto 2 and again in Canto 76. The Yale Notebooks,⁴⁴ contain a note in Pound's handwriting which says,

⁴⁴ These notebooks are held at Yale's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and were purchased from Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz, after the debacle concerning the Pound materials having been unethically obtained by Yale from the aging lifelong companion to

"Prester John, 1476 = Throne of gold set with gems, 7 tiers, gold, ivory, crystal, -- to the rubys, for this stone giveth sleep" (Yale 11). Prester John comes from a widely circulated 16th century European letter in which "he told of a Christian utopia he had founded" and detailed the bed he slept in as one "entirely covered with sapphires, by virtue of which I maintain my chastity. I have many beautiful women, but I only sleep with them three months of the year" (Terrell 398). Perhaps, given Pound's personal intimacies and what Marianne Moore⁴⁵ would call his 'scalawag' ways, this is also a subtle nod to his sexual proclivities.

Pound uses this stone sleep also as a metaphor for spiritual repose. The seven tiers that Pound alludes to represent the seven walls of Ecbatana that Herodotus mentions, and which Pound recalls while languishing in forced exile at Pisa. Mary de Rachewiltz, Pound's daughter, maintains that Ecbatana is one of the Cantos' constant themes⁴⁶.

Ecbatana was for Pound what Byzantium was for W.B. Yeats – the epitome of paradise – a utopia. Both Pound and Yeats, writes Sean Pryor, "invoke and adapt a host of blissful times and places, and they move freely from one to another. This freedom partly results from the ease with which the typology of paradise allows different myths to be compared and conflated" (Pryor 4). Whereas the ostensible garden paradise is often located on an island, as we see in *The Odyssey*, the

Pound, Olga Rudge, when she was suffering from dementia and living alone in Venice.

⁴⁵ c.f. *Holding on Upside Down: The Life and Work of Marianne Moore* by Linda Leavell, 2013

⁴⁶ Stated by Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz, in the opening address for the 26th EPIC, 7 July 2015, Dorf Tirol, Brunnenburg, Italy.

"longing for a lost paradise often relocates that paradise in the future as a hope, a possibility" (5) as we see with Pound's use of Ecbatana here in "Canto LXXIV".

Pound's dream of a paradise on earth, as also purveyed by Mussolini and the Fascist political platform, in large part, equates with the "Pisan Cantos'" Ecbatana. It is the, in this case, the tragedy of the dream as introduced in the opening lines of this canto. The utopia, which Pound longs for, is never realized, and the possibility or hope is dashed and now seen in the peasant's bent shoulders. The dream, like Ecbatana, is relegated to the mythical.

a. What God, Man, or Hero

Pound suggests the conflation of the sacred and profane, or secular and non-secular, in the following line when he writes "Rouse found they spoke of Elias [Hebrew prophet, Elijah] / in telling tales of Odysseus OY TIE" (Canto LXXIV, 446). Rouse is, as mentioned previously, the British classicist W. H. D. Rouse who Pound recalls from his London years. Those formative years, Pound's time in and around London, is prevalent throughout the Pisan cantos, and is quite evident in, of course, the London sequence.

Pound's use of this reference to Rouse and the Odyssey is especially lucid as he writes the response, "No man / I am noman, my name is noman" (446). 'No man' is understood to be both no man and Hero, like Odysseus when he tries to escape the cyclops, Polyphemus, and reiterates Pound's position from the first few dozen lines of Canto 74. He is both no man, no man of real consequence in the grand

schema of a prison camp, filled with more violent and worse offenders, that was the DTC.

He suggests that he is both no man and hero who is banished for his beliefs. This line echoes a portion of what is Pound's most well-known wartime poem, Hugh Selwyn Mauberly (1920), which reads, "What god, man, or hero" (*Personae*, 187). This line also reflects Pound's adaptation from Pindar's "Olympian Odes," which appears in Loeb's translation as, "what god, what hero, aye, and what man shall we loudly praise?" Pound, according to K.K. Ruthven's *Guide to Personae*, uses this line as an example of "Pindar's big rhetorical drum" as seen in *The Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907 - 1941* (143); however, this line also recurs in Pound's writing from his London days, in the early part of the 20th century, and in later parts of his *Cantos*.

Pound continues the Nekuia⁴⁷ canto with an exhortation "but Wanjina⁴⁸ is, shall we say, Ouan Jin / or the man with an education / and whose mouth was removed by his father / because he made too many things," (74, 447) or more literally whose voice was taken away for saying too much. Compared to the other prisoners at Pisa, Pound is, indeed, the 'man with an education'. The father reference represents his fatherland, America, and the punishment for his talking too much via the Rome radio broadcasts and other venues. According to Terrell, Wanjina is, in Australian folklore, the "son of a god [who] created the world by saying the names of things," much like how Adam in the Biblical story of Eden named God's creations, but "Wanjina created so

⁴⁷ In the original manuscript, Pound gave LXXIV this title, making a clear link with Canto 1 and, of course, the *Odyssey*.

⁴⁸ Wanjina is Pound's reference to the Australian aboriginal deity, Wondjina.

many objects that his father closed his mouth so he could not speak" (Terrell 365) and therefore could not create any more things.

Pound's mouth has been symbolically closed, and he has been silenced, in part, by the incarceration at Pisa. Ouan Jin is also a "Man of Letters: Writer," according to both the Terrell and Cookson's guides. This is Pound clearly appropriating the character of Ouan Jin as a mask for himself, much like how he uses Odysseus throughout the *Pisan Cantos*. Ouan Jin, which, according to modernist scholar, Maud Ellmann, is also a "French transliteration of a Chinese ideogram meaning 'man of letters'" and functions as a "pun [which] underlines the fallen deity's affinity to Pound..." (129). While Terrell and Cookson do not take this meaning to imply a French *transliteration*, per se, it definitely functions as a pun in this context and in my reading.

Paradoxically, it was in reading this essay on James Joyce and *The Odyssey* that I encountered Ellmann's assertion. By inserting these "broken names into the poem," Ellmann continues, "Pound sets up a resonance" (130) between the name that was silenced (Wanjina) and Odysseus, who appropriates 'I am no man' and becomes a nameless hero in order to elude the Cyclops. It is Pound's clear conflation of varying centuries, cultures, traditions, or even geographic locations – his time-traveling tendencies previously mentioned – that also indicates Pound's no man, exiled status.

Further in Canto 74, Pound adds more specific imagery from his "death cells in sight of Mt. Taishan @ Pisa" (74/447) by describing the peak he sees from his cage as Taishan, as the sacred mountain in China. While Pound never visits China in his lifetime, he imagines

that the mountain he could see from his cage at the DTC must look like the sacred mountain in the Western Shantung Province, which has many "shrines on the road to the summit" (Cookson 134). The next line uses another sacred mountain, but this time one from Japan, Mt. Fujiyama. Pound remembers the view from Gardone, a town on the Lago di Garda, in Northern Italy, and associates it with Mount Fujiyama. Gardone is, not so coincidentally, the town where Mussolini set up the Salò Republic after the fall of his Fascist government in Rome. While Pound aligns himself with Ouan Jin, a man of letters, which he clearly was, he also uses these lines to continue his elegy for the tragedy of the dream that was Fascism.

Many Pound scholars believe that Pound's ideas, especially his politics, take a drastic turn after his move to Rapallo in 1924. Pound is insulated in the tranquility of the Cinque Terre, and does not enjoy the diverse community of literati that was his peer group during the London days, or even during the period he resides in Paris. While Pound's irascible personality alienates him from some of London's literary elite, and from certain salon communities in Paris, it is in Italy that he is particularly cloistered. Ironically, he struck out to find a place that would aid his intellect and his writing. Though he was isolated, friends like W.B. Yeats and others intermittently visited Pound and Dorothy in Rapallo; however, he did not have that regular contact with others who would or could 'call him out' on his increasing extremism and insular foibles. Additionally, being an only child, his aging parents, Isabel and Homer, move to Rapallo to be closer to their son, thus making his circle even more limited.

While living in Rapallo, many of Pound's ideas take a turn towards stagnation; a number of his friends from those formative years remark the émigré becomes a bit stranger than he was in London or Paris. Forrest Read observes that "for Pound the years in Paris apparently made less of an impression than his earlier years in America and London, or his later years in Italy ... Pound seems to have felt himself a sojourner" (211). Pound was the quintessential outsider, especially in Paris during the early 1920s, but no matter where he chose to explore, he remained in exile and apart from the majority, the prevailing groups.

Dag Hammarskjöld, former Secretary General of the United Nations, observes this trait and comments in 1954 during a speech at the Museum of Modern Art that

Modern art teaches us by forcing us to use our senses, our intellect, and our sensibility, to follow it on its road of exploration. It makes us seers – seers like Ezra Pound, when, in the first of his *Pisan Cantos*, he senses 'the enormous tragedy of the dream in the peasant's bent shoulders.' Seers – and explorers – these we must be if we are to prevail (Hammarskjöld, as quoted by Little, 70).

Not everyone shares the peremptory attitudes that led to Pound's incarceration, and clearly Hammarskjöld views Pound as a prophet and pioneer, a man like many explorers, ahead of his time and persecuted for his 'explorations.' Hammarskjöld makes Pound's status as an outsider, exile, and sojourner even clearer with this statement.

Pound's use of two different sacred mountains twice in just two lines implicitly underscores how "mountains often symbolize divine truth in literature and myth," according to Marianne Moore biographer, Linda Leavell (217). While Pound creates his own brand of myth by incorporating many other worldwide mythologies, he also expresses his

own, personal 'divine truth' in discussing his precarious situation as "the cat [who] walked the top bar of the railing" (74, 447). Pound, throughout the *Pisan Cantos*, walks a fine line between the autobiographical and the mythological, blending each together as a statement of being neither expressly one nor the other, but both.

Pound remains in exile, an outsider, who is bodily inside the cage while his thoughts reside outside, and remains a stranger even when writing on his own or adopted land. Dag Hammarskjöld, like a few other important figures of that time, recognizes Pound's status as exiled explorer who dealt in the divine truths of art and literature while remaining a stranger in a strange land. Pound inhabits a strange category; he is technically American, though he would not live in America for most of his adult life. He is not British and certainly not Italian; although, he lived in Italy from 1924 to his incarceration at Pisa and after his subsequent repatriation to Italy following the St. Elizabeth's confinement.

Even Pound's successive transfer to American authorities, and his ultimate relegation to the 'bughouse', establishes another form of exile. Donald Davie acknowledges this perceived difficulty, in neither being truly one or the other, by stating Pound is "always going to be happier outside his own country than in it" (20). Additionally, Davie adds, the consequences were "calamitous thirty years later, when Pound, still conceiving of himself as an American patriot, broadcast from Rome radio..." (20). Pound's status as an exile is multi-dimensional as he fits several categories of banishment and in being othered from the prevailing group or groups he often longed to be accepted by.

Pound's use of world mythology and international, literary, and regional histories make his outsider status even more pronounced. He venerates Flaubert, Laforgue, and de Gourmont, who were French, and borrows heavily from Classical Greek and Roman literature, but has "virtually no views of American nineteenth-century literature, since he appears not to have read ... Emily Dickinson, or Melville or Hawthorne, Fenimore Cooper or Thoreau" (Davie 6). While Pound "saw himself as quintessentially American, despite the large portions of his life spent abroad" (552) he appears to construct "order over the chaos [of exile] ... by re-creating in literary renderings a world turned static," (xxi) Martin Tucker writes. Pound's stasis peaks while residing in Rapallo; it is his use of mythologies and literatures from outside the United States to construct an identity of exile, as seen as an ingrained effect throughout the *Pisan Cantos*, which makes his outsider status even more pronounced, and he is even more so a stranger in a strange land.

For if Flaubert is Pound's true Penelope, as Pound himself asserts, then Catullus must be his Circe. Of course, considering Pound's ongoing status as an outsider, he naturally turns to literature that is decidedly not American. Pound writes of the importance of Catullus early and often in his career. For Pound, to get "anything like this directness of presentation one must go back to Catullus [and...] If a man is too lazy to read the brief works of these poets, he cannot hope to understand writing, verse writing, prose writing, any writing" ("How to Read" 33). It is for this reason that Catullus and other writers of the Classics are used throughout much of Pound's work.

Additionally, the references and lines throughout *The Cantos*, and here in the Pisan section, which suggest Catullus are frequent. Pound writes, "The great writers need no debunking" ("How to Read 21); he continues in 74, "and the water was still on the West side / flowing toward the Villa Catullo / where with sound ever moving / in diminutive poluphloisboios" (Canto LXXIV, 447). Villa Catullo, according to several references, indicates where the poet, Catullus, lives while writing his "salutation to the promontory of Sirmio" (Terrell 365), but it also represents for Pound who, like Thomas Hardy and others, was enamored of this beautiful, iconic area. Sirmione, at Lake Garda, is also where Pound has "his momentous meeting with Joyce⁴⁹," (25) as noted by Donald Davie, et al. Pound's memories permeate these lines.

Pound uses the Homeric kenning⁵⁰, 'poluphloisboios' as an onomatopoeic device to indicate the "rush of the waves on the sea-beach and their recession" (*Literary Essays*, 250). Pound also invokes this onomatopoeia as a way in which to remember the beautiful water at Lago di Garda where he finally meets his colleague, the illustrious writer-in-exile, James Joyce. While Pound advocates for Joyce's work, and gets it published in various venues, he does not meet him in person until later. By the time Pound recalls Joyce in this canto, he is already dead⁵¹, but the usage suggests Pound reverting to the fond memories of his colleague, another influential exiled writer who cleverly appropriates the Odyssean trope.

⁴⁹ c.f. Canto LXXVI where Pound writes of recalling the arrival of James Joyce.

⁵⁰ c.f. *Odyssey* XIII, etc.

⁵¹ James Joyce dies in 1941 while in Zurich, Switzerland, which precedes Pound's writing of this canto by about four years.

b. Inciting Humanity to Continue Living

Why does Pound attempt to write of such bucolic images during his incarceration? Are such 'highbrow' concepts of beauty, art, and literature even conceivable for him in the 'gorilla cage?' Pound himself seems to anticipate this question and addresses it years before in "How to Read", later compiled in the *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. Pound writes in 1929⁵² that the "function of literature as a generated prize-worthy force is precisely that it does incite humanity to continue living; that it eases the mind of strain, and feeds it, I mean definitely as nutrition of impulse" (*Literary Essays*, 20). Pound is using his memories and the writing of literature, his art, to continue living and ease his mind of strain. Pound's mental breakdown while at Pisa is precipitated by mental confusion and the inability to write. It is after the breakdown and the resultant psychological evaluation that Lt. Col. John Steele permits Pound to use an Army typewriter and paper, which ignites his recovery and ability to continue his *Cantos*.

These privileges were not afforded to any other prisoner at the DTC. The breakdown is listed as a "spell" c. 7 June 1945 in Pound's "Summary of medical history" notes from Pound's psychological reports seen in the JH Edwards materials⁵³ held in Special Collections at the University of Tulsa's McFarlin library. In the 1945 report, "No evidence of psychosis, neurosis, or psychopathy" is noted, but he

⁵² "How to Read Part One: Introduction" is originally published in the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1929. It is elaborated upon in Pound's *ABC of Reading* published in 1934, and compiled into *Literary Essays* published in 1935 with an introduction by T.S. Eliot.

⁵³ I was, on several occasions, given access to the unpublished JH Edwards materials housed at the University of Tulsa McFarlin library. The "Summary of medical history" is located in box 1:1.

[Pound] "shows some anxiety, restlessness, tremulousness, and has had an attack of confusion" (13, "Psychological Reports of 1945"). The spell and attack of confusion are the same, and occurs after Pound "had been in the cage for two weeks," (7) notes psychiatrist, E. Fuller Torrey, M.D. While Torrey never examines the living Pound, he is a research psychiatrist specializing in schizophrenia and bipolar illnesses; he writes on Pound after hiring on at St. Elizabeth's and subsequently gaining access to Pound's hospital records after Pound's release and eventual death. Torrey has maintained that Pound received preferential treatment, which cannot be denied, and that he was never mentally unfit.

Because of this 'spell,' the two camp psychiatrists, Richard W. Finner and Walter H. Baer, later examine Pound, in part to determine his mental soundness. This examination results in the 1945 report listed in the JH Edwards collection. Part of that report recommends that Pound be moved out of the 'gorilla cage' and provided "more humane living conditions" which culminate in an "officer's tent in the medical compound" (Torrey 8). Pound's spirits rally with the improved living conditions, and he continues to work on the "Pisan Cantos." Because of Pound's frequent writing and the ensuing improved mental state, the new DTC psychiatrist, Dr. William Weisdorf⁵⁴, examines him again and he is deemed "psychologically normal" and "perfectly sane" (9). The myth that Pound was ever insane is discredited, contrary to much media and public fanfare. The writing that Pound is allowed to do at the DTC is what helps him to recover.

⁵⁴ c.f. United States Army memo from Lt. Col. John Steele to Commanding General, MTOUSA, July 19, 1945.

Pound continues to compose the *Pisan Cantos* and writes of "the stillness outlasting all wars," (74/447) which is the peacefulness he encounters after leaving the 'death cell.' The stillness can be attributed to the improved mental condition, but also the increased quietness outside the DTC camp and Army-occupied area. The DTC was located just north of Pisa, an area Pound was very familiar with. He visited this same area around 1896 with his Aunt Frank. He visits this same area with Ernest Hemingway and his wife while on a walking tour of Italy, and Pound shows them the battlegrounds where Sigismundo Malatesta fights in the fifteenth century (Baker 107). It is also in the same area, named the Via Aurelia, where Marcus Aurelius travels centuries before.

The stillness that Pound recounts is also fused with memories of better times spent with friends in the beautiful hills surrounding Pisa. The Via Aurelia passes directly in front of the DTC, and Pound recalls Marcus Aurelius who, like Mussolini, tries to restore the Roman Empire to its previous glory. One cannot miss the irony of a "Meditation" written by Marcus Aurelius that reads, "If anyone can show me, and prove to me, that I am wrong in thought or deed, I will gladly change. I seek the truth, which never yet hurt anybody. It is only persistence in self-delusion and ignorance which does harm" ("Book Six, Meditation 21" 96). Pound's state of mind changes drastically after the spell he suffers in the outdoor cage, yet he, according to much of his work (before and after Pisa,) tries to seek the truth via the act of consciously writing 'a poem containing history.' Many would contend that it is Pound's self-delusion and

ignorance, especially in certain matters, which lead to his incarceration.

The beginning of what we see as the published "Canto 74" starts as an elegiac response to the end of the dream. Yet, what we see in the published canto *after* Pound's 'spell' is what Lawrence Rainey calls a

second stage of composition that continued the otherworldly and aestheticizing mood of his previous drafts but also introduced a very different note derived partly from quotidian experience, as indicated by the use of diary-like entries, and partly from Pound's 'premeditated exercise of remembering,' his effort to combat the forgetfulness that had overcome him during his collapse when confined outdoors ("Introduction" 13).

Pound's 'premeditated exercise of remembering' combined with the conscious act of writing the "Pisan Cantos" culminates in infusing these poems with characters from history, memory, experience, art, and literature – which all spring from Pound's broad expanse of knowledge gained, in large part, by being an exile and émigré. By writing and remembering, Pound's mental state improves. One can argue that his *Cantos* improve, too.

Most Pound scholars and even his critics can agree that the "Pisan Cantos" are the most lyrical, beautiful, and "show a new sense of proportions ... filled with a combination of sharp day-to-day observation, erudition, and humorous insight" (⁵⁵Bogan 107). They are, because of this, unlike previous sequences. Was the 'tragedy of the dream' and the subsequent incarceration good for Pound's art? Does

⁵⁵ A clipping of Louise Bogan's article appears in the JH Edwards materials housed in Special Collections, at the McFarlin Library, University of Tulsa. Bogan, a writer, poet, and critic, wrote for *The New Yorker* and other periodicals, served on the Guggenheim Foundation fellowship board, and was a friend to Marianne Moore and other literary artists of the 20th century.

pain equal insight – *Ubi dolor ibi oculus?* Can literature and art heal the mind or shattered spirit? It seems to for Pound.

Pound writes “with one day’s reading a man may have the key in his hands” (74/447) to indicate that in the act of reading one may have the key to life and to understanding. The specific readings that Pound potentially alludes to here, as indicated by his notebooks held at the Beinecke, are certain Chinese books: the *Analects*, Mencius, and Chung Yung, as well as books by Cocteau, Wyndham Lewis, Frobenius and books on subjects such as economic theory and history (Terrell 366). Pound’s reading tastes vary widely throughout his lifetime. Yet, after about 1930 (and his relocation to Rapallo) his reading becomes much more focused upon issues, which correlate to his incarceration, including social credit, monetary theory, and economics.

The insular effect of being in exile in Rapallo, as previously discussed, and now confined at the DTC, cause Pound to write and speak as a “man alone to an invisible and imaginary audience – lack of feedback leading him to what would seem utter loss of reserve in checking his less honorable and untold night thoughts” (Bacigalupo 16). These ‘less honorable thoughts,’ Massimo Bacigalupo suggests, are readjusted in response to the “pressure of defeat and incarceration” thereby producing Pound’s “most lasting work, the *Pisan Cantos*; however, once the immediate turmoil is over “he [Pound] returns to what he called his ‘phantastikon,’ and accordingly removes himself from the scene of what has been termed the industrious despair of modern man” (2).

c. Omnia Quae Sunt Lumina Sunt

The potential beauty and lyrical quality of "Canto 74" diverts into Pound's account of activities at the DTC prison camp. After his 'spell' and psychiatric examination, Pound's poetry in the second part of "74" takes a turn towards the intersection of memory and chronicle. He writes, "under *les six potences* / Absouldre, que tous nous vueil absoudre / lay there Barabbas and two thieves lay beside him" (74, 447). The French phrase is actually a line from Villon's⁵⁶ *Epitaphe*, which translates to: "the six gallows / Absolve, may you absolve us all⁵⁷" and is where Pound records the execution of DTC prisoners. Pound uses these same words to open his early opera, "Le Testament", written years before.

In this quote, where Villon imagines for himself and his fellow thieves on the gallows, 'Absoudre . . .', absolve us all, Pound intertwines the events of Pisa with the Biblical story of Barabbas and with Villon. Barabbas, of course, is the thief who was in jail with Jesus Christ. If Barabbas had been executed, then Christ would have been released, but according to the New Testament Barabbas was released by Pontius Pilate and Jesus Christ crucified instead in accordance with the crowd's wishes.

Is Pound supposing himself as a stand-in for Christ? Possibly. He does assume many masks and appropriates many different hero figures throughout The Cantos. Jesus Christ is certainly the hero of the Biblical narrative, and Joseph Campbell uses Jesus in his *Hero with a Thousand Faces* to illustrate the theory of the monomyth, or hero's

⁵⁶ Francois Villon (1431 – 1463)

⁵⁷ c.f. Cookson, Terrell, Bacigalupo texts and John Gery's lecture at Brunnenburg's Ezra Pound Centre for Literature program, 2008.

journey. Pound, like his use of Odysseus, et al. appropriates another heroic trope, the Christian story of Barabbas and Christ, but "minus Hemingway, minus Antheil, ebullient" (74/447).

Several lines preceding this use of the Biblical Barabbas, Pound remembers his old friend, Hemingway, and the stillness that would outlast all wars. But, now he writes of the present, in the camp, minus Hemingway and minus friends. The memory remains, *dove sta memòra*, but Hem is gone as is the American composer, George Antheil, both of whom Pound works with in Paris during the 1920s.

While Pound writes of the gallows – dark episodes in the day-to-day life at the DTC – and uses the word 'ebullient,' he employs it as a way to juxtapose the potentially deadly consequences against pleasant memories and the pastoral. Pound, in his *Guide to Kulcher*, attributes a quote to Turgenev⁵⁸, writing "Nothing but death is irrevocable" (200). 'Ebullient' is used in the same few lines surrounding the Barabbas scene and Villon quote to underscore a dark-humored irony that it is the other prisoners' fateful execution (the Barabbas substitutes), and not the exile-hero, Pound.

The next few lines are taken directly from interactions Pound has with fellow 'detainees,' which were, under US Army guidelines, referred to as 'trainees'. He writes, "and by the name Thos. Wilson / Mr K said nothing foolish, the whole month nothing foolish: / "if we

⁵⁸ Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883) is a Russian poet, author, and playwright whose influence upon several writers including Flaubert and Hemingway is documented. In Hemingway's biography, it is noted that 'Hem' regarded Turgenev's book, "A Sportsman's Sketches" as his favorite book. Turgenev also advocated for the liberation of the peasants in pre-revolutionary Russia. He is, like Pound, a writer who suffers the consequences of his political and social views and lives and dies in exile.

weren't dumb, we wouldn't be here" / and the Lane gang" ("74, 448). Pound's use of the quotes indicate what would be the present time for him, in that moment, and some of the authentic occurrences at the DTC as he records them in his poetry. His use of quotes to indicate actual, not historical or imagined, events is evidenced throughout the whole of *The Cantos*, but especially in 74 where Pound is constructing a poetic amalgam of the real, the imagined, and the historical generated from a life of exile.

The textual appropriation of a conversation a fellow prisoner has with the poet; "if we weren't dumb, we wouldn't be here," is both insightful and foretelling considering how Ezra Pound and the world views his incarceration and supposed crimes. Again, Pound is using his acid wit to 'throw shade' on his rather serious situation. Hemingway, Pound's old friend, condemns him, his politics, and what he refers to as his 'goddamned bullheadedness,' by stating he got what he deserved. Others, including Pound, begin to see the severity of his situation. While TS Eliot disagrees with Pound's politics, as soon as he hears of his incarceration, Eliot starts a campaign to have Pound released.

As Pound writes the following lines, "Butterflies, mint and Lesbia's sparrows, / the voiceless with bum drum and banners, / and the ideogram of the guard roosts," (74/448) he combines elements of memory and the present time which serve as a memento mori of sorts. As Terrell's guide indicates, Pound develops this line from a metaphor in Dante's "Purgatorio" to show how the "paradise-oriented man is conscious of his divine end" (366). Dante's original source, reads (in translation), "O proud Christians ... do You not know that we are

worms, born to form the angelic butterfly" (Book X, 121 – 125). While Pound has access to few books at the DTC, he recalls this passage from Dante to indicate the awareness he has of his 'divine end.' Life is fleeting, but he sees all life as one, and when we die we form the parts of paradise on earth. In the next few lines, Pound invokes a medieval philosopher, Johannes Scotus Eriugena, whose book *De Divisione Naturae*, was condemned by Pope Honorius III. Pound is actively writing his Cantos, and perhaps expects that it, like Eriugena's book, will be condemned.

More importantly, it is Eriugena's line "Omnia quae sunt, lumina sunt" or "All that is, is light", that Pound invokes to establish his idea that when we die, we become part of that light. Pound uses the lines "in the light of light is the virtù / "sunt lumina" said Eriugena Scotus / as of Shun on Mt. Taishan" (74/449). Virtù, in this instance is traced back to Cavalcanti and Pound's work on the troubadours.

Pound's invocation of 'all that is light, is light' combined with his use of "butterflies, mint, Lesbia's sparrows" establish his belief that all other creatures will become figures of the sustaining process of nature – ashes to ashes and dust to dust. Pound's conscious use of this *memento mori* helps to illustrate how he is aware of the possibility of his 'divine' life's end. He is aware of this, even more so, because of the execution of DTC prisoners, in particular Louis Till.

Louis Till is one of several African-American prisoners who make an appearance in "Canto 74". The first is Thomas Wilson, a black

'trainee' at the DTC. The second and third are Mr. K and Lane, respectively. Mr. K is the one who utters, "if we weren't dumb, we wouldn't be here" and Lane is who Pound refers to as the ostensible 'leader' of "the Lane gang" (74/448). But, it is the execution of Louis Till that Pound refers to as being "hung yesterday / for murder and rape with trimmings" (74/450).

Ironically, Louis Till, the American soldier court martialed for rape and murder and later executed on July 24, 1945 at the DTC had a son, Emmett Louis Till, who was lynched in Mississippi in 1955 for flirting with a white woman. Emmett Till's murder⁵⁹ is credited as a pivotal moment, and an impetus for the Civil Rights movement here in the States. The two white men, Bryant and Milam, were charged and acquitted of Emmett Till's murder, but subsequently admitted to his murder in a 1956 *Look Magazine* interview. Bryant and Milam avoided charges after their confession because of double jeopardy.

According to the FBI files on this case, which were opened to the public in 2006, The 14 year-old's body was badly decomposed and identification was difficult; however, the ring Emmett wore when he was found contributed to positive identification⁶⁰. He was wearing a silver ring with the initials "L. T." and "May 25, 1943" carved in it, which alludes to his father, Louis Till and his incarceration at Pisa.

Pound's requiem for the 'failed dream' of both Mussolini and Fascism opens "74" and correlates with his rather brief elegiac

⁵⁹ c.f. Norman MacAfee, an independent scholar from New York City, presented on Civil Rights and Ezra Pound, at the EPIC 2015 in Brunnenburg. MacAfee discussed how he thinks that both Emmett and Louis Till's death can be seen in Pound's writing.

⁶⁰ c.f. FBI (2006) pp. 69 – 79.

response to Till's, and others, execution at the DTC. Going back a few lines in "74", Pound references several other writers who are important to him. He fuses these references with his frequent mention of light in this section of "74."

Elements of Confucius, Dante, and Bernart de Ventadorn, are invoked when he writes, "Light tensile immaculata" (74/449). Pound writes by way of translation in *Confucius* that "As Silky light, King Wen's virtue / Coming down with the sunlight, / what purity!" (Pound, *Confucious*, 187) to indicate that Wen is perfect, and "the sun's cord unspotted" (74/449). Pound equates Wen with perfection and the 'sunt lumina,' or all light.

Pound adds another "sunt lumina" to emphasize his point. "'Sunt lumina' said the Oirishman to King Carolus, / 'OMNIA,' / all things that are are lights'" (74/449). The "Oirishman" is Eriugena, according to Terrell's guide, and the Chinese ideogram on this page interprets to "bright, clear, understanding⁶¹," as Pound's ideogram fuses the literal light with the abstract idea of clear understanding.

Pound adds in *Confucius* that "The hidden meaning of these lines is: Thus heaven is heaven [or this is he heavenly nature, co-involgent]" (*Confucius* 187). 'Co-involgent' is Pound's word for the Italian term, *coninvolgente*, which loosely translates to involving, engrossing, absorbing. Thus, King Wen's 'engrossing' virtue and purity is, in part, because "he looks in his heart / and does" (187). Pound adds that "here the sense is: In this way was Wen / perfect" to

⁶¹ Taken from my lecture notes at the *Pound Centre for Literature* program that I attended for six weeks in 2008 at Brunnenburg, Italy.

establish that a *perfect* being is one that is all light and does what is in his heart.

Of course this can relate to Pound's conviction that he was unfairly incarcerated for only doing 'what is in his heart.' Pound begins Canto LXXX with the lamentation, "Ain' committed no federal crime, / jes a slaught misdemeanor" (80/513). Returning to "74" we see Pound's second use of "Tempus tacendi, tempus loquendi," (74/449) or a time to speak and a time to be silent. Perhaps, it is in Pound's act of writing this section of his Cantos that he can do both.

Pound, as a prisoner, is not only an exile in that camp, but also in the country where that prison camp is located. Pound's silence led to his 'spell' and he is writing himself back into the light, even though he is now perceived as "a man on whom the sun has gone down" (74/450). Pound's 'engrossing virtue,' or light, seems as though it is diminishing as he regains his clear understanding. He writes the ideogram, as it appears on page of 74, as a symbol for that which is not OY TIE or that which is 'no man' as a way to establish again that he is no man. His light, his virtue, appears to fade, or so Pound suggests in these lines.

Pound's next 'sunt lumina,' leads to his brief mention of Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, a man whose light had gone out when he was tragically killed in WWI. Pound writes, "that the drama is wholly subjective / stone knowing the form which the carver imparts it / the stone knows the form" (74/450). In Cantos 25 and 45, Pound writes that Gaudier-Brzeska's stone knows the form. In this allusion to the sculptor friend, Pound implies that even though he is without his books, he

still knows the knowledge gleaned from those books. He regains his 'fire' by the act of writing, and the light is not diminishing. He refers back to his 'spell' and the healing process, which is the active act of writing and remembrance – the light which signals the intersection of memory and chronicle.

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IV. Who Will Wear My Feathery Mantle

The 'sunt lumina,' or 'is light', which appears throughout the middle section of 74, establishes Pound's use of his own metaphysical paradigms to suggest emerging from out of darkness into the creative world. His spirituality, as established in previous sections, is not necessarily in line with conventional Christianity, but blends different modes into his own personal spiritual beliefs. The sunt lumina quote is another clear reference to the 9th century Irish 'heretic', Scotus Eriugena.

This relatively obscure, Neo-Platonist philosopher is important for Pound because of Eriugena's view regarding God becoming human, in the form of Jesus Christ. The incarnation, or the taking on of human form, is according to Eriugena, balanced by humans becoming God in deification. Man becoming God as God became man. Pound ponders philosophical incarnation during his incarceration thereby blending philosophy and spirituality into this canto to create a very fine metaphysical thread, which might be missed upon first glance.

Before Pound's internment, he had worked on a volume of Eriugena's *Periphyseon* that was given to him by Ubaldo Degli Uberti of the municipal library in Genoa. Pound also worked on Eriugena prior to this period of early 1940, and the subsequent incarceration. During the late 1920s through the mid-1930s, while educating himself on philosophy in the context of religious and political authority, Pound read extensively and made notes in the margins of his copies of Eriugena's books. These books⁶², which detail Pound's continued

⁶² I had a chance to view these books during the 2015 EPIC in Brunnenburg.

interest in Eriugena, are currently housed at Schloss Brunnenburg under the care of his daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz.

The thematic elements of Eriugena are important in "Canto 74" because of Pound's continued use of Scotus Eriugena's quotes for what Mark Byron calls the "defining intellectual principle, in which reason guides intellect and philosophical/theological inquiry rather than deference or blind adherence to (church) authority" (Byron 3). Clearly Pound is questioning the authority of the church in relation to the value, or rightfulness, of intellectual or philosophical study. His blending of several theologies and philosophies identify his long-standing interest in that which separates him from much of traditional or mainstream Christianity. Like Eriugena, he is, especially in Pisa, a bit of a heretic; however Pound's authentic religion is his poetry and his opinions where he maintains his interloper viewpoint quite expressively.

On just this one page of "Canto 74," we see mention of many of the world religions and spiritual beliefs which Pound considers significant. He writes of Confucianism, Christianity, Greek mythology, and indigenous African beliefs in these few short lines. Thinking about the world, the troubles in the world, and especially his own trouble and the very tangible possibility of his own end cause Pound to consider the metaphysical and the spiritual elements of life and integrate those considerations into "Canto 74".

Pound is deeply affected by the execution of Louis Till, and the lines that immediately surround Till's name and story blend classical mythology and Christianity. When Pound writes, "Hey Snag wots in the bibl'? / wot are the books ov the bible? / Name 'em, don't bullshit

ME," (74/450) he is quoting a snippet of conversation he overhears between Till and another trainee. 'Snag' is a nickname for Till, and this dialogue is spoken by, at this point in "Canto 74," an unnamed prisoner to Till. The mention of the Bible, in connection with Till who would be executed, shows a balancing of the pure and the profane.

When Pound writes of Till's hanging, "for murder and rape with trimmings," and adds the line a bit later after the reference to the books of the Bible, "plus mythology, thought he was Zeus ram or another one" (74/450). This rather obvious reference points to the classical myths of Zeus' numerous rapes and ravishments. Perhaps, Pound sardonically insinuates that Till thought he was a Zeus-like ram because a few lines later the Canto reads, "the ewe, he said had such a pretty look in her eyes; / and the nymph of the Hagoromo came to me, / as a corona of angels" (74/450).

The reference to the 'the ewe' with a 'pretty look in her eyes' is linked to a statement that Till purportedly makes in validation for his crimes. While having a pretty look in her eyes is, of course, no justification for 'rape and murder with trimmings,' it does establish Pound's use of Till's story as a comparative feature for the death of a dream and his own banishment to the DTC for crimes 'against nature and country'.

The 'nymph of the Hagoromo,' which appears here, is Pound's reference to the Noh play, as it appears in his *Classical Noh Theatre of Japan*. This book, initially published in 1917, is a compilation of Pound's translations integrated with the bulk of Ernest Fenollosa's notes. Pound's knowledge of Noh is a direct result of Fenollosa's work, specifically his legacy of notes and translations. In this

book, Pound appropriates Fenollosa's work to discuss the distinctive elements of Noh poetry and drama.

Pound's rather unorthodox poetic compilation integrates Fenollosa's authoritative translation and notes via association; it is not always true to the literal translation. Fenollosa is, of course, dead and cannot dispute Pound's loose translations or his rather imprecise interpretations. However, *The Cantos*, as a whole, according to Ce Rosenow, is "structured around the organizing principles of Noh drama and suggests that *The Pisan Cantos* can be read as a Noh play" (Rosenow 227).

Noh, for Pound, represents a more civilized society with greater emphasis on art and culture – a higher intellectual order closer to the patronage system of the Middle Ages invoked throughout the *Cantos*, and referenced extensively in "Canto 74" and Pound's other works. Rosenow's assertion stages Pound's use of Noh as a metaphor and "a touchstone for high civilization in order to employ it as a counterbalance for the instances of destruction he saw around him" (228) which links his regard for Noh to how he idealistically views Fascism. The failed dream was to create a paradise on Earth. Noh, for Pound, represents a move towards "light, like a rushlight / to lead back to splendour" (116/815) -- a better way of life where art, culture, and poetry are valued. *Omnia quae sunt, lumina sunt.*

These references to Japan, and especially to Noh drama, act as stand-ins, façades, for what Pound sees as happening when there is little regard for the arts, and the consequences of "fallen civilizations, poor government, and cultures that lack artistic vision" (Rosenow 228) and a lack of a 'guiding light'. This, in

effect, reinforces the premise that throughout "74" Pound elegizes the 'tragedy of the dream' and what he sees as the potential ruin of civilization by those in power who do not recognize the importance of art and culture.

In later editions, Pound's book on Noh Drama is prefaced by W.B. Yeats' introduction, which was written in 1916 around the time of the Uprising and not long after Pound and Yeats lived together at the Stone Cottage in Sussex. The use of Yeats' introduction, and the fact that it was also written in a time of war – The Irish cause for self-rule – situate Pound's references back to memories of other wars for what he sees as rightful causes. He is not advocating war, but mourning the loss of a civilization that is caught up in war.

The nymph which appears in "74" refers to a character in the play that leaves her magical cloak on a "bough where it is found by a priest" (Terrell 369). She wants her cloak back, and the priest relents only "if she will teach him to dance" (369). Pound's ongoing use of what Massimo Bacigalupo describes as "the woman of the earth and of heaven defines an attitude of reverence" and the elevation of the feminine as a point of reference," (Bacigalupo 17) throughout the poem. This singular allusion to the nymph of Hagoromo also relates back to Pound's quote from the "Ur Cantos," published in 1917 in Harriet Monroe's *Poetry* magazine.

The first three cantos which now appear in Pound's large volume, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, were completely changed as they were originally written and named, "Canto I, II, and III" or the "Ur Cantos." Pound wrote these in 1916/17 during his London years. More importantly, the line regarding the 'nymph of Hagoromo' refers to

Pound's question, "Whom shall I hang my shimmering garment on; / Who wears my feathery mantle, *Hagoromo*; / Whom set to dazzle the serious future ages?" (Pound, *Ur Cantos*, l. 100 – 103) and suggests that in the *Pisan Cantos* Pound poses a question to the reader of, who will assume the role of speaker for the ages since he is now, in essence, silenced.

Pound's next few lines in the *Ur Cantos* refer to the troubadour tradition of France and Provence and specifically the troubadours, Daniel Arnaut, Bertran De Born, and Uc de St. Circ. This is important here in "Canto 74" because it establishes Pound's continued use of memory, and the incorporation of the Troubadour Tradition, with which he began his early career. Also, Pound's use of Uc de St. Circ, is especially significant because this certain troubadour is from France, but like Pound is an exile outside of his homeland. Uc de St. Circ is more known for his troubadour lyrics in Italy, like Pound, who is better known for the work he creates outside of his own country.

In this short passage, Pound recalls the subjects of earlier studies and poetry while languishing at Pisa. The use of this memory here functions to highlight Pound's situation, as he asks, "Who will carry on MY tradition if I am executed like Till." Who has the capacity to assume my magical cloak? By his use of memory for bygone antiquity, Pound insinuates that there is no one left who can.

a. The Sun has Gone Down

Pound realizes that the hero of this Canto cannot be some new version of Provence. He must, as Hugh Witemeyer suggests, "fall back on his imaginative conceptions, the images of his own phantastikon" whereby he can create a new world within the pages of "Canto 74" which

will "transcend the actual worlds of history" (Witemeyer 159). Pound's banished status makes the question of who will carry on his 'tradition' even more pertinent because within the prison camp, or even the world at large, he sees that there is no one who can or will assume his mantle. Pound is in exile from the *tradition*, and the 'dazzle [of] the serious future ages' in which he placed himself. He is, indeed, the man on whom the sun has gone down.

What Pound writes in the next few lines after the reference to Till, the ewe, and the nymph of Hagoromo is filled with imagery and suggestion of the natural world. It is, at first read, just another reference to Taishan, the sacred mountain. The lines are, "one day were clouds banked on Taishan / or in glory of sunset / and tovarish lessed without aim / wept in the rainditch at evening" (74/450). However, it is in the recurring use of the sacred mountain, Taishan, in correspondence with the 'glory of the sunset' as it is set against the weeping tovarish where we see the self-awareness of Pound's banishment in "Canto 74".

Because tovarish, or tovarishch, literally means 'comrade, ally, friend, or colleague' Pound is, according to Terrell's guide, signifying "himself as the one who, at the DTC, blessed all creation and 'wept in the rain ditch'" (Terrell 369). While this might be true in the overarching sense, it reads more as Pound's positioning of himself as the 'everyman,' who opposed the majority faction during the Russian revolution. *Tovarish* also implies Pound's subtle reference to the daily bourgeois newspaper published in St. Petersburg, Russia in the early part of the 20th century where it functioned as a periodical

sympathetic to Menshevikism, or the Orthodox Marxist view of social and economic development⁶³.

Mensheviks, as opposed to the Bolsheviks, tended to be more moderate and held the fundamental peasant-based system and liberal opposition in greater regard, which fits into Pound's belief in the dream of Fascism as being able to provide for everyone, including the provincial class. The tovarishch, or Mensheviks, split from the prevailing Leninists, or Bolsheviks, because they believed that socialism could not thrive in Russia because of its 'backward economic conditions,' thereby approximating in this line how Pound views Western economic and financial structure.

The strands regarding economics are woven throughout "Canto 74", yet Pound makes an effort to camouflage the overt elements of his opinions. The reference to Tovarish was missed by several scholars who, in performing a close reading, regard the literal elements, the words on the page and "the art of the poem itself" (Wimsatt and Beardsley 4), but overlook the implied link between Pound's politics and economics – his most famous cause célèbre and the crux of his exile.

Pound was not a supporter of Russia, of Marxism or Communism; although, he advocated for the idea that workers should own the means of production. Likewise, Pound wants the artist/worker to be sustained by the system and even here in these lines suggests the

⁶³ c.f. Vladimir N. Brovkin's *The Mensheviks After October*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991 and the "Glossary of Terms." *Marxism.org*. Retrieved 9 October 2015.

negative influence of an unsound economic system that is demonstrated in the unequal distribution of goods and power. The Tovarish, like Pound, are exiles even among their own people; they are, in the successive lines, evidenced as men "on whom the sun has gone down" (74/450). They were not on the 'winning side' of the Russian Revolution, and like Pound are separated from the established society.

Pound's second use of this phrase on this single page reiterates his despondency in a critical period of banishment. He sees little chance of anyone carrying on his tradition, and writes that "the drama is wholly subjective" (74/450). This subjectivity is especially pertinent to those, like Pound, the Tovarish, or Till on whom the sun has gone down, and who have been "torn from its setting" (74/450).

While Pound writes, "nor shall diamond die in the avalanche / be it torn from its setting / first must destroy himself ere others destroy him" (74/450) he expresses both the ideas of metamorphosis and culpability. Diamonds are, literally, a product of pressure and other elements, and do not change even if buried in an avalanche, or shit storm, as is Pound's case. He, like the diamond, has been torn from his familial setting in Rapallo and Sant'Ambrogio and buried alive in dirt and trouble, akin to this allegorical avalanche.

Pound draws for his readers a self-portrait of his dire position of exile and situates himself alive within the Chaos of destruction. The line, "first must destroy himself 'ere others destroy him" is taken from several sources familiar to Pound. First, is Mencius whose quote Pound appropriates via Legge:

A man must first despise himself, and then others will despise him. A family must first destroy itself, and then others will destroy it. A kingdom must first

smite itself and then others will smite it (Terrell quoting Legge 370).

While this line in "74" links the preceding quote to Mencius and the Confucian tradition, a la Legge, the African folktale of Wagadu and Gassire's Lute follows in the resulting lines: "4 times was the city rebuilt, Hoo Fasa / Gassir, Hoo Fasa dell' Italia tradita / now in the mind indestructible, Gassir, Hoo Fasa" (74/450). With these references, Pound invokes another myth of the earth and of heaven. He appeals to Wagadu as part of his transformation and trial by fire.

Wagadu is a goddess of the Fasa people, and featured in the section, "Gassire's Lute," in the African epic, *Dausi*. Wagadu disappears, "and is lost once through vanity, once through falsehood, once through greed, and once through dissention," but as Frobenius adds, "for Wagadu, whenever men have seen her, has always had four gates" (Frobenius 32). Pound alludes to this idea in the ensuing lines when he writes, "With the four giants at the four corners / and four gates mid-wall Hoo Fasa / and a terrace the colour of stars / pale as the dawn cloud, la luna" (74/450). The mention of the 'terrace the colour of stars' refers back to the first page of "Canto 74" and what Pound distinguishes as the visionary city of Dioce (Ectabana) that, for him, symbolizes the ruler Deioces' "aspiration to create a paradisaal city with what he perceived to be Mussolini's intentions" (Terrell 362).

Pound's sustained lamentation is for the loss of that dream. The four corners, four gates, and the four giants represent part of the folktale which recounts that whenever Wagadu appears, "the strength in which she endures no matter whether she be built of stone, or wood, or

earth, or lives but as a shadow in the mind and longing of her children" (Frobenius 32). Pound dons yet another masque, this time of Wagadu, in hopes to live on in the 'shadow of the mind,' and as a troubadour constructing his epic for the current epoch.

Pound again resorts to memories of previous readings and studies as he considers his mortality. Pound's incorporation of this West African epic points to his work on both Frobenius and the troubadours. Michael Faherty writes of Pound's use of this story as an interpretation of the Troubadour tradition. Faherty suggests that for Pound, the African epic and the "African singers and players [griots] that Frobenius could not resist comparing to the medieval troubadours of Provence [who] fled the south of France for the comfort of courts in Italy, Germany and England," (Faherty 14) represent themes and characters which Pound incorporates regularly. Unlike the troubadours, and to some degree – Pound, "the griots had thrived in exile, passing their songs and tales from father to son for centuries" (Faherty 229). Pound wishes to survive his exile, but like Wagadu the cause for his disappearance into the DTC is multifarious.

The causes for the disappearance of Wagadu – vanity, falsehood, greed, and dissention – which also appear as referential threads in other parts of "Canto 74" and especially the "Drafts and Fragments" section, which conclude *The Cantos* could be likened to explanations for why Pound lands at the DTC. The repeated chorus in "74" which echoes, "Hooo Fasa," is what Michael Faherty calls "the voice of loss and lament that Pound puts on in the first few Pisan cantos, with his civilisation seemingly in shreds and himself shut up in a cage," Pound chants 'Hooo Fasa', just as Gassire once did" (Faherty 222). Pound

considers what may be his end, and his Hoo Fasa dirge is for the failure of the dream and that of his 'betrayed Italy'.

In the lines that precede the four giants and four corners of Wagadu's manifestation, Pound writes, "dell Italia tradita" to underline his position that "Italy was betrayed by the king and Pietro Bodoglio who replaced Mussolini as the head of the [Italian] government" which Pound sees as a failure deriving from a "lack of order as expressed by the Confucian Cheng Ming, (right name)" (Terrell 370). Pound longs for "a new paideuma," which he associates with Frobenius, as stated in both in his *Spirit of Romance* (284) and *Guide to Kulcher* (58-59). The new *paideuma* is an enlightened, advanced society with more importance given to art and culture – a higher intellectual order.

CH'ING MING, like Wagadu, represents a new start, a new civilization, which can accomplish things that the current civilization does not. With weaving these various traditions within this canto, Pound continues his assertion that poetry can do things that other movements cannot. Pound writes, "Certain things are SAID only in verse. You can't translate 'em ... Man gittin' Kulchur had better try poetry first (Kulcher 121).

Likewise, Pound's repeated use of Frobenius in this section of "74" denotes his yearning for a new civilization even after the literal failure of the dream. Pound uses his persistent status as an outsider to represent 'that which is not'. Politics failed him. Economics failed him, but his poetry did not.

b. Between NEKUIA and the Charybdis of Action

Pound employs his 'no man' masque, a persona, to take issue with the larger social relevancies, as he sees them and to use his status as an outcast to make this dream for a rebuilt society fulfilled within the pages of his *Cantos*. Pound reaffirms his deeply held belief that "poets are the 'antennae of the race'" (Eder 38 quoting Pound); however, he frequently uses his poetry as a blending of literatures, mythologies, and oral folktales to construct his personal amalgam of poetic piety. He is of the world, but not in it. Pound is OY TIΣ – no man – a man on whom the sun has gone down and he is caught quite literally between a rock and hard place, or as we see in "74," between NEKUIA and the Charybdis of Action.

The last "Hooo Fasa" lamentation, which is recorded here amidst the references to Dioce, segues into what Pound writes as

... a dance the renewal
with two larks in contraappunto
at sunset
ch'intenerisce
a sinistra la Torre
seen thru a pair of breeches (74/451).

The 'dance of renewal' reads as Pound's resurgence to the fecundity of nature, like Demeter and her daughter, Persephone's, return in spring after a cold, dead winter.

The Eleusinian mysteries, which Pound links to Demeter, assert that like the plant life, which lays dormant during winter, the human soul after the death of the body, is thus reawakened and reincarnated. Pound layers this meaning here to avow reappearance among the living, if only in his poetry. Pound is familiar with the Eleusinian mysteries and with its link to the troubadour tradition, and implies that his

death-like dormancy at Pisa is due for a 'contrappunto,' or counterpoint. His own *Risorgimento* would come much later.

The two larks are references to Bernart de Ventadour's, poem, "Lark," which Pound translates early in his career as part of his work on Provence and the Troubadours. Next, Pound uses an entire line to state, "ch'intenerisce," or "that softens" to allude subtly to Dante's "Purgatorio" and where the twilight hour softens the hearts of the homeward bound. Pound employs this line to suggest that at the twilight, or at the end of life, one's heart mitigates toward matters of filial devotion. To the left of the tower, or 'a sinistra la Torre,' brings the reader back to where Pound is situated in a camp west (or left) of the Tower of Pisa. He alternates memory with reality here, and in the italicized line, "*Che sublia es laissa cader,*" or "who forgets and lets himself fall," takes us again back in the land of memory where he circuitously refers to the troubadour tradition and to Ventadour's poem, "The Lark".

Ventadour's poem contains the line, "who forgets and lets himself fall" and continues with "for the sweetness which goes into his heart / Ai! what great envy comes unto me for him whom I see so rejoicing" (Pound, *Translations*, 427). Pound writes of this poem and of Ventadour both here in "74", and in *The Spirit of Romance*, suggesting that even while dying, and falling to its death, the lark continues to sing. The lark forgets the imminence of mortality and lets itself fall, thus equating his wish to be one who, like the lark, continues to sing even while facing death.

The following lines, after the italicized reference to Ventadour's Provençal poem, show yet another application of Homer's

Odyssey. "Between NEKUIA where are Alcmena and Tyro / and the Charybdis of action / to the solitude of Mt. Taishan" (74/451) which employs the mythological story of Amphityron's wife, Alcmena, as a trope to suggest that something is not what it may seem.

Alcmena was visited and subsequently ravished by Zeus, who had taken on the form of her husband, thereby giving birth to his son, Herakles. Pound situates Alcmena and Tyro, who was also seduced by a god in disguise, Poseidon, in the space between Nekuia and Charybdis. Both are women who were taken advantage of by gods, which results in them having children, thus attaining a kind of mythological immortality, but Alcmena and Tyro's fate is tied to the duplicity of the events that culminate in their giving birth to gods.

The mention of "Nekuia" prefacing the mention of Alcmena and Tyro refers to the segment in the *Odyssey* where Odysseus must journey to the Underworld. Odysseus passes to the Underworld, under Circe's advice, to receive information from the blind prophet, Tiresias, so that he can negotiate safe passage home to Ithaca. Charybdis is the whirlpool-like monster, often associated with the real Straits of Messina, which Odysseus must navigate. He barely survives the Charybdis, but survive he must in order to reach his homeland. Again, Pound assumes the role of the Odyssean traveler, an exile who must undertake certain challenges to reach the safety of hearth and home.

The term, between Scylla and Charybdis, is likened to 'between the devil and the deep blue sea,' or the common cliché, between a rock and a hard spot. Pound uses between Nekuia and Charybdis as a deliberate malapropism to signify the poetic link between talking with the dead to learn information – the Nekuia and the request for

Tiresias' assistance – and surviving a disastrous vortex, or Charybdis. In "Canto 74" Pound often invokes both the living and the dead, but he finds himself truly between a rock and a hard spot in balancing his incarceration at the DTC for supposed crimes, and wanting to lead the world to Deioeces by making observations on what he sees as the downfalls of Western civilization.

"Canto 74" was originally titled, "Nekuia." It is here in the Nekuia section where Pound communicates the important literary foundational elements intricately associated with this section. Pound invokes the ghosts of the dead and the living, and clearly conflates the two literary traditions in which he is most interested: Homer's *Odyssey* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Both traditions represent an exile who must travel amongst the dead and the living to return home to safety. Pound adds mythological elements apparent in both tales to not only imply a long tradition of characteristic storytelling, but also to insinuate his own negotiation of the metaphorical Nekuia and Charybdis in order to characterize his own apotheosis of exile, like both his literary heroes, Dante and Odysseus, into his Canto.

After the whirlpool, or Charybdis of action, comes the "solitude of Mt. Taishan" to suggest the poet's idea of final reward. Pound uses Taishan to represent the spiritual self-actualization of one who has tried to maintain the visionary quest for an idealized society, and has failed. His compensation for sailing through the dark waters of chaos is ruin. Pound's world, like that of T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land* is insolvent and incoherent, and his vision of resurrecting the devastation of humanity to a *paradiso terrestre* does not seem possible "under the gray cliff in periplum" (74/451).

The periplum, negotiating a voyage by sight instead of by map is the view a coasting sailor, like Odysseus, would have by steering along the course of the voyage. Pound's symbolic voyage is within the pages of his poetry, but he uses these frequent tropes to layer meaning, ply-upon ply, to indicate his own fictional voyage through the Nekuia, or land of the dead.

Pound incorporates an abrupt transition from the 'solitude of Mt. Taishan' to that who "wd / not be dragged into paradise by the hair, / under the gray cliff in periplum / the sun dragging her stars / a man on whom the sun has gone down" (74/451) to contrast his difficulty in seeking the paradisal. Analogous to Persephone who has been dragged to the underworld, Pound, the 'man on whom the sun has gone down,' tries but could not be dragged into paradise. The sight of Taishan, a paradisal vision from his confines at Pisa, drags him into the rapturous vision, if but for a moment, but he cannot go. Pound remains under the gray cliff.

The sun dragging her stars situates Pound's use of Helios, as part of the Persephone and Demeter myth. After Hades steals Persephone away to the underworld, Demeter, her mother goes mad looking for her daughter, and appeals to Hecate, the deity signifying magic, spirits, and witchcraft to invoke assistance of the Sun god, Helios. Hecate and Tiresius are similar representations of prophecy and the supernatural. In Pound's internment, he wishes to escape the confines of his metaphorical underworld, and like Demeter, goes mad until he appeals to the light. Pound again employs the tropes of mythology, and the Eleusinian mysteries to signify his descent into madness, his eventual rebirth, the cycle of dark and light, and the

reality of living in the land of darkness while paradoxically appealing to the light.

Pound is an exile living apart from the light of his world who finds his Helios in the writing of poetry. But then a "wind came as hamadryas under the sun-beat" (74/451), and Pound reverts to the natural world to stave off the impending darkness of the 'man on whom the sun has gone down.' The hamadryas, or hamadryad, is a tree nymph who offers some consolation to Pound in the form of a wind, or light breeze, that comes in his 'sun-beat' condition, yet he remains alone except for nature. The dryad is gone, the breeze dissipates, and Pound appears to continue the theme of loneliness in the next lines.

When Pound writes, "Vai soli / are never alone / amid the slaves learning slavery / and the dull driven back toward the jungle / are never alone 'HAION ΠΕΠΙ 'HAION" (74/451) he alludes to mythological and spiritual elements. While he writes, "Vai soli," Pound misspells the Biblical (Vulgate) reference 'Vae soli,' or "Woe to him who is alone." Pound 'borrows' this line as an act of remembrance from his work on Jules Laforgue.

Laforgue, in turn, acquires it from Ecclesiastes 4:10. The King James Version reads, "For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up." Laforgue⁶⁴ is long dead when Pound discovers him via T.S. Eliot; nevertheless, uses him in this sequence as a sort of volta, or turn, where he shifts to personal memory and its link within literature instead of using nature as a consort to the mythological.

⁶⁴ Jules Laforgue (1860 – 1887)

Pound writes an essay in a 1917 edition of *Poetry* wherein he applies his creative translation skills to Laforgue's "Pierrots." Laforgue's poem, which contains the line, "The shiver of Vae soli! gurgles in my veins . . ."⁶⁵ (Laforgue 107) and shows how the "sickness of dead calms engulfs my sails (107). Pound employs the biblical line, "Vai soli!" remembering it from something he wrote thirty years before, as an attempt to synthesize the human experience – his own personal experience – into "Canto 74". Pound uses not only the inter-relationships within literature, mythology, but in his own life.

Boris de Rachewiltz explains that for Ezra Pound, these emotional symbols exist as a "personal invention of the poet that derives from his inner tropisms," and are "wholly subjective in origin" (de Rachewiltz 174). By using the Meta technique as a point for his own subjectivity, Pound creates a bricolage of exile and experience – real, imagined, combined with mythological and spiritual. In doing so, Pound creates another Meta reference, but this time to his own poem, *De Ægypto*, which reads "I, even I, am he who knoweth the roads / Through the sky, and the wind thereof is my body" (Pound, *Personae*, 17). The wind precedes the lamentation of being alone.

Pound is alone, except for having nature, which in effect, Pound asserts then we "are never alone" (75/451). Pound's lines in *De Ægypto* are taken from another source – a translation of the *Book of the Dead* that Pound reviews in an article published in an issue of *Eliot's*

⁶⁵ The original French text of Laforgue's poem reads, "Le frisson du Vae soli gargouille en mes moelles . . ." and is prefaced with "le mal des calmes plats s'engouffre dans ma voile" (*Pierrots*, French version, 106).

Criterion. Pound uses memories of previously reviewed material as a touchstone for his meta-subjectivity.

While he is not alone, though he might feel that way, he is quite literally “amid the slaves learning slavery” (74/451). The slaves learning slavery are the DTC prisoners who are relentlessly drilled 14 hours a day or more in order to earn their freedom through retraining and reassignment. These ‘trainees’ are seemingly slaves learning how to be better slaves within their system of slavery – the US Army. They are the “dull driven back toward the jungle” (74/451) in order to gain a re-commissioning and advancement into the light of society. The jungle represents the rather lush, green space in and around the DTC site at Pisa.

c. Vai Soli, Woe to Him Who is Alone

The next chorus of “are never alone” leads into the ‘HAION ΠΕΠΙ HAION’ or the “sun around the sun” as Terrell’s guide explains. This idea based in the Greek referenced by Scotus Eriugena represents “the light [which] sucks up the vapor” (74/451). Pound uses the sun, but “this time emerging from darkness, [and it] is identified with the creative word, the Paraclete and Logos rising from consciousness” (de Rachewiltz 184 – 185). Paraclete is the spirit that proceeds from God the Father, like Helios proceeds as the sun that provides light. Logos is, of course, the Word made Man – Jesus Christ.

Pound equates the sun God, Helios, with God the Father and the light that provides warmth and nurturing to humankind, as God the Son. Son/Sun is Pound’s play upon the idea of Paraclete and Logos in

conjunction with the sun around the sun/son or 'HAION ΠΕΠΙ HAION' and the right ordering of things.

Furthering this right ordering of things, Pound addresses the converse side to the sun – the lunar aspect of the heavens. He writes that “the tides follow Lucina,” (74/41) who is a “minor Roman deity ... of tidal and menstrual periodicity” (Terrell 371). Pound’s use of the moon hearkens back to previous cantos, XCVI and XCVII, where he writes “All under the moon is Fortuna” referring to what Boris de Rachewiltz calls the “esoteric doctrine of the moon as the mediatrix of changes of fortune that are related to its various phases (de Rachewiltz 185).

Not only does the moon signify change because of its phases, and the sequential waxing and waning, but this allusion to change similarly encompasses the poet’s personal fate as well. Fates are associated with moon in Orphic text, and Pound demonstrates this idea in “XCVII”, a later canto, which reads, “above the Moon there is order / beneath the moon forsitan” (97/697) which suggests it is “related to fortuna as to do with chance, luck” (Terrell 623), or la Ruota della Fortuna – the wheel of fortune.

Pound’s fortune changes immensely in the time that he is at the DTC; he is now “a hard man in some ways” where “a day as a thousand years” (74/451). This section shows that each day in the Detention Center for EP seems a thousand years. His hardness, ‘in some ways’ is the result of his imprisonment and exile. He is now the “leopard [who] sat by his water dish” (74/451) representing a caged animal for some to view like a leopard at a local zoo. The urochs, which he “has killed ... and the bison sd/ Bunting doing six months after that war

was over / so pacifist tempted with chicken but declined to approve / of war "Redimiculum Metellorum" allude to the story of the poet, Basil Bunting and his imprisonment after WWI in 1918.

Bunting, a friend to Pound who visits and lives for some years in Rapallo, was incarcerated for refusing "induction into the British army as a conscientious objector" (Terrell 371) and he subsequently went on a hunger strike. The guards, according to Carroll Terrell's version in a biography of Bunting, "put a roast chicken in his cell every day, but Bunting held out and after 11 days they let him go" (Terrell 29). Pound uses this reference to Bunting in hopes that like his friend, he will be released from confinement.

The "Redimiculum Matellarum" reference, or 'A garland of chamberpots,' is a collection of Bunting's poetry published in 1930 in England that Pound mentions because it is "privately printed / to the shame of various critics" (74/451). Pound's mention of 'privately printed' becomes another commentary on the intersection of politics, publishing, finance, and economics. He writes that "nevertheless the state can lend money / and the fleet that went out to Salamis / was built by state loan to the builders" (74/451). Salamis is a reference to a war between the Greeks and Persians, which Pound employs as a contrast to the current war and its economic cost.

Because so much of private industry money was caught up in the war effort, as Pound sees it, he had difficulty getting certain items printed. His friend, Bunting, who resorts to having his book of poetry 'privately printed' experiences the same phenomena as a result of what Pound calls the state making loans to the builders of war. Pound's

interpretation of this act of valuing war over art is a sustained theme.

Pound resumes this theme of commenting on the financial and cultural cost of war when he writes, "hence the attack on classical studies / and in this war were Joe Gould, Bunting and Cummings / as against thickness and fog" (74/452). Joe Gould is an interesting Bohemian character that Pound has some familiarity with; e.e. cummings painted his portrait and referred to him in his work.

Gould was responsible for penning what he called "An Oral History of Our Times" in a series of handwritten notebooks, but that, like his so-called history, turns out to be a sham. The mention of Bunting and cummings in this same reference, point to the two poets imprisonment because of the complications of WWI; Pound may have thought Gould was also imprisoned; however, no record accounts for this and this is more or less a red herring. Like many references in "Canto 74", Pound's memory isn't always perfect and he weaves people and events into the Cantos as he sees them.

We see a strophe break separating the mention of his friends, Bunting and cummings to signal the transition of ideas to the next lines which reference the "black that die in captivity / night green of his pupil, as grape flesh and sea wave / undying luminous and translucent"(74/452). This reference to 'the black' alludes to the "black panther in the Roman zoo," according to Hugh Kenner (Terrell quoting Kenner 371). Big cats fascinated Pound, and they appear throughout his *Cantos*. He was a friend to many kinds of felines – both feral and domestic cats, and could tell the history of the local street cats in and around Rapallo. Those stories, as told by Pound to

T.S. Eliot, are part of the basis for Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats."

In letters between Pound and his wife, Dorothy, she refers to him as "Mao" but not the Chinese connotation; she uses it as a reference to the sound a cat makes, "Meow" or "Mao." Pound indicates that the black panther will die in captivity, to liken himself to that caged panther incarcerated in the zoo. He fears he, too, will die in captivity.

"Est consummatum, Ite;" is what Pound uses to separate the next two strophes. The Latin phrase, "Est consummatum, Ite" is what concludes the Catholic mass – it is finished, go. This phrase is also linked to what is purported to be Christ's final words on the cross, "It is finished." Pound concludes this section with this statement and a semi-colon which links it to the next line: "surrounded by herds and by cohorts looked on Mt Taishan" (74/452) thus returning us to present time with him at Pisa. The herds represent the general populace at the DTC, and the cohorts are a listing of Pound's friends and associates from happier times who are listed in the next rather long section.

Before Pound gets into the cataloguing of memories of friends and places recalled from happier times, he recounts an incident from a trip traveling abroad with his Aunt Frank in the late 1800s, when Pound was about 13. Pound writes,

but in Tangier I saw from dead straw ignition
 From a snake bite
 fire came to the straw
 from the fakir blowing
 foul straw and an arm-long snake
 that bit the tongue of the fakir making small holes
 and from the blood of the holes

came fire when he stuffed straw in his mouth
 dirty straw that he took from the roadway
 first smoke and then the dull flame
 that wd/ have been in the time of Rais Uli (74/452)

The indentions, in this section, serve to point to specific natural events in this anecdote. Pound uses this story of a trip to Morocco to articulate how Morocco had once avoided a war with the U.S. and England. A kidnapping occurs when Rais Uli (or Ali) (1875 – 1925) kidnapped Westerner, Ion Perdicaris and his nephew, Cromwell Varley, in 1910 from Tangier where Perdicaris was living in a villa there. By repaying the ransom, that the U.S. had paid to secure the release of these two men, Morocco avoided an armed conflict with what was certainly the 'world powers' at that time. Money is at the heart of this exchange and Pound uses it as an allegory to show that when the U.S. and England want to avoid war, they can. The indented line breaks in this section allude to parts of the natural world that Pound references in his memory of Morocco, and to emphasize his personal revelations in regard to using this idiosyncratic fact.

Pound tries to publish a 'fictional' re-telling of this 'fakir's tale' interwoven with the kidnapping story to an American publication while he was living in London, but is unsuccessful. The rest of page 452 details events and images intertwined with the story of Rais Uli and the Perdicaris kidnapping in order to highlight Pound's most frequent cause of the first half of the 20th century - the importance of economics intertwined with matters of war and nationalism. Pound suggests here, by using this particular story, that the Western Powers could have avoided the two most recent wars, WWI and WWII, but deliberately chose not to. Pound's failed attempt to persuade the

United States to avoid entering the war becomes a subtext here in these lines.

Pound moves on to reminiscing of his friends and colleagues in the next twenty lines or so. He mentions first, William, or W.B. Yeats, who "dreamed of nobility" and "Jim the comedian singing: / Blarney castle me darlin'" as a caricature of James Joyce who, according to various sources, "clowned around as a singer" (Terrell 372). Pound adds references to various landmarks and restaurants that he and his friends frequent in London and Paris to again stage this section as an intersection of memory and chronicle to blend the past amidst the present – *dove sta memòra*.

While sorting through the inventory of his friends and various quips that characterize them, Pound records several restaurants. These lesser and greater restaurants such as "les Lilas, Dieudonne London, Volsin's, etc. show how he is reduced to remembering restaurants as an indication of just how much his world is coming apart -- grasping at the last straws of his bourgeoisie existence⁶⁶.

After another long list of restaurants, dancehalls, friends and acquaintances, Pound writes, "où sont les heures of that year" (74/453) to show how he dreams of the past and wonders, "where are the good times" of that year. Like many of the people and places he lists, they are gone. Wars and economics have devastated many of these landmarks, his friends have moved on or died, and he finds he is losing something – his sanity perhaps, but he grasps at the assorted memories within these lines because he doesn't want it, or them, to

⁶⁶ Taken, in part, from a conversation that I had with Richard Sieburth, editor of the newest edition of the *Pisan Cantos*, while at EPIC 2015 in Brunnenburg.

go. He clings to the past within these few pages, and then abruptly thrusts his reader into his present reality.

Pound's rough syntactics shake us out of the reverie of the past and bring us back with him into the prison at Pisa. In this section, Pound records many of the ongoing events inside the DTC, as he writes of the "niggers scaling the obstacle fence / in the middle distance / and Mr Edwards superb green and brown" (74/454). The dichotomy of these lines is that Pound records this event rather dispassionately as a way to juxtapose the ridiculousness of the whole situation and to plunge his reader vicariously back into the moment he experiences alone. This works to make this section coarse and tangible as apposed to the politely remembered sequence of people, places, and events discussed in the preceding section. These revelations point to associations Pound makes in divulging his history and meaning, a *la* Wimsatt and Beardsley.

The next sequence of lines in "74" recount a crucial incident occurring within the DTC: a fellow prisoner, Mr. [Henry Hudson] Edwards, a black man with a face like a "Baluba⁶⁷ mask" who makes EP a table is considered "the greatest charity / to be found among those who have not observed / regulations" (74/454). Pound contrasts this 'act of charity' to the fact that this prisoner who lands himself at the DTC with Pound for not following the rules. Pound points out what he sees as the irony in the ensuing lines:

not of course that we advocate—
and yet petty larceny

⁶⁷ Baluba is Pound's name for a tribe in the Southwestern Belgian Congo, thus alluding to Frobenius, according to Marcella Spann Booth, as quoted in Terrell's *Companion to the Cantos* p. 374.

in a regime
 based on grand larceny
 might rank as conformity nient' altro
 with justice shall be redeemed" (74/454).

When Pound compares this small act of 'larceny' with the larger larceny of countries, especially his own, who engage in the 'stealing' of money to finance wars and other schemes, he creates a false dichotomy or false dilemma to reinforce his firmly held belief that the current war (for him, WWII) is not so much for principles and politics as it is for wealth and power. The logical fallacy is more logical than fallacious, even now.

Pound ends this section with a two Biblical references. The first is Leviticus 19. Pound does not write the quote here, but expects his reader to know, or to look up, that it means, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure" (Leviticus 19:35).

The Leviticus reference suggests the premise that one should live a virtuous life, in all areas of ones life, including even business transactions. It could also be applied to Pound's pet theories of economics, and to not use dishonest standards when measuring, weighing, or evaluating. Nevertheless, it is clearly judgment which lands Pound at the DTC – the judgment of his government that he had committed a crime; although, he had yet to stand trial. More closely we see Pound's premise that we should not engage in double standards: using one method of judgment or evaluation and not using that same standard whereby to judge the other. He is against dishonest, duplicitous standards, not judgment entirely but the equitable act of trading fairly. This is, of course, a rather pointed idiosyncratic

'dig' whereby Pound suggests that not all people (or nations) engage in this theory of fair measure.

The second reference that Pound drops in here is First Thessalonians 4:11, which reads, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands as we commanded you" to signify the dignity in working with one's hands and minding your own business. Pound alludes to Edwards' act of making the table here in the larger sense of elevating the art of working with one's hands as a noble act. Instead of being a crime, like at the DTC where the rules prohibited prisoners from interacting or talking with each other, Pound asserts that the building of the table is less an offense than an act of kindheartedness and Christian charity. This Bible verse reinforces the supposition that one should lead a quiet life.

While 'quiet life' is not exactly the term one would use in describing Pound's career, the poet asserts that by doing good things work with ones' hands, a person could lead a quiet, honorable life. This is Pound's idea of true art – creating something lasting and beautiful with one's hands, whether that is poetry or building a table, each one has merit, using Pound's presumption. By highlighting Edwards quiet, charitable act, Pound champions the act and the person.

Pound underlines the hypocrisy of his incarceration is in these lines. Pound frequently uses Christian allusions and tropes, Biblical quotes, and other mainstream spiritual references to frame events within a familiar context, but he does so purposely in order to evoke an element of overt religiosity within a subtext of covert alternative spirituality.

While he is an exile, and living apart from the mainstream, he still considers these references vital to both his poetry and the reader's understanding. In writing his rather abbreviated biography for New Directions' release of *Selected Poems* in 1949, he describes his background as beginning in 1918 with what he lists as important events culminating in the publication of his newest short collection of poetry.

Pound credits his background as being devoted to the so-called "investigation of the causes of war, to oppose same ... moving from Social Credit to Gesellism⁶⁸ ... Obtaining imprint in Italy of Social Credit and Gesellite doctrines, comparing them with Catholic canonist theory and local practice" (Pound, *Selected Poems*, viii). At the very bottom of page 454, in what is the last word on the page, Dioce is mentioned again.

Dioce, or Ecbatana, is one of Pound's representations of an ideal society, and thus his wish to not "surrender neither the empire nor the temples / plural / nor the constitution nor yet the city of Dioce / each one in his god's name" (74/454 – 455) brings us back to why he is incarcerated. Pound mentions Dioce/Ecbatana frequently in "74" to continue the exile's song of lamentation and loss of the dream. Pound's belief that his actions were in support of the American Constitution, sets up the contradiction for why he is incarcerated; that notion is made clear here. Pound equivocates defending the U.S.

⁶⁸ Silvio Gesell (1862 – 1930) was a German monetary theorist with whom Pound aligned himself when it came to issues of usury, scrip theory, etc. Pound agreed with much of Gesell's and Keynes' theories and practices as outlined in Keynes' *General Theory*. John Keynes (1883 – 1946) was a British economist whose ideas fundamentally changed the course of modern economics and governmental policy in the 20th century.

Constitution with his radio broadcasts. These lines in "Canto 74", written in 1945 at the DTC, are supported by what are the finishing lines of his bio written in 1949 for *Selected Poems*. Pound writes that in,

1940 after continued opposition [he] obtained permission to use Rome radio for personal propaganda in support of U.S. Constitution continuing after America's official entry into the war only on condition that he should never be asked to say anything contrary to his conscience or contrary to his duties as an American Citizen (Pound, *Selected Poems*, viii).

To highlight Pound's belief in the rightness of his actions and the Rome radio broadcasts, he again invokes "The wind is part of the process / The rain is part of the process" (74/455) and the Taoist principle that all life should bend and flow with the flow of nature.

He equates his actions as that of "Kuanon, [and] this stone bringeth sleep" to suggest a spiritual peace in trying to do what was right. While he might have a modicum of peace in knowing he did the 'honorable' thing by attempting to correct the trajectory of America's future, and its involvement in a very costly world war, he suffers greatly for his 'spiritual peace'.

The next section represents Pound's return to the natural world intertwined with events of the past. He mentions the enlightening power of the sexual act, "in coitu inluminatio" (74/455) in the context of the divine light and its expression in the physical world much like how the divine light is also expressed in the physical act of lovemaking. Perceptions deriving from sensual experience are defined as 'fire' [or light] personified by deities: Aphrodite-Kypris,

Helen, Circe, Hathor," as Boris de Rachewiltz asserts, and Pound uses that idea of sexuality in the context of both nature and light.

d. Beauty is Difficult

Pound expresses the beauty and complexity in the natural world – the katydids he mentions in a earlier line and the herbs – mint, thyme, basil – which are associated with paradisaal vision (Terrell 374) to show that all this IS part of the process. It is all related. The natural world and the sun are inextricably linked.

The natural world revolves in cycles, and it all flows and nothing stays, according to Heroclitus, or, more importantly, his contention that the only certainty is change. This idea is also frequently attributed to the French philosopher, François de La Rochefoucauld, whom Pound studied prior to his arrest. Everything ties in here within "Canto 74" – Pound's work, studies, and personal beliefs, everything. He leaves no area of his life or memory untouched, and even mentions the eucalyptus seed⁶⁹ he picked up on the way to Lavagna and always carried with him. *Dove sta memòra* – The memory lives within.

Pound writes, "eucalyptus that is for memory / under the olives, by cypress, mare Tirreno" (74/455) to express that no matter where we are, or were, or are going, we carry our past with us; it is all related. He then expresses the more political point of this matter, that "the only people who did anything of any interest were H. M. / and / Forebenius der Geheimrat" (74/456). The H. and M. stand for Hitler and Mussolini respectively. Frobenius is, obviously, a

⁶⁹ This detail regarding the eucalyptus seed, or pip, was provided by Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz during an informal conversation at EPIC 2015 in Brunnenburg.

reference to Leo Frobenius, the German, whose work on ethnography Pound regarded highly. He lists Cocteau as having "wrote a play now and then or the / Possum" (74/456) to pay homage to his friends' talents he valued. Jean Cocteau and Possum were geniuses according to Pound, and he valued their critical work as serious contributions to humanity, culture, and civilization. It all flows together – art, politics, friendships and it all changes.

In the subsequent section, again Pound conducts a litany of remembered persons and events before hurling us into the cage with him. The beauty of the natural world and his garden of memories are interrupted by the reality of the DTC. "The dwarf morning-glory twines round the grass blade / magna NOX animae / with Barabbas and 2 thieves beside me, / the wards like a slave ship, / Mr Edwards, Hudson, Henry comes *miseriae* / Comites kernes, Green and Tom Wilson" (74/456). This snippet shows multiple sides to Pound's personality and poetics – the good and the bad.

Pound dons the masque of a persecuted Christ figure at the crucifixion with the two thieves, surrounding him as at Golgotha. The DTC assumes a Gehenna-like quality with Pound suffering like Christ, or Barabbas who was supposed to be, on the cross. Pound invokes the Latin phrase, "*comes miseriae*" italicized so as to emphasize its meaning of 'companion of misery.' 'Comites' translates to companions and Pound is definitely in close quarters with despair, and his wretchedness and exile is sustained throughout the following associations.

EP makes another problematic comparison, but this time to a slave ship. Pound is so unaccustomed to having black folk in such close

proximity that he equates it with a slave ship and the Middle Passage. The fellow 'trainees' that he mentions are all men of color. The 'magna NUX animae' line represents the "great nut of the soul" to evoke a theme that "the body is in the soul" (Terrell 376), which would also help to explain the eucalyptus pip and that Pound is surrounded by those who, on the outside, are not like him.

The seed that Pound carries with him serves as both a physical reminder and metaphor for the Pythagorean leitmotif that the body IS the soul. Pound's later allusion to the "great acorn of light" in Canto 116 withstands this same seed-like representational association. He is the NUX⁷⁰ in the NOX animae.

The seemingly innocuous lines, repeating three times on three successive pages, as a 'NOX/NUX' pun echoes Pound's more serious proclamation. Pound uses Ovid to speak for him and to maintain that he is wrongfully incarcerated; he suffers the dark night of the soul (NOX), as he is persecuted by the 'passing folk' (NUX) represented by the US Army staff that pass in/out of the DTC. The *magna nox animae* repeated line illustrates Pound taking on a chthonic role in which he suffers the spiritual crisis of the age, and descends into the Underworld (like Persephone who ate the seed) in his search for 'truth' or philosopher's stone.

Pound's use of Ovid is no surprise, as he was very familiar with the Roman poet and exile. Ovid and Confucius were to Pound the "only

⁷⁰ NUX comes from Ovid's "The Walnut Tree," and reads in Latin as, "Nux ego iuncta viae cum sim sine crimine vitae, A populo saxi praetereunte petor, on p. 294 in *Ovid: The Art of Love*. Like Pound, Ovid was banished for his work; he lived out his life writing poetry in a small town on the Black Sea where he died in exile.

safe guides in religion.”⁷¹ The first lines of Ovid’s “The Walnut Tree” translate to “I, a walnut tree, hard by the roadside, though my life be blameless, yet am pelted with stones by the passing folk” (Ovid 295). Pound gathers Ovid from his memory bank of literature like other references to classical works in this section. Pound writes in a 1929 article⁷² that “Catullus, Ovid, Propertius all give us something we cannot find now...” (Pound, *Literary Essays*, 27). He is clearly drawing upon past exiles to write of the present.

Between the NOX/NUX references, Pound writes “ac ego in harum / so lay men in Circe’s swine-sty; / ivi in harum ego ac vidi cadavers animae” and draws again from *The Odyssey*. His use of the Homeric tradition is overt, but these lines suggest he is not just metaphorically in the pig-sty, but literally. “Ac ego in harum” translates to “and I too in the pig-sty,” and links his perceived situation back to Odysseus’ crew and companions who were transformed by Circe into swine and spent their time in a pig-sty. He is surrounded by black men, criminals, and by “God’s messenger Whiteside / and the guards op/ of the ... / was lower than that of the prisoners / “all them g.d. m.f. generals c.s. all of ‘em fascists” (74/456). Pound’s reaction is visceral.

“God’s messenger Whiteside” is not an actual messenger of God, but used contemptuously to point at the contradiction of having a “black turnkey at the DTC” who was tasked by the “Provost Section to

⁷¹ Taken from Angela Jung’s *Italian Images of Ezra Pound: Twelve Critical Essays*. Ed. Angela Jung. Trans. Guido Palandri. Taipei: Mei Ya Publications, 1979. Print.

⁷² From Pound’s article in the *New York Herald Tribune*, 1929 “Books” section, which appears (in part) in “How to Read Part One: Introduction” in the compilation *Literary Essays*, 1935.

handle the solitary cells and 'security cages'" (Terrell 376). The line that appears within quotes is, like most quotes Pound employs, taken directly from conversations he hears and witnesses. Using biographical revelations corroborate reading this using the theory that "evidence of the meaning of his words [are] a personal one [which] express a personality or state and the dramatic character of his utterance," according to Wimsatt and Beardsley (11).

The abbreviated profanity signifies Pound's use of other prisoners' words, again as a dramatic character of utterance. It is quite a colorful section, and since Pound never was one for strong language or strong drink⁷³, he abbreviates the g.d. for goddamn; the m.f. for mother-fucking; and c.s. for cocksuckers. This abbreviation captures the essence, if not the eloquence, of the prisoners' exchanges, which Pound thought should remain verbatim, but minus the explicit vulgarity.

The paradox in abbreviating the coarse language, but allowing racial slurs is seen in the following passage, "'c'mon small fry' sd/ the little coon to the big black; of the slaver as seen between decks / and all the presidents / Washington Adams Monroe Polk Tyler" (74/456). He uses the trainees' last names, which sound quite dignified, to juxtapose the pigsty camaraderie against the absurdity of reality. The 'between decks' line is where Pound appropriates another reference to the slave ships to highlight the slave-like qualities of his and fellow prisoners' internment. The listing of the

⁷³ Pound's various biographers record that he did not drink to excess, and was only tipsy twice in his life, both times from champagne. Likewise, his avoidance of profanity is noted and attributed to his Quaker-roots and upbringing.

U.S. president names in tandem with the slave reference seems even more contradictory; however, it is a device where Pound can make commentary on the racial divide, the experience of exile, and the dissimilarity between the situation at Pisa and those who inhabit the DTC who are far from authoritative, presidential figures.

After Pound's use of the detainees' names, he rolls into another conflagration regarding banking. He writes that "robbing the public for private individual's gain ΘΕΑΛΓΕΙΝ / every bank of discount is downright iniquity / robbing the public for the private individual's gain / nec benecomata Kirkê, mah! κακα φαργак' εδωκευ / neither with lions nor leopards attended / but poison, veneno" (74/457). Pound uses the trope of bewitchment as a mode of comparison for how banking and financial systems have cast a spell over the public in order to deceive and rob them. ΘΕΑΛΓΕΙΝ literally means to enchant, bewitch, which is what Circe did, but it also means to cheat. The lions and leopards are mentioned in the context of companions of Circe.

The main theme that Pound asserts here is that the banking system swindles the public, but in other Cantos, he makes these not-so-veiled accusations against persons who benefit behind the system, those men like Rothschild or Rockefeller. Pound blames bankers for poisoning the well, those who have given the public dreadful drugs (φαργак' εδωκευ) like usury as a poison (veneno) "in all the veins of the commonweal" (74/457) so that they don't realize they are being robbed. "Nec benecomata" translates to "nor fair-tressed" in relation to Circe (Kirkê) the enchantress. Banks are not gray-eyed Athena, not the

fair-haired goddess, but the dark-haired sorceress out to ruin the unsuspecting.

The link between the preceding lines from "74" and usury are made sharper when Pound writes that "if on high, will flow downward all thru them / if on the forge at Predappio? sd/ old Upward: "not the priest but the victim" (74/457). Predappio is the town where Mussolini was born, and the several lines which end here, Pound shows usury as a disease that will flow downward infecting everything in its path. Pound writes in his *Guide to Kulcher*, "When a given hormone defects, it will defect throughout the whole system" (*Kulcher*, 60). Usury is a poison that pollutes the body and soul of humanity, Pound reiterates. The Upward reference pertains to a former colleague of Pound's whose work appeared in *The Egoist*, *Poetry*, etc.; he is the persona who serves as the victim in this section.

Upward's work on primitive religions as a cultural anthropologist, later as a poet, and then as a publisher, deeply impacted Pound and many in Pound's circle, including Orage, G.R.S. Mead, and others. It is "Pound's idea of the Eleusinian mysteries [which] were seen through such books as Upward's *The Divine Mystery*" (Terrell 377), that impacted Pound because it was an anthropological study of Christian mythology.

Whereas Upward's poetry appeared in the first Imagiste anthology, *Des Imagistes*, edited by Pound, he did not write or publish much poetry except for the short-lived experiment in Imagism. It is Pound's use of Christian mythology vis-à-vis Upward's book that is the most obvious link between the two. It is Upward's career and eventual suicide in 1926 that Pound alludes to in the lines, "with a printing

press by the Thames bank / until I end my song / and shot himself / for praise of intaglios" (74/457). The 'intaglios' mentioned here is Pound's reference to the printmaking technique, which uses an impression to create a printed image. Upward's iconic John Barleycorn ring adorns the cover of his book, *The Divine Mystery*, via intaglio. Pound's memories of previous events and colleagues who impact his work are mixed within this section, and they are the "friends [who] come from far countries ... filial, fraternal affection is the root of humaneness / the root of the process" (74/457).

The 'root of the process' is another of EPs references to his work on the Confucian *Analects*. This section reads, "The real gentleman goes for the root, when the root is solid the (beneficent) process starts growing, filiality and brotherliness are the root of manhood, increasing with it" (Pound, *Confucius*, 195). What this symbolizes is Pound's belief, via Confucius, that one "should respect what you do and keep your word ... be friendly to others" (195), and inferring that public works are not to interfere with agricultural production because one should "employ men in proper season" (195). Pound asserts his views on finance and usury, again, to comment on the governmental appropriation of agricultural industries and as a way for the state (or banks) to own the means of production.

Prior to the short Confucian-like sequence, Pound brings us back to the DTC and writes of his dark night of the soul, "nox animae magna from the tent under Taishan / amid what was termed the a.h. of the army / the guards holding opinion" (74/457). The tent is his new living quarters after he is moved out of the gorilla cage, and he lives within the asshole (a.h.) of the army, or so that was the

opinion of the guards who maintained control of that area. He writes of these daily details, as a way for his speaker to see the interaction between form and meaning in order for his reader to get the full experience of his exile. He uses these biographical elements as tension to show in poetic detail the roughshod existence of his banishment amid his most vulnerable period, the NOX ANIMAE.

This canto is not filled with bucolic images, happy platitudes, and syrupy sentimentality for bygone ages, nor is his other work in *The Cantos*. It is a paradox in that Pound's meaning is sustained through a balance of ambiguity and deliberate expression. Pound uses his own experiences, friends, and the common history – myopically viewed through his eyes, of course with, what Noel Stock calls its “many cunning passages and contrived corridors” (Stock 194) to illustrate biographical elements that comment upon larger ideologies.

In typical Pound fashion, he has already drawn certain conclusions in regards to economics and usury, and feels that there is no “need for anyone to be digging into economic history” beyond what he had already read and decided upon, which would serve him only as it “proved his ideas right and assisted them into action (195). Pound insulates himself and his ideas, especially in regard to finance and economics.

Even one of his most thorough biographers, Noel Stock, is surprised to find that Pound did not perform as much research as one should to make such far-reaching claims about economics and global financial matters. Nevertheless, the exiled poet rushes in “with cutlass waving, against a foe who is everything at once, and in the end was bound fast” because unless you go carefully and “find some way

of ignoring or coming to terms with [history], you will end up its prisoner" (Stock 194), which is exactly what befalls Pound. His vitriolic poetic assertions are not always based upon sound research, and that is undoubtedly the most problematic issue within his method of writing history via poetry.

The next dozen or so lines following the Upward reference engage with history, primarily the Middle Ages, which according to Stock is where "Pound's most serious historical errors occur" (204), excepting his work on Cavalcanti and other poetry of that period. Pound uses the Middle Ages to stand in for what might never be again – "writing ad posterus" (74/458). He concludes this historical section with bringing the reader back into the visceral elements of the DTC. "Le Paradis n'est pas artificiel / but spezzato apparently" (74/458) translates to "the Paradise is not artificial," which Pound borrows from Baudelaire's *Les Paradis Artificiels* to comment that while it isn't artificial, it is apparently broken (spezzato). This 'brokenness' sums up quite effectively what Pound's view of the world was at that time – it was broken. All that is left are fragments.

The wars devastate the landscape, the struggle for global and national political power decimates what he views as culture, and his world lay around him in ruin. Yet, "it exists only in fragments" (74/458) alluding with deliberate ambiguity to both the Sapphic fragments which are all that are left of Sappho's poetry and the fragments which are all that are left of the world. He then adds "unexpected excellent sausage" which is Pound's suggestion that even though the world lay about in ruins, he found some small corporeal pleasures, like the sausage he is served at the DTC is quite good.

This adds a rather personal meaning here in expressing Pound's response to the situation of finding decent sausage in a prison camp. Again, Pound mixes paradoxical elements to elevate the tension in the text. The contradiction of the natural world versus the man-made disaster is part of the irony in these lines.

Other natural and somatic elements which, amidst the terror of the cage, he finds beautiful are, "The smell of mint, for example, / Ladro the night cat / at Nemi waited on the slope above the lake sunken in the pocket of hills" (74/458). Pound records the small pleasures associated with nature and the physical senses, like the smell of mint, which is "one of the hieratic herbs related to the vision of paradise" (Terrell 378). Mint is one of the herbs frequently mentioned in "Canto 74," and for Pound it has a certain magical connotation. Ladro translates to thief in Italian, and this references a cat⁷⁴ that befriends Pound in the DTC. Naming of the cat 'Ladro' serves as an ironic device because Ladro also translates to 'rogue', and thus the name illustrates the cat as a roguish character amongst rogues.

The Nemi reference comes from Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, and alludes to the sacred grove and the temple of Diana in the Alban Hills of Latium, Italy. This sacred spot is guarded by a priest who holds the post until another kills him who sought the office⁷⁵, as was the custom. Pound uses this in the context of the murderers and guards who surround him juxtaposing the pure (spiritual aspect) with

⁷⁴ This anecdote is from Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz.

⁷⁵ Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.

the profane (worldly, physical aspect). Again, more irony, tension, and paradox sustained throughout this sequence.

Following the reference to the Temple of Diana, Pound writes of "Zarathustra, now desuete / to Jupiter and to Hermes where now is the castellaro / no vestige save in the air" (74/458). Zarathustra is a 5th century Persian and founder of Zoroastrianism, an old fertility religion. Diana, from the preceding line, is the goddess of the hunt and the woodland, and she who can talk with and control animals. Pound links the natural elements via religion and mythology. His use of Jupiter and Hermes follows suit and are major deities built around his contention that the paradise is NOT artificial. Paradise is very real he suggests by oblique expression

Pound uses the French term, 'desuete,' to denote obsolete, and uses it to infer that the practice of the fertility rites of Zoroastrianism and the Cult of Diana are out of date. His idea that we, as a culture, have fallen away from the land and 'natural rites' are part of what has led to the downfall of our culture, according to Pound. The next few lines return us back to the natural world "under the olives ... that which gleams and then does not gleam / as the leaf turns in the air" (74/458) After a brief remembrance of "il Pozzetto / al Tigullio," the well near the beach at Rapallo where Pound lived, he teases us with a pleasant memory of a seaside town, for just a moment, before we are thrust back into the DTC. This disruption creates tension as his speaker returns to the prison camp.

We are again confronted with quotes and snippets of conversation from inside the fence at Pisa's detention center, and Pound uses the abbreviated form of profanity to mock the guards and his situation at

the DTC with "'wd.' said the guard 'take everyone of them g.d.m.f. generals / c.s. all of 'em fascists'" (74/459). Pound creates another layer of paradox in these lines by using a speaker to suggest the esteem with which the guards view the political system he saw as having the potential for creating *paradiso terrestre*.

While he agrees in previous passages about the generals being g.d. m.f. c.s., he never specifically says that and uses the words of others in the DTC to make that statement for him. A few lines later, he add another reference to being in the pigsty, "in harum ac ego ivi / Criminals have no intellectual interests? / and for three months did not know the taste of his food / in Chi heard Shun's music / the sharp song with sun under its radiance" (74/459). Pound repeats the motifs of injustice and being relegated to the pigsty where he, now a criminal, is not treated as an intellectual. Pound links intellectual sustenance to food by way of metaphorical device.

Not knowing the taste of his food for three months hearkens back to Confucius. Pound uses this to highlight how he has been without his intellectual food by using one of his translations from his book on Confucius which reads, "In Ch'I he heard the 'Shao' sung, and for three months did not know the taste of meat; said: didn't figure the performance of music had attained to that summit" (Pound, Confucius, 220). Pound was deprived of certain leniencies, or intellectual 'meat' like books and material for writing, until after his breakdown. The irony is in this is that it is intellectual activities that help him return to his 'right mind.'

Pound records a reference to Eastern poetry with the "one tanka entitled the shadow / babao, or the hawk's wing / of no fortune and

with a name to come" (74/459) to suggest that a reference to the Japanese poetic form, and a meeting Pound had with Katue Kitasono where Pound asks Kitasono if he had seen Hawk's Wing, the Yeats play, and if it was "of any use in Japan?" (Terrell 379). The babao is a type of bugbear in Italian, but Pound uses it figuratively to suggest a 'bear market' in financial terms with the following lines having to do with the "downright iniquity said J. Adams / at 35 instead of 21.65" (74/459) and the devaluation of gold by Roosevelt from 35 to 21.65. A bear market is where the price of securities, like gold, fall and investors sell which creates more losses and economic panic.

We know that this is another economic allusion sustained by Pound because the following lines heave blame upon the "spawn of the gt. Meyer Anselm / That old H. had heard from the ass eared militarist in Byzantium" (74/459). Meyer Anselm, or Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1743 – 1812) is generally "considered to be the founder of the House of Rothschild" (Terrell 379) and one of Pound's frequent Jewish scapegoats for what he sees as global and national economic evils.

Pound sustains this rancorous tirade by adding a reference to both the "old H" (Henry Morgenthau, Sr.) "and [his son] young H/the tip" and adds "Meyer Anselm, a rromance, yes, yes certainly / but more fool you if you fall for it two centuries later" (74/459). The 'rrromance' Pound refers to suggests a metaphoric idea popular in the 1930s that "money, 'high finance,' and international money operations were 'a great romance,'" according to Carroll Terrell (379); afterward Pound's statement calls the public out on their foolishness by 'falling for it two centuries later.'

Pound's diatribe doesn't become any pleasanter when he adds "the yidd is a stimulant, and the goyim are cattle / in gt/ proportion and go to saleable slaughter / with the maximum of docility" (74/459); the 'yidd,' of course, is a reference to Jewish persons using the Yiddish dialect, and 'goyim' is a common Yiddish term for gentiles or any non-Jew. Both 'yidd' and 'goyim' are not necessarily pejorative depending on the context. Here, I would suggest that Pound does not use it as flattering terms, to purposefully increase the tension in these lines. He compares those whose unflagging support of current economic practices equal cattle happily being led to slaughter.

The following page continues Pound's economic rant, and he again increases the tension between religious standards and economic standards by invoking the Leviticus 19 quote concerning fairness in measure. Pound places the Leviticus quote in the context of the Confucian tradition when he writes, "Yu has nothing pinned on Jehovah / sent and named Shun who to the / autumnal heavens sha-o" (74/460) to indicate his belief that the "laws of Jehovah" regarding finance and "control of usury are better than those of the early Chinese emperors," per Terrell's guide (379).

Amidst Pound's descriptions of historical money problems, he returns us rather briefly to the DTC with "a black delicate hand / a white's hand like a ham / pass by, seen under the tent-flap / on sick call : comman' / comman', sick call comman'" before resuming his speaker resumes the bombastic monologue regarding economics. An obvious simile of a white 'hand like a ham' against the contrasting element of a 'black delicate hand' creates a tension in the text to advance to the next section.

Pound uses no masques for these views and the poetry that follows is full of historic precedents, however justified, but from his unreliable speaker, with a skewed point of view, these lines regarding finance, banking, and usury read more of as a 'shit list' than poetry. What remains within this rather long section references several important points.

While Pound takes issue with what he sees as the "two largest rackets ... of the value of money / of the unit of money" (74/460), he adds in references to both the *Divine Comedy* and Henry Ford when discussing the "small town of Wörgl" (74/461) in the Austrian Tyrol near Innsbruck. For Pound, Wörgl represents an the right kind of economic system where by "issuing its own Gesellist⁷⁶ money" it was able to go from a bankrupt town, where its "citizens had not been able to pay their rates ... schoolteachers, etc. But in less than two years everything had been put right" (Pound, *Selected Prose*, 314). The Wörgl experiment was a success until they were found out and their unique system purged and effectively banned from the area. Pound calls this an "ideological war [that] had been won (314).

Pound's portrays the Bürgermeister, paradoxically, as a cerebral, subversive working-man who "had a milk route" by mentioning that "on whose book-shelf was the Life of Henry Ford / and also a copy of the *Divina Commedia* / and of the *Gedichte* of Heine" (74/461). Pound has no way of really knowing what was on this man's bookshelf, but uses

⁷⁶ Pound's use of the Gesellist comes from Silvio Gesell's economic theories. What Pound does not mention until later in the Canto is that Gesell was tried for high treason because of his failed economics in Germany in 1919. After being acquitted, Gesell turns to marketing his anarchist and monetary theories via books and pamphlets. Gesell is, like Pound, an outsider who writes of economics and finance, but has very little training or research in those matters.

this representation to paint him as an intellectually advanced blue-collar type who reads Dante and the poems (*Gedichte*) of Heinrich Heine in order to effect his argument that sometimes the 'regular men' can do a better job of banking than the banking institutions can. The irony is implicit.

Pound winds down this section with a reference to the "usurers' hell-a-dice / all of which leads to the death-cells / each in the name of its god" thus proposing that Aristotle said "philosophy is not for young men" (74/461). What Pound infers here comes from his *Guide to Kulcher* that "As ethics, Arroy [Aristotle] is not fit to clean the boots of Confucius" (*Kulcher* 326) thus elevating the Eastern systems over Western. Comments like these further highlight Pound's emotional state and the tension in regard to his exile.

He spends the next half page elevating the Chinese and Japanese kingdoms, even adding in a "Dai Nippon Banzai" (Hail to Great Japan) and "I believe in the resurrection of Italy" before lamenting "quia impossibile est / 4 times to the song of Gassir / now in the mind indestructible" (74/462). Quia impossibile est translates to "because it is impossible," and Pound realizes the hopelessness of dreaming for some sort of *risorgimento* of his adopted homeland.

Pound then places this concession alongside the wish for Wagadu, from the "Song of Gassir", to act as a *deus ex machina* to rebuild the land. Invoking Wagadu as a *deus ex machina* is a rather contrived irony in that Pound laments the loss of his Italy, sees the impossibility of its return, but hopes for an unexpected solution to the insoluble difficulty.

In the next section is another rather long poetically written lecture about economics where Pound again invokes Gesell, but this time he explains a bit more about the complicated positioning in this text and Gesell's eventual acquittal for treason. Pound only explains Gesell's situation in light of him having been acquitted. After this, he adds, "Oh yes, the money is there, / il danaro c'è, said Pellegrini / (very peculiar under the circs)" (74/462), which is a direct reference to a situation with Mussolini.

Pellegrini is part of the Italian Ministry of Finance, and later becomes part of the Saló Republic; however, in this instance Pound uses Pellegrini's act of offering M. (Mussolini) more money as "il capo dello stato" to suggest some sort of shady irregularity. It is Pellegrini's act of wanting Mussolini to take more than 4000 lira per month, because "the money is there", that Pound deems inappropriate and somehow suspicious in these lines.

The next sequence repeats much of the themes from the previous sections, but Pound frequently uses the indented line as an aside to punctuate his important points like "whereas a jew will receive information / he will gather up information" (74/463). The indention acts as a repeating echo, or to emphasize Pound's point. He creates a kind of tension, by using this echo, or chorus, for the next dozen or so indented lines.

The use of the white space here, amid a rather long "Dantescan" metaphor leads the reader to the summit of the mountain in an earthly paradise, as Pound builds toward "the winds veer in periplum / and from under the Rupe Tarpeia / drunk with wine of the Castelli / "in the name of its god" "Spiritus veni" (74/463). Spiritus veni roughly

translates to "come spirit, come," and is often used in the Catholic Mass as "come Holy Spirit come. The wind is the spirit in the sustained metaphor that Pound employs, and "the Rupe Tarpeia, or Tarpeian Cliff where criminals and traitors were hurled to there death" (Terrell 382) is a stand-in for the DTC, and drives the tension towards the resolution of "Beauty is difficult" (74/464).

Pound uses the phrase, "Beauty is difficult" in five instances on three pages to build the tension towards the eventual conclusion of this Canto. The first is in the context of "sd/ Mr Beardsley, and is featured with "quotes" to indicate that this is a direct quote from English illustrator, Aubrey Beardsley⁷⁷. He uses the reference here to Beardsley in order to frame a series of anecdotes that suggests Pounds elevation of memory and chronicle to create a biographical meaning within the text.

The second use is framed by "a.d. 1910 or about that" and the subsequent "in the days of the Berlin to Bagdad project" (74/464), which symbolizes a railway project that represents the encroaching German imperialism (Terrell 383) of that period. It also refers to T.E. Lawrence, of Lawrence of Arabia fame, who was involved with this project during construction and with whom Pound was acquainted.

Pound's text creates a contrast between the beauty of the mechanized, industrial world of a German-engineered rail system against the literary and publishing world of London in the late Edwardian period. He mentions several colleagues from his London days

⁷⁷ Beardsley was a contributor to the *Yellow Book*, which was edited by one of Pound's publishers, Elkin Mathews, and associated with the both the Decadents and Symbolists.

in this sequence to allude to their literary work 1910 to about 1913, and uses those references again in the third mention of "beauty is difficult" when he recounts that "He said I protested too much he wanted to start a press / and print the greek classics....periplum" (74/464). The "He" is another allusion to T.E. Lawrence, and Pound's deliberate use of the white space in the middle of the line and between the words 'much' and 'he' asks as a breath or pause within the line emphasizing 'he' to set it off from the preceding part of the line.

Pound includes the ellipsis as part of his text to engage the reader with the idea that Greek classics should be printed from 'how they viewed them' or periplum. He uses this metaphor to suggest that publishing the Greek classics as they see them is an act of beauty. The "beauty is difficult" reference in this next sequence is placed in the context of "But on the other hand the President of Magdalen / (rhyming dawdlin') said there were / too many words in "The Hound of Heaven" (74/465). Including a reference to a well-known Francis Thompson poem with an overtly Christian theme, Pound alludes by way of irony that he "had failed to follow," or, to quote the Thompson poem, "You drove divinity away from you," thus placing himself in the poem as a source of contradictory insight.

Pound adds, "or else a mere desire to titter, etc." (74/465) to conclude with a certain textual anxiety which shows one struggles to maintain the source of beauty, and serious art could easily become comedy, or buffoonery. Pound writes on the following page another "beauty is difficult," but it is preceded by "and with a name to come" (74/466). This is followed by the Greek text of Elpenor's line from

the *Odyssey* Book XI where Ulysses' companion says, 'for generations to come'. This scene from the *Odyssey* is part of "The Visit to the Dead" section, and represents Elpenor who comes, in ghostly form to Ulysses, in order to "tell *people to come* what a poor unlucky fellow I was" (113)⁷⁸. Pound uses this a metaphorical device to establish, by way of Elpenor, what an unlucky man he is.

The additional meaning, suggested to the reader by Pound's deliberate ambiguity, is that Elpenor's ghost suggests that beauty is difficult to sustain throughout time; times change, things evolve, and this embedded tension reminds the reader of the struggle for art amidst mutable forces, like Odysseus sailing to the land of the Cimmerians.

The final "Beauty is difficult..." (74/466) brings the reader back inside the gates of the DTC. The ellipsis connects "Beauty is difficult (capital B) to the plain ground, and then the line break and sizeable indentation emphasizes the "precedes the colours" line. Pound's irony here is that even within a prison wall, one can find beauty, but it is indeed a difficult task.

The natural elements of "this grass or whatever here under the tentflaps" and the continuation, "is indubitably, bambooiform" represent the "representative brush strokes" of the "La Nascita" (74/466). Bambooiform is a neologism that Pound employs rather paradoxically to suggest that if painting the grass under the tentflaps, they would be deliberate, visible, individualized brush strokes. He sees the irony of in finding beauty – art – inside the

⁷⁸ Butler, Samuel, trans. "Book XI: Visit to the Dead." *The Odyssey* by Homer. New York: Washington Square Press, 1966. 112 – 125. Print.

DTC and continues with this paradox by mentioning Botticelli's Birth of Venus in the context of "her eyes" ... "whereas the child's face / is at Capogquadri in the fresco square over the doorway" (74/466).

The Capogquadri is "the name of the house in Siena where Pound used to stay during visits" (Terrell 385) with Olga Rudge while she was working with Count Guido Chigi Saracini⁷⁹ on Vivaldi's works. "Her eyes" is a reference to Olga's eyes, and the "child's face" is Mary de Rachewiltz, Pound's daughter. In this moment, he recalls the beauty of his loved ones by 'seeing' his daughter's face in the fresco square that stands over the doorway in this building and remembering his lover, Olga.

Pound adds "that certain images be formed in the mind / to remain there / *formato locho*" (74/466) as a representation that images of his 'beauty' lives on in the mind, where it will remain like *formato locho*. *Formato locho*, which translates to 'in a prepared place' and, derives from a line in Cavalcanti's canzone, "Donna Mi Prega", acts as a volta.

The next line, Pound writes "Arachne mi porta fortuna / to remain there, resurgent EIKONEΣ / and still in Trastevere" (74/466). The Arachne (spider) brings me good luck (fortuna) alludes to both a reference in Pound's essay, "A Visiting Card," where he insinuates that Eliot loses his link to the Goddess of Creation -- having lost "all the threads of Arachne" (Pound, *Literary Essays*, 320). The myth of Arachne serves as a metaphor for creation. Pound's methodical ambiguity places mythology and metaphor together to create an implied

⁷⁹ I visited both the Capogquadri and Count Chigi-Saracini's palazzo in 2009 during my first EPIC.

meaning that like these images that live in his mind, and the spider in his tent, are good omens. EIKONEΣ translates to "pictures, images" (Terrell 385) and supports this extended metaphor emphasizing the beauty of images and good luck amidst the hell in his Inferno.

What we see in the last two pages of this rather long canto are references to Pound's memories of his former life, outside the camp before the 'fall from grace', to create a kind of tension leading to a paradox of forgetfulness. In essence, his assertion to be one of the many "who have passed over Lethe" (74/469) suggests that the images and memories will remain with him, though they, or he, may be forgotten. The references to "Towers of Pisa / (alabaster, not ivory) / coloured photographs of Europa / carved wood from Venice venetian glass and the samovar" (74/467) are a listing of "bric-a-brac brought back from Europe and North Africa" (Terrell 386) when Pound and his Aunt Frank traveled together in the 1890s. This litany of tchotchkes reinforces Pound's meaning of the paradoxical juxtaposition of remembrance and the forgotten.

Subsequent lines in this sequence add to the catalogue of 'forgotten' memories: "Tangier / the cliffs the villa of Perdicaris / Rais Uli, periplus"; however, Pound adds a reference to "Mr [James] Joyce also preoccupied with Gibraltar / and the Pillars of Hercules" (74/467) to indicate the confluence of distant memory and the trips with his aunt, and merging with a literary memory from his colleague, Joyce's *Ulysses*. What these references do is to link the authentic distant past with a more contemporary literary past through irony. Leopold Bloom "associates a gift ... from Tangiers area, with Gibraltar" (Terrell 386 – 387) which Pound uses to reinforce his

intertextual memories of the past and present in order to push towards his concluding lines.

Likewise, Pound employs this same strategy in the following lines, "'Ecco il tè' said the head waiter / in 1912 explaining its mysteries to the piccolo / with a teapot from another hotel" (74/468) and Pound fuses a personal memory within the superficial, but recently remembered, past. In this sense, 'piccolo' means a young boy in "the first stage in a multistaged career of a waiter" (Terrell 387) as Pound reminiscences of a visit to Assisi. Another embedded memory within this page is of

Herr Bacher's father who made madonnas still in the
tradition
carved wood as you might have found in any cathedral
and another Bacher still cut intaglios
such as Salustio's in the time of Ixotta,
where the masks come from, in the Tirol
in the winter season
searching every house to drive out the demons
(74/468).

This passage engages the reader to follow Pound's memory of an artisan who, like the artist in the court of Malatesta (Salustio, son of Sigismundo Malatesta), creates an image, or intaglio that serves as a spiritual object.

Pound uses an image of this *intaglio* on the frontispiece of his *Guide to Kulcher* to portray Malatesta as a "failure worth all the successes of his age" (Guide to Kulcher). Within these lines, Pound uses the irony of a 'failure' who is 'worth all the successes' to create a meta-commentary on this text using his own life and experiences.

This meta-commentary is sustained in the concluding strophe where "Serenely in the crystal jet / as the bright ball that the fountain tosses / (Verlaine) as diamond clearness" (74/469). The stone reference here, like other mentions of stone (e.g. the stone sleep, philosopher's stone, etc.) serve as a metaphor for divinity or purification becoming ever clearer to the speaker of the poem. The crystal jet is the manifestation of divinity, and the diamond clearness echoes Pound's metaphor for crystal-clear lucidity "under Taishan / where the sea is remembered / out of hell, the pit" where it is not an accident, "nec accidens est but an element / in the mind's make-up" (74/469) that he is there in exile.

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V. Implications of Pound's Poetry: An Epilogue⁸⁰

Part of the difficulty in writing about Ezra Pound is the perception even among those in the academy. Pound usually brings in a lot of 'baggage' to any discussion regarding his poetry; not only is he difficult to read, his life makes him even more challenging. Yet, he is the one person from whom we can trace much of the changing literary landscape of the early-mid twentieth century to. He is challenging to analyze, no doubt, but the effect that he had on other writer and poets is undeniable.

T.S. Eliot would write on Pound quite often, especially during their London days. Having composed several introductions for his books and collections, and forming a friendship early during both of their careers, Pound became, as we know, *il miglior fabbro*, for Eliot. He writes in "Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry, "All talk on modern poetry...ends with dragging in Ezra Pound somewhere. He may be named only to be cursed as wanton and mocker... Or he may be classed as filling a niche today like that of Keats in a preceding epoch. The point is, he will be mentioned" (Eliot 5846).

Pound IS mentioned throughout most of the subsequent poetry of the 20th century, and by way of other poets' work, and the critical effect upon the poetry and literature emerging out of that modernist vortex and into the postmodern, fragmented world. The effect, however, upon invoking Pound's name now often results in words worse than 'wanton' or 'mockers;' therefore, much of the effort in Pound

⁸⁰ A portion of this chapter was presented at EPIC 2015 – Brunnenberg, Tirolo, Italy.

studies, it seems, is to explain the role of Pound's beliefs and his convoluted view of history and finance.

There is no getting around the difficulties Pound's politics and personal life present for us now, even in the 21st century. While Pound was never a member of the Fascist party, he did support the Fascist regime and what he considered Mussolini's efforts toward building a better society. His politics became even shadier when we discover his support for Hitler. There are drafts of unpublished letters, which account for Pound's preoccupation with politics and economics in collusion with Nazism. He writes extensively of his elevation of the Fascist dream along with the beauty of heaven on earth and terraces of the stars, Ecbatana.

For many it is a difficult task to see beyond the tragedy of Pound's dream to the light of his poetry. We can say that his politics are not his poetry even though his poetry is filled with politics. Pound's work is, at times, hard to love.

Even Pound's love life is not without debate. But what remains apart from this controversy is Pound's effect upon literature and poetry. His association with other influential poets of the 20th century remains unrivaled.

Robert Frost, a poet closely linked with Pound, writes that a poem "ends in wisdom ... a clarification of life ... a momentary stay against confusion" (Frost 11), and is testimony to the compelling enchantment and power that writers find in words—arranged "correctly;" they can bring order to chaos and clarity to confusion. Pound's poetry as seen in "Canto 74" offers that momentary stay against confusion as it, too, begins in chaos and ends in wisdom and clarity.

Frost continues in his "The Figure a Poem Makes," writing about the end of the poetic journey – the "clarification" and "stay against confusion" – the enlightened discoveries made by a writer. In the conclusion of the same essay, Frost describes the process that leads to enlightenment: "Like a piece of ice on a hot stove the poem must ride on its own melting. A poem may be worked over once it is in being, but may not be worried into being. Its most precious quality will remain its having run itself and carried away the poet with it" (12). The surprise, of course, is the discovery that the writer makes along the way about some aspect of human experience.

We learn through this poem various aspects of Pound's human experience, and like him, are carried through hell and into the light with it to see the experience of OY TIE in exile. Studying Pound's poetry, like Dante's journey through Hell, to Purgatory, and into Paradise, has been a journey of discovery – the "rose in the steel dust" (74/469). Herein these pages we can appreciate the patterns created in "Canto 74" as the "unknown beauty of the crystal's law...to have an idea more wholesome to our frail imaginings of the meaning of the Mystery of Life" (Upward 222). The art that Pound creates in exile functions on various aesthetic levels.

Pound writes rather prophetically of "two sorts of artists: the artist who moves through his art, to whom it is truly a "medium" or a means of expression; and, secondly, there is the mediumistic artist, the one who can only exist in his art..." (Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska*, 105 – 106). The paradox here is that Pound represents both; he uses his poetry as a means of expression, but because he has been dead for over

forty years he now exists only in his art and in the art that those who write of him create.

The industry surrounding the study of Pound's poetics is robust with a move towards online periodicals like *Paideuma*, hosted by the University of Maine, and *Make It New* run as an online journal by many of us⁸¹ with an interest in Pound's work. Pound's work, as he would write of it, is to "discover the truth, or a part of the truth, even before one has learned that it may not be the whole truth" (*Literary Essays*, 321). His life and his work is a contradiction in terms.

As Pound writes, the only way to study poetry "is the method of contemporary biologists, that is careful first-hand examination of the matter, and continual COMPARISON of one 'slide' or specimen with another" (*ABC of Reading*, 1934). That has been the purpose here, the examination of Pound's poetics within the lens of exile.

The influence of his exile's experience is profound for Ezra Pound. Eliot writes "His vanity requires no response / And makes a welcome of indifference" (*The Waste Land*, l. 241- 242). Eliot's character in his epic poem has some similarity with Pound in that, like the Waste Land's typist, Pound's vanity would require no response because he, "out of the dust and glare evil ... have passed over Lethe" (74/469) and into the light and beauty of immortality.

Similar to Eliot's aforementioned assertion, Pound fills a niche, like that of Keats, and there is no doubt of Pound's legacy. Ezra Pound will, if we choose to remember the art and the poetry instead of

⁸¹ I have worked as a regular contributor to this online journal, and with its Managing Editor, Roxana Preda, for several years now. Currently, I am working on a project to digitize all of Pound's 'uncollected' literary essays into a digital forum.

the ugliness, be remembered as a thing of beauty that is a joy for
ever: / Its loveliness increases; it will never / Pass into
nothingness; but still will keep (from Keats, "Endymion, Book 1").

Implication of Pound's Poetry: Works Cited

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Appendix

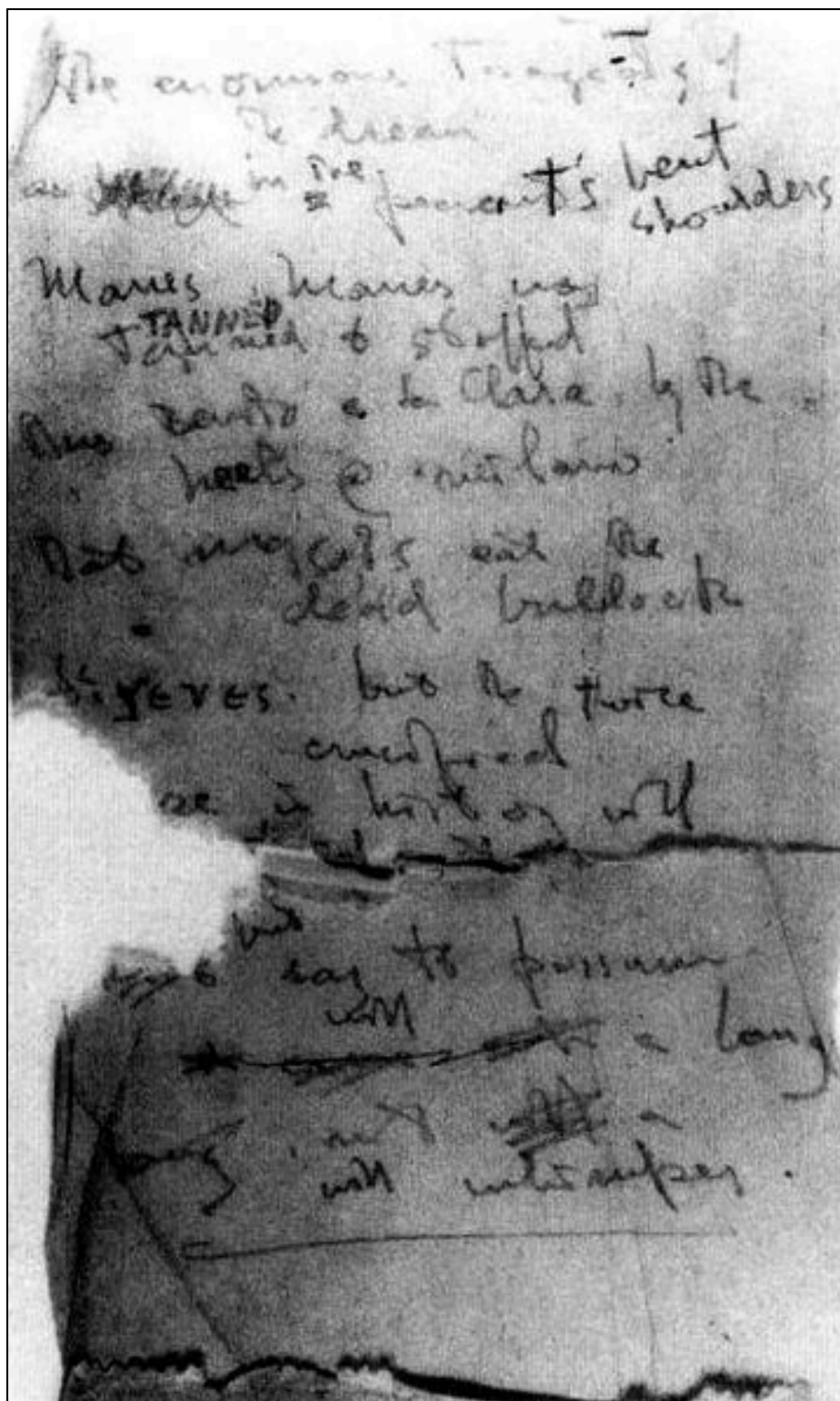


Figure 1 – Beginnings of the Pisan Cantos on Toilet paper. Image and copyright courtesy of the Ezra Pound Estate and Mary de Rachewiltz.