

"I'LL SAY ABOUT THE OTHER THINGS I HAVE SEEN THERE.." POUND READER OF DANTE "I'll tell you about the other things I have seen there..".

It is the ninth verse of Canto I of Dante's Inferno that follows the famous incipt:

'In the middle of the journey of our life I found myself in a dark forest ... "wild and strong, allegory of sin and damn and that so much frightens him because he had lost the right way, the one that leads to salvation and to describe what it was it is a difficult thing because this wild wood is impervious and difficult, and at the very thought of that the fear returns to him! It is almost as distressing as death; but to say what good he found there, the meeting with Virgil, he will talk about the other things he saw there: And what are they?

What are the other things whose Dante will tell us? Probably the three beasts from which Virgil will free him or not? Answers are in the subtitle: *Pound reader of Dante*.

This illuminating and interesting book has been written by Professor Roberta Capelli (University of Trento), a specialist in the American poet and Alice Ducati (University of Trento), edited by Edizioni dell'Orso and published in the "Medievalism" a collection of historical-literary, philological and cultural studies, founded by the author Capelli herself, which collects scientific works concerning contemporary and modern medievalism.

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The cover is made by LOME, a famous artist from Trentino, who provides us, in addition with the traditional profile portrait of the great poet, his geometric drawings rich in flowers and leaves which introduce us directly into the ideal and poetic wood on which Dante Alighieri will enter with his *Divine Comedy* through the keen and passionate eyes of Ezra Pound.

(Ezra Weston Loomis Pound October 30, 1885 Hailey-November 1,1972 Venice)¹.

Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, and grew up near Philadelphia. He completed undergraduate work at the University of Pennsylvania and earned his BA from Hamilton College, but he lived much of his adult life overseas. In his article "How I Began," collected in Literary Essays (1954), Pound claimed that as a youth he had resolved to "know more about poetry than any man living." In pursuit of this goal, he settled in London from 1908 to 1920, where he carved out a reputation for himself as a member of the literary avant-garde and a tenacious advocate of contemporary work in the arts. Through his criticism and translations, as well as in his own poetry, particularly in his Cantos, Pound explored poetic traditions from different cultures ranging from ancient Greece, China, and the continent, to current-day England and America An Introduction to the Economic Nature of the United States (1944; reprinted in Selected Prose, 1909-1965), that for 40 years "I have schooled myself, not to write an economic history of the US or any other country, but to write an epic poem which begins 'In the Dark Forest,' crosses the Purgatory of human error, and ends in the light and 'fra i maestri di color che sanno' [among the masters of those who know]." Bernstein explained that Pound's concept of an epic determined many of the characte-

Ezra Pound is widely considered one of the most influential poets of the 20th century; his contributions to modernist poetry were enormous. He was an early champion of a number of avantgarde and modernist poets who have developed important channels of intellectual and aesthetic exchange between the United States and Europe and have contributed to important literary movements such as Imagism and Vorticism. His life's work, The Cantos, remains a signal modernist epic. Its mix of history, politics, and what Pound called "the periplum," that is a point of view of one in the middle of a journey, have given countless poets permission to develop a range of poetic techniques that capture life in the midst of experience. In an introduction to the Literary Essays of Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot declared that Pound "is more responsible for the 20th-century revolution in poetry than is any other individual." Four decades later, Donald Hall reaffirmed in remarks collected in Remembering Poets that "Ezra Pound is the poet who, a thousand times more than any other man, has made modern poetry possible in English." Pound never sought, nor had, a wide reading audience during his lifetime; his technical innovations and use of unconventional poetic materials often baffled even sympathetic readers. Early in his career, Pound aroused controversy because of his aesthetic views; later, because of his political views, including his support for the Fascist government in Italy. For the greater part of the 20th century, however, Pound devoted his energies to advancing the art of poetry.

The several contributions of young researchers and famous specialists in the book highlight a new version of Dante's presence in Pound's Poetry and Life. The great poet was in fact a constant guide and reference point for the young American ever since he wrote to his mother, when he was just twenty years old, that he "preferred to study Dante and the Biblical Prophets instead of the insignificant contemporaries", up to the radio speeches of the Second World War, full of quotations from Dante to demonstrate that his war was the same as that fought by the exiled Florentine, against speculators and counterfeiters of money and language because – he insisted – certain facts, war or not, the Americans must know them.

Admiration for Dante's poem, which reaches its apex in the two cantos composed by Pound in Italian, would turn into an attempt, successful in many ways, to innervate Dante's power in the avant-garde of the early twentieth century, united by the rejection of the prissy, superficial and hypocritical moralism of the Victorian age, but without falling into provocation as an end in itself.

In the cover It is only an apparent paradox that one of the great authors of Modernism such as Ezra Pound made the voices of the poets of the past resound and relive in his verses, including Dante in particular, and should therefore also be counted among the greatest exponents of Medievalism.

But Ezra loved and taught the Middle Ages trying to research that light obscured by centuries of criticism to that era regarded as the darkest of all times.

Pound's passion for Dante, besides, is not only linked to his ideal content, but he carefully examines and highlights the sound, meaning and appearance of the words used by all medieval Italian poets. Purifying language and freeing it from dross in order to bring it back to the limpid and absolute precision of Dante and Cavalcanti; rectifying words in order to save the world: an ambitious project, which for Pound was also a life destiny based on rigour, fidelity and above all sincerity.

The precision of Dante's language combined with his evocative power make him a model and a valuable ally in re-educating readers in the true flavours marred by so much bad literature the modern one.

To Dante, Pound owes the idea and the title of his great work, the Cantos, which is a journey through Hell and Pur-

ristics of the Cantos: "the principle emotion aroused by an epic should be admiration for some distinguished achievement," rather than "the pity and fear aroused by tragedy.

gatory in the 20th century, deprived of a Paradise, disfigured and violated by greed and the thirst for profit at all costs. His poem, as he wrote in Italian in 1944, has many points in common with Dante's: "For forty years I have disciplined myself to write an epic poem that begins in the dark forest, passes through the Purgatory of human errors, and ends in the light".

Pound first read Dante in 1904 as an undergraduate at Hamilton College in upstate New York. His Dante instructor, Professor William Shepard, "Shep," admired Pound's seriousness as a student of languages. Pound's study of Dante continued for another sixty-eight years, until his death in 1972.

He continued to study Dante in 1904, following Shepard's lectures in medieval poetry, with a great deal of excitement. Pound's principal literary correspondent during that time was his mother, and whatever parental conflict he experienced as a teenager was with her. The United States had manifested considerable anti-Catholic sentiment from before its founding, and that prejudice was reinforced by the waves of Italian Catholic immigrants who were arriving on its shores, many of them living in tenements in South Philadelphia.

Pound's parents, Homer and Isabel, who lived in a Philadelphia suburb, volunteered as missionaries in those slums, trying to convert the Italians to their Presbyterian version of Christianity.

Of course there was an American Dante movement in New England centered on Boston. Longfellow was the first instructor of Dante at Harvard, starting in 1836, and there was a kind of Dante club or cult in Boston in the latter part of the nineteenth century. America needed an epic and perhaps Dante might do. He had denounced the corruption of the Catholic Church and clergy.

In 2015 In Italy, regarded as the second home for Pound, was founded the Ezra Pound's Researches Centre as an Institution of the Academy of Merano which are both near the Fontana Castle where Ezra pound lived in 1958 after his detention in the psychiatric hospital of St. Elizabeths in Washington.

The Academy has promoted since the 1959 a cultural exchange among several linguistic areas and particularly between Italy and Germany and it is directed by Ralf Lüfter, who was also the scientific head of the first conference of December 2016 devoted to Pound reader of Dante, together with Professor Roberta Capelliwho wrote the premise (Lüfter) and the introduction (Capelli) of the book "I'll Say About The

Other Things I Have Seen There.."Pound Reader Of Dante.

It is a sort of collection and the result of the first convention with the participation of some of the most important names in the Italian and international panorama of Dante and Poundian studies, together with young researchers in the sector who give us an interesting investigation into the many different ways in which Pound studied, interpreted and imitated Dante, but also the many levels at which Dante's influence can be found in Pound's production.

All the eight essays of the book "I'll Say About The Other Things I Have Seen There.."

Pound Reader Of Dante focus on the importance that Pound recognized to Dante in the development of culture and literature as precursor of a civil humanism to guide society that represents a dream for Pound deeply interested at the Past but attracted by the Modernism of the beginning of Ninth century like the same authors tell us.

The relationship between Dante and Pound is continuously open and interactive and main features ad new elements could be find overall in all Pounds 'works about Dante.

This book, made up by brief essays, is a sort of collection of short stories which tell us the intimate relationship between the two poets like they were contemporary poets and not belonging to a different eras. In giving us an excellent picture of Ezra Pound 's sensibility and passion for Dante and his poetry underlined and discovered through the deep analysis of his lines compared with Dante's famous ones we can appreciate and love more Dante because we see him with Pound's eyes deeply fancied of him.

In Ezra Pound's Cantos as Sergio F. Berardini (University of Trento) reports in the first essay of the book Pound says: "I have tried to write Paradise" but to understand this, is important to define Paradise leaving from the Inferno "The Hell" passing by Purgatory. They are not physical places but mental states. The Inferno is darkness and the fall represented by the original sin done by Adamo and Eva, who closed eyes after sin, can rescue themselves coming back in the Paradise and light. Human History is just this path towards bliss and happiness trough Love.

In the canto XCI Pound in fact reminds the line 34 of Dante's Paradise: "conviene che si mova/la mente, amando " the mind should move, loving. Then love is functional to elevate our soul towards salvation even if the Inferno couldn't completely have abandoned.

Then write Paradise could mean write about love, nature, beauty and beauty has been created by God, after buried by men, then men have to bring to light beauty, to discover it again. This means writing Paradise and it is not absolutely easy. Like the journey of a "farfalla "butterfly concluded by its sons, Pound found out the sense of beauty and how write paradise leaving us the inheritance to come back in Paradise.

In this essay the author makes us to understand actually the greatness of the Dante's Paradise with words of Pound who has tried to write it again but this implies a particular effort that is a journey inside ourselves and our ability to love. To write Paradise then we have to reach it before, through love and the poet is a man with a mind able to convey us the natural beauty of universe which already exists and poet must only bring it in light.

An exemplary reflection on the social humanism so longed for by Pound and on two subjects very dear to him, money and injustice, is provided by the author Caterina Ricciardi (Università Roma Tre) in the second chapter of the book entitled "Falseggiando" (falsifying) Dante in Canto XXXVIII of Paradise in verses 118, 119; "il suol che sovra Senna /induce, falseggiando la moneta" (the soil that overtakes the Seine / induces, falsifying money). Pound speaks of the corruption of the modern powers of the earth that will soon lead to his shipwreck, following the same method used by Dante who in his Canto XIX of Paradise makes a list of governors who misgoverned their people. The fall of Europe and America, desolate lands as also seen by T.S. Eliot, is foreshadowed by Pound through a moment of light and illumination, the epiphany, a technique very dear to modern writers, given by divine love and the light of divine wisdom seen by Dante and of which he speaks in verses 16-19 of Canto XXVIII of Paradise².

Therefore, the Supreme Poet is for the American poet a luminous *viaticum* that guides and warns him, a Virgil of the twentieth century, in a sort of historical courses and recourses that Pound duly takes into account. For this reason,

Both Dante and Pound had realized that a fair distribution of wealth prevents wars between nations as well as social tensions within a state. According to Pound, those who held political power in the United States were the descendants and ideal heirs of those who, out of greed, had betrayed the original economic principles on which the Confederation had been founded at the time of Presidents Adams and Jefferson. Pound thus attacks, first and foremost, Alexander Hamilton, the founder of the Bank of America in imitation of the Bank of England: he saw this as the beginning of all unproductive speculation, useless except for the speculators themselves who, through their alchemy, made a financial profit out of it.

as a good scholar of Romance philology, he historicizes the figure of Dante, contextualizing it and above all considering and re-evaluating its precursors.

This is what Luca Morlino (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun) points out in his contribution to the book "With joy of Spirit": Pound's Saint Francis as a viaticum to Dante."

For Morlino, Pound as a reader of Dante means Pound as a reader of Dante's age and of his precursors. And one of his most significant precursors is surely St Francis of Assisi who praises the Lord and his creatures in the famous Canticle of the Sun. The work was written in the Languedoc language, the mother tongue of poetry and for St Francis the language of the mother. It was translated, albeit in a non-canonical form and not always faithful to the literary text, by Pound because he considered it necessary for understanding the Divine Comedy as reported in his work on the pre-Renaissance literature of Latin Europe, The Spirit of Romance.

The Spirit of Romance is equivalent to "the Joy of the Spirit", that is, the joy of the Provençal troubadours who, with their musical and lively poetry, which is also prayer, sang of love like Saint Francis, who is therefore considered a troubadour who sings of the love of love, Christian love and for a different Madame, or Madonna, the Virgin of virgins.

We must be grateful to Ezra Pound who revalued and circulated in America and Europe the classics of Romance literature and Italian literature, which he loved, translated and commented on, reviving Dante as the absolute master of poetry after Petrarch and Boccaccio, about whom he observed: "to the art of poetry they bring nothing of distinction" (Pound 2005 a:166.)

the "Sommo Poeta" (Great Poet) Dante, on the contrary, was the master in the art of making verses and the school book for anyone who wants to study the art of metrics is "De vulgari eloquentia" of which Ezra Pound was a reader and admirer.

The strong presence of *De vulgari eloquentia* in Pound's work, which he assures to be on multiple issues, is noted by Lorenzo Fabiani in the fourth essay of the collection Pound reader of Dante where he highlights the historical-literary and rhetorical-formal aspects.

Pound himself, a traveller at the age of 27, wrote that "Dante served me as a Baedeker in Provence", carrying in his pocket, in addition to the real guide that he appoints in order to follow a real itinerary, another book studied with annotations and notes entitled "De vulgari eloquentia" as a

guide for a mental journey.

A full immersion to fully understand the poetry of the Provençal troubadours also through the places ("way of the land") that framed their verses.

It is in the work Carta da Visita (Visit's Paper), written 30 years after the journey to Provence, that Pound indicates The *De Vulgari Eloquentia* as the ideal guide for a poetic training path that he will deepen at the University.

Henry Chaytor in his book the Trobaudours of Dante used *De vulgari eloquentia* as a textbook, appreciating Dante's aesthetic and critical sense born of practice. In the same way Pound considers it an indispensable technical treatise, as well as Romance poetry characterized by complex metrical forms where the right balance between rhythm, the arrangement of rhymes and their musicality allows one to master the art of poetry. In strictly formal terms, Pound showed his preference for the *sestina* as a very complex form and that attempting to write it was the threshold to artistic maturity.

Artistic maturity which Pound has fruitfully used like "Italian poet under the Aegis of Dante"

as reported by Furio Brugnolo (University of Padua) in the fifth essay of the book.

Pound often used Italian language for prose writings but as regard poetry only with Cantos LXXII e LXXIII, written in Rapallo during the Word war II considered a great example of the epic, fascist epic in Italian Literature of 20th century in balance with the Provencal features and Dante's epos in the Commedia. They are strongly marked by a s Dantesque structure permeated by his mood at textual, syntactic and metrical levels with dream vision and conversations with souls and ghosts using sometime the same vocabulary (né...né, neither, new word formations, popular language, repetitions)

But what is interesting more than imitation is the assimilation of a dantesque style, digested and which has actualized and revivificated Dante even if he is close to futurism and Marinetti who Pound mentions as a ghost, dead only few weeks ago and the fascist ideology.

Brugnolo puts in evidence that Since Pound wasn't Italian tried to write "as Dante did" because he didn't have the same inhibitions and inferiority complex which have had other Italian poets towards Dante and besides speaks about Italy not as the actual Italy but as" the framework of his own daydreaming "(E. Montale) that is "to give poetry back to history ..." that is also a utopia.

Arnaldo Di Benedetto (literary critic, University of Tu-

2015(Marsilio,), an important and precise volume because it finally reconstructs the physiognomy of a book dreamed The author reviews a series of personal memories of Pound, mentioning his daughter Mary, an Italian and English-language writer, whose book "Discretions" he mentions, as well as some of the American poet's fundamental works, such as" A Lume spento ", with its Italian and purely Dantean title, which he considers to be the pinnacle of

his poetry, and the Spirit of Romance, a collection of essays on Provençal poets. As a critic he condemned Milton and his decorative poetry, and among the Italians he considered only Giacomo Leopardi worthy of reading after Dante, who was overshadowed for a while by Petrarch, but was energetically relaunched by T.S. Eliot and Pound himself in the twentieth century. He revealed how his relationship with Dante was rooted in him since his ancestors by one of his maternal relatives who was a poet and translated the Comedy for the first time in America and founded the Dante Club, which has now become the Dante Alighieri Society of Cambridge,

rin) in the next essay the Scheiwiller and Pound, Pound and Dante(with not dantesque ending) wites about the intellectual relations between Pound and the Italian publisher Vanni Scheiwiller who had promoted the plea to liberate Pound from the hospital St. Elizabeths in Washington involving a

lot of international writers. The long association between Pound and Scheiwiller is linked overall at the edition – never realized – of a collection of Pound's essays centered on Dante, which will see the light with Lorenzo Fabiani e Corrado Bologna authors who write Dante of Poundonly in the

up by Pound and Scheiwiller since 1954.

Massachusetts.

In conclusion, Di Benedetto tells us that he saw Pound for the last time in Milan, at Vanni Scheiwiller's house, together with Giovanni Giudici, a Ligurian poet whose dossier he signed with Mauberley's translation, a poem included in the essay: "I was looking at them up there" in which Pound recalls the cage in which he was imprisoned in Pisa in 1945.

With regard to T.S. Eliot mentioned several times in this review, the book contains a specific essay edited by Stefano Maria Casella (IULM University) entitled "de la loro schiera"::Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, critics and poets on Dante.

The author compares Pound and Eliot with Dante as critics and poets, although their production is rich in interconnections, similarities, analogies and influences, can be considered synchronous activities, to "say of the other things I found there" paraphrasing the title but to deal with the "good" that I found there to see and understand and to find a moral lesson for then act and "where" you have to turn to get it.

Both Pound and Eliot "met" Dante who therefore "appeared" to two who were on the way" already in their hometowns where the cult of Dante was widespread and in their poetic and critical beginnings of evident influence from Dante.

In Pound, in addition to "A lume spento", which is clearly Dantean and where the influence of R. Browining and his dramatic monologue from his work "Casa Guidi" also appears, it is significant to note that in The Spirit of Romance, chapter XII is entitled DANTE, who is considered "the master" from the very first verses, while Eliot dedicated his first two essays to Dante, naming the Sacred Wood in 1920 DANTE.

The two ITALIAN CANTOS, LXXII and LXXIII, written in Italian, where his competence and linguistic mastery shine through, bring him closer to the master because he uses his own language. Moreover, Pound had planned to write the Paradiso in Italian, but was unable to complete it because he fell into his own personal hell, which everyone knows.

In Dante's poetry Eliot appreciates and shares and comments on, as if to comment on himself, almost tending to self-justify, the coexistence of poetry with the philosophy that he himself loved and had studied, and the sense of punishment after sin and the renunciation of earthly affections for the celestial conquest, the emotional, intellectual and spiritual spectrum of which was excellently expressed with Dante's typical allegory.

Even the coexistence of ugliness and beauty in Dante's poetry was considered a mastery representing Inferno and Paradiso, considered by Eliot to be simpler canticles and more popular for readers than Purgatory, which was considered more difficult because damnation and salvation are more exciting than purgation.

Little Gidding, What Dante Means To Me are essential steps in the footsteps of the master as is The Waste Land where Eliot admits that he imitated Dante by trying to make the third rhyme without rhyming, while in Four Quartets we have the rewriting of Dante's encounter with Brunetto Latini.

About Dante in What Dante Means To Me Eliot wrote

"... of the very few poets of similar stature there is none...".

He is a classical poet because"...poet should be the servant of language rather than the master of it...". "a really SUPREME poet (who) makes poetry also more difficult for his successors".

At the end of the essay, the author states, provisionally, because the theme needs to be deepened, that both Pound and Eliot, although they had no guides, unlike Dante who had Virgil, Beatrice and St. Bernard, in their poetic and Dantean journey can be considered, and I quote, "an authentic testimony in favour of the world that lives badly" that is the wasteland in which modern man lives.

Freeing the Western mind from the superstructures that suffocate it is the founding purpose of Pound's work, of which Dante is the exemplary link, which is highlighted in the criticism that the American poet formulates and constructs for medieval culture inclined to abstractions and their Aristotelian roots linked to theology and the idea of a single, immobile God, both with Dante's texts and therefore with Dante but also beyond Dante.

"Ezra Pound beyond Dante, with Dante" is the concluding essay of this book edited by Maria Luisa Ardizzone, an expert in medieval studies and lecturer in Italian literature at New York University, which outlines the genesis of a method in the composition of the Comedy that, through allegory, considers the three realms beyond life, of which time is also a subjective dimension, to be mental, or rather representative of the state of souls after death rather than real places.

Thus the dead, Pound tells us, do not go to Paradise but live in Paradise, and he adds that the reward or punishment represents the kind of life that vices and virtues produce, which in the Comedy, a representation of life and not therefore of death, take shape in bodily torments that symbolize the passions of the spirit. The Comedy thus becomes a document of the life of human beings in all times and cultures.

The Cantos are to be considered a criticism of the western tradition and aim to build a new philosophical-scientific knowledge, already traced by Guido Cavalcanti in "Donna me prega", (Woman prays me) but obscured, and a world free from usury and avarice with an ethic formulated as a mirror of nature through the language of poetry or rather of its language that becomes the salvation of humanity because it is the whole of humanity that sins and lives the condition of the forest (darkness), rather than individuals.

The Comedy therefore constitutes for Pound a sort of archetype on which to build the Cantos, which resume the historical process where Dante left off, albeit in opposition to

Dante's theological knowledge, and constitute an *archive* of fragments of tradition to be saved, a cultural replacement, a new *Paideuma*, the complex ideas that draws from the past conditioning future thinking, for which we are shaped by the culture we inherit and in which we live.

A turning point came when Pound wrote the essay Machine Art, accompanied by photographs of machines and engines in cultivated fields, almost as if to underline the insufficiency of the descriptions he had written, revealing an aesthetic idea based on function and not on the contemplation of beauty, which opposed usury, which Pound condemned on the basis of Aristotle's Politics, echoing Dante, who in the Inferno considered usury and sodomy to be against nature.

The machine, on the other hand, is not against nature, but enhances its production processes thanks to the conquest of the sciences, as was also done in the 15th century by the great Leonardo, who proposed the illustration of machines, and thus the word Art takes us back to its ancient Platonic-Aristotelian meaning of Tecne, which is the engine that represents productive activity.

One of the points of arrival of Pound's criticism of Aristotelian aesthetics of contemplation alone and in favour of a pragmatic aesthetic that works is found in Rock-Drill (Epstein's sculpture) in *Cantos* LXXXV and XCV, written during his detention at St Elizabeths in Washington, where he introduces the word *techne*, the intellectual virtue of all human beings that makes them capable of constructing something through calculation and precision, as opposed to the Aristotelian word theoria.

The language used by Pound confirms his attempt to formulate Paradise by looking at the sciences, the highest form of which is ethics, identified with KUNG, that is, Confucian ethics. Paradise is therefore linked to nature, consisting of its processes of light and the sphere of the sensible, which are natural paradisiacal states, and therefore it is not otherworldly like Dante's metaphysical universe, which instead looks to theology and to an Aristotelian-Ptolemaic structural system that coincides with the Empyrean, the highest and most immobile heaven.

Pound applies the theory of *techne* to poetry, which becomes a machine-poetry that replaces rhetorical relations with productive ones. Poetry is praxis, it educates to think and do and to produce. Poetry is part of ethics and therefore can be associated with politics and opens up to new dimensions, and in this Pound is certainly a great reader of Dante, whose work still has aspects to be investigated and understood.

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