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**EZRA POUND'S  
FASCIST  
PROPAGANDA,  
1935-45**

**Matthew Feldman**





## **Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935-45**

*Also by Matthew Feldman*

*Fascism: Critical Concepts*, 5 Vols., eds. Roger Griffin with Matthew Feldman (2004)

*Beckett's Books: A Cultural History of Samuel Beckett's 'Interwar Notes'* (2006; revised paperback edition 2008)

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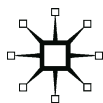
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# Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45

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*For Claire  
lovingly there,  
at each turn*

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## Preface

It is high time to start taking Ezra Pound's fascism seriously. In doing so, *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45* is driven by dual, mutually reinforcing, contentions. In turn, these are intended to appeal to two distinct scholarly constituencies, while also raising some considerations for a third. Prior to acknowledging this book's substantial intellectual debts – followed by two parts of three and four chapters, covering the periods 1935–40 and 1940–45, respectively – a foretaste of the themes and approach to follow is provided here. Most importantly, in challenging received opinion in several academic subjects, this preface briefly introduces a number of more general misconceptions addressed in this study: the fallacy of reading modernism as antithetical to fascism; of refusing to treat fascist ideology as a genuinely seductive attempt to establish a revolutionary 'third way' between capitalism and socialism in modern Europe; and derivatively, of failing to account for the commitment of intellectuals from very different backgrounds to this new 'political religion'. Many of these assumptions are projected onto the remarkable case study personified by Pound – whose 'case' remains often discussed, yet still largely misunderstood. Coloring in Pound's turn to fascist activism, accordingly, is empirically undertaken via an interpretative lens memorably characterized as "thick description" by the sociologist Clifford Geertz: "the essential task of theory building here is not to codify abstract regularities but to make thick description possible, not to generalize across cases but to generalize within them."<sup>1</sup>

Given this close focus upon Pound and his often-neglected ideological context, the methodological heavy lifting is taken up presently, rather than consistently invoked across a text much more concerned with, at last, setting the historical record straight. Given the wealth of previously neglected materials under review, this book's natural constituency is 'Pound studies', a now sizeable sub-discipline of 'modernist studies'. For too long, Pound's fascist activism has simply been dismissed as either mad or bad, the product of political naiveté or misplaced economic idealism. Some or all of these factors may apply but, in short, this misses the wood for the trees. All too often lacking in supporting evidence, this tradition will be directly countered by the archivally driven view advanced here: Pound was a committed and significant English-language strategist and producer of fascist propaganda before, and during, Europe's most destructive war. Methodologically speaking, part of the 'new historicist' turn in modernist studies, this assertion derives from an insistence upon, above all, theorizing from a position of empirical accuracy. Returning to the archives in order to narrow the horizon of literary interpretation, this approach also places heavy stress upon authorial presence and historical contextualization.

As a consequence, 'new historicist' findings are often at odds with overly "presentist" readings of modernism.<sup>2</sup> Would that all canonical modernists were multicultural, or gay-friendly and politically (if there *must* be a politics) moderate; but that was not how it was back then. Correspondingly, the self-serving conceit that modernism was somehow inured from ideological extremism leaves too many pivotal figures out of the account – from the Norwegian novelist Knut Hamsun on the revolutionary right to the Russian painter Alexander Rodchenko on the revolutionary left, amongst countless others – to justifiably conceive modernism in purely esthetic terms. Far closer to the mark, Pound's most recent biographer, Alec Marsh, has aptly intuited that, in and of itself, "Fascism is a modernist politics."<sup>3</sup> Constructing canons is one thing, understandably titling toward contemporary concerns, but care toward the shifting values of the time – even the ugly ones – remains vital as well. Moving from apoliticism in the 1920s to revolutionary politics in 1930s, Pound's trajectory was shared by literally millions in interwar Europe. Nor were artists exempted from this ideological draft. Insofar as this reflects back on Pound's contemporaneous and subsequent poetry, there is merit in Lauber's charge, to some extent surely, that Pound's ongoing sequence, *The Cantos*, turned into a "Fascist epic" during these

years. While close reading of Pound's poetry is admittedly secondary over ensuing pages, it bears noting that these neglected insights were also raised, now more than three decades ago, by a leading Poundian scholar named Massimo Bacigalupo, who described *The Cantos* as "among other things, the sacred poem of the Nazi-Fascist millennium, which mercifully never eventuated."<sup>4</sup>

The term 'sacred' above is valuable, furthermore, in highlighting another principal reason it no longer can be tenably claimed; for example, that "Pound was reluctantly a fascist. Or, better, Pound was only reluctantly political in any sense of the term."<sup>5</sup> By contrast, Pound's 'totalitarian' politicizing of anything and everything by the 1940s – from his poetry to works by Vivaldi and Confucius – in the service of Fascist propaganda is a characteristic feature of the second argument underpinning this book; in a word: belief. This explanation is precisely where the pre-eminent monograph on this period, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism*, was stopped in its otherwise trailblazing tracks, with a troubled Tim Redman declaring that Pound's frequent "reliance upon declarations of faith gives pause."<sup>6</sup> Crucially, these professions of ideological "faith" were an integral feature of radical right movements both before the watershed of 1945, and indeed since.<sup>7</sup> By placing this indispensable aspect of fascist ideology at the heart of what is, in many ways, a counterpart to Redman's brilliant survey of Pound's wartime Italian writings, this vital interpretative lens is here trained upon Pound's Anglophone propaganda for fascist movements in Britain, Italy and ultimately, war-time Germany.

Naturally enough, this raises the question of precisely what fascism 'is' – the genesis of the burgeoning field of 'fascist studies', representing another intended readership of this work. As with all ideological constructions, the quest for identifiable, core features of fascist ideology (such as hyper-nationalism and the cult of the leader) remains open to lively debate. A generation ago Roger Griffin, a leading theorist of generic fascism, nonetheless discerned a "new consensus" amongst historians and political scientists as to the so-called "fascist minimum", centering upon a spiritual rebirth of the nation from decadence, especially through "the regeneration (palingenesis) of both the political culture and the social and ethical culture underpinning it."<sup>8</sup> In contributing to this debate, I have elsewhere argued that fascism's "political faith", typically mapping onto traditional Christian practices, can be usefully understood as a defining feature of fascist ideology:

Since it first emerged in the wake of World War One, fascism can be profitably conceptualised as a *specifically modern form of secular ‘millenarianism’ constructed culturally and politically, not religiously, as a revolutionary movement centring upon the ‘renaissance’ of a given people (whether perceived nationally, ethnically, culturally, or religiously) through the total reordering of all perceivedly ‘pure’ collective energies towards a realisable utopia*; an ideological core implacably hostile to democratic representation and socialist materialism, equality and individualism, in addition to any specific enemies viewed as alien or oppositional to such a programme.<sup>9</sup>

The relevance of ‘political religion’ theory to interpretations of fascism is now perceived as so integral that, in previously marginalizing the role of the sacred in fascist ideology, Griffin tellingly admitted in 2008: “The simple answer is that I was wrong!” Like most scholars of fascism, he has come to accept the pivotal role of ‘political religion’ as a “secular, state religion to encourage the mass experience of national rebirth from decadence and collapse. Understood in this way, ‘political religion’ becomes an indispensable concept for understanding interwar fascism.”<sup>10</sup> That fascism’s ‘sacralization of politics’ has moved to the forefront of historical interpretation is largely due to the efforts of Emilio Gentile, who has long, and increasingly influentially, argued that Mussolini’s “Fascism was the first nationalist totalitarian movement that fully displayed the characteristics of a political religion, as it indeed proclaimed itself to be”:

There was an inherent and necessary link in [F]ascism between the totalitarian will to conquer the monopoly of political power and the way in the which it conceived its own ideology as a fundamentalist and dogmatic religion that could not tolerate the coexistence of other political convictions and demanded that Italians believe in its myths and celebrate its rituals.<sup>11</sup>

Elsewhere, Gentile has delimited these characteristics as the primacy of faith and myth in the political arena; guided by the “consecrated” figure of Mussolini; alongside “*ethical commandments*” and a “*political liturgy*”, extending to “a system of beliefs, myths, rituals, and symbols that deified the nation and state and celebrated the personality cult of ‘Il Duce’ as a living myth.”<sup>12</sup> Following his lead, there is now a rich and nuanced historiography on the palpable role played by political faith in the development of Italian Fascism.<sup>13</sup> The usefulness of viewing fascist ideology as a sacralization of politics is further underscored by a recent work on daily life in interwar Venice, rightly arguing that Mussolini’s Italy “should be seen, and indeed saw itself, as a kind of political religion

capable of ‘making Italians’ and binding individuals to the nation and to Fascism [...] the regime undoubtedly constructed a liturgy based on notions of blood, duty and sacrifice, a set of rituals that mimicked or overlaid key religious rites”.<sup>14</sup>

Characteristically, as Mussolini immodestly phrased this ‘anthropological revolution’ in his official autobiography: “It was necessary to lay the foundation of a new civilization.”<sup>15</sup> Yet this was more than rhetoric. It was part of a socio-political, revolutionary attempt to overcome perceived decadence by seeking to create literally ‘new men’ of action and faith: warrior-priests with the will to turn myth into reality and establish a secular utopia; or in Pound’s words, a “paradiso terrestre”.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, Ferris and others have consistently noted that Fascism’s “new civilization” was deliberately and pervasively overlaid upon Christian foundations. In the context of Mussolini’s Italy, as John Pollard recently concluded, this meant that Fascism’s ‘political religion’ only made sense against the backdrop of a Roman Catholic faith and culture:

If the PNF adopted the trappings of religion – credo, litanies, commandments, and rituals – it was not in order to fill a secular void in Italian society but because it made the movement and the regime more comprehensible and acceptable to the average Italian who was steeped in a living and vibrant *Catholic* culture. In a country which was 99% Catholic and the seat of the Papacy, there was never the remotest possibility that Fascism could in any sense replace Catholicism as the national religion, despite Mussolini’s many claims to the contrary.<sup>17</sup>

Fascist liturgy may have appeared to some contrived or even laughable, and Mussolini little more than a posturing buffoon, but for millions of devoted Italians adherence to Il Duce, the ‘Pope of Fascism’, betrayed every phenomenological sign of genuine religiosity. That countless Blackshirts attending Mass on Sundays also, and simultaneously, evangelized for Mussolini’s Fascism helps to further illuminate that one ‘faith’ was not, in practice, exclusive of another. In this case, rather, Catholicism provided an indispensable liturgical framework for Italian Fascism. Paeans to a ‘secular faith’ in Fascist Italy, in short, were sustained and deliberate attempts to deify both state and leader as the mythic embodiments of a regenerated civilization – one which, in the Italian context, necessarily relied upon Catholic traditions and rituals for legitimacy.

Pound’s veneration for Mussolini only starts to make sense, then, against the unmistakable backdrop of Fascism’s ‘political faith’. Far from

unique in his engagement with an essential ‘cult of the leader’ in interwar fascism, for instance, the “fifty odd pieces Pound sent to the Duce between 1933 and 1945” were but a tiny fraction of the roughly 1,500 letters a day addressed to Mussolini in the mid-1930s.<sup>18</sup> Sampling these 4,227 boxes of letters in the “Segreteria particolare del Duce” archive, in addition to 199 private diaries composed during Fascism’s control over the Italian peninsula. *Fascist Voices* repeatedly emphasizes “the crucial importance of the figure of Mussolini to emotional and political engagement with the regime.”<sup>19</sup> For Christopher Duggan, “the powerful emotional cocktail that constituted the [F]ascist ‘faith’ ” meant that “the regime was able to draw itself into realms of belief that frequently went beyond the trappings of mere public display and penetrated intimate mental recesses.” Correspondingly, Fascist Italy’s “obsession with the primacy of ‘will’ and ‘faith’ ” was inscribed in many thousands of expressions of devotion and is discernable across every page of Duggan’s account, suggesting that any one of countless Fascist ‘believers’ might have expressed the same sentiments (albeit less poetically), and followed the same ideological trajectory (albeit less publicly), had they swapped places with Pound between the wars.<sup>20</sup> Even as an expatriate in Fascist Italy, Pound’s commitment to the ‘Fascist faith’ was far from idiosyncratic; it was representative. One fitting example amongst scores provided across *Fascist Voices* helps to illustrate the apostolic tendencies of twentieth-century ‘political religions’: the little-known Edgardo Suli’s “hymn to the Duce”, based on a key Catholic work by Thomas à Kempis entitled *Imitation of Mussolini*. With no trace of irony, this “holy work” praised Fascism as “the new political religion”, declaring: “You should imitate Mussolini alone” – with ‘imitation’ understood, like in *The Imitation of Christ*, as “love which invades every thought and action, sometimes so unconsciously that you are sublimated ... into perfection.”<sup>21</sup>

Finally, the attempt to “see how people living then understand world”, in a process of ‘methodological empathy’, has long been associated with the great pioneer of fascist studies, George Mosse.<sup>22</sup> Yet to my knowledge, to date no one has applied this interpretative approach to a close reading of fascist propaganda, let alone to individual propagandists. Seen from the above perspective, propaganda is not just – as “presentist” uses of the word so often signify – a byword for emotional coercion, cynicism and outright deceit. In the hands of committed believers like Pound, instead, the advancement of fascism’s political faith was intended to, first and foremost, ‘convert’ potential ideological adherents. The emphasis

upon ‘positive’ propagation rather than ‘negative’ manipulation (not, of course, in any moral sense of these terms) in this admittedly atypical case study will likewise, it is hoped, contribute to the much-needed application of ‘methodological empathy’ to the enormous body of scholarship on political propaganda, past and present. By recourse to groundbreaking historiography on ‘political religions’ in modern history, joined with an empirical reappraisal of modernist figures characterized by a ‘new historicism’, *Ezra Pound’s Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*, in this light, reveals no less than an exemplar of fascism’s propagation of ‘political faith’. As such, Pound’s fascist activism will be shown to be less an act of attempted ‘brainwashing’ than one closer to the actual etymology of the word propaganda, revealingly coined by the Catholic Church centuries ago via the *sacra congregatio christiano nomini propaganda*. Seen in this light, Pound’s fascist propaganda offers remarkable insight into the propagation of ideological faith by the devotee of a totalitarian political religion.

## Notes

- 1 Clifford Geertz, “Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture”, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (Basic Books, New York: 1973), 14.
- 2 For an excellent survey of the pitfalls of “presentism” and “historicism”, which “are bound unavoidably together”, see Dan Stone, “History and Its Discontents”, in Dan Stone, ed., *The Holocaust, Memory, and Fascism: Essays in the History of Ideas* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2013), 3.
- 3 *Ezra Pound: Critical Lives* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 106.
- 4 Massimo Bagicalupo, *The Forméd Trace: The Later Poetry of Ezra Pound* (Columbia University Press, New York: 1980), x; see also John Lauber, “Pound’s Cantos: A Fascist Epic”, *Journal of American Studies* 12/1 (1978).
- 5 Paul Morrison, *The Poetics of Fascism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot and Paul de Man* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1996), 47.
- 6 Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 47.
- 7 For discussions of Pound’s engagement with postwar fascism, see my “Ezra Pound’s Political Faith from First to Second Wave Fascism; or ‘It is 1956 Fascism’”, *Modernism, Christianity and the Apocalypse*, eds., Erik Tønning, Matthew Feldman, with Henry Mead (Leiden, Brill: in press); and Alex Houen, “Ezra Pound: Anti-Semitism, Segregationism, and the ‘Arsenal of Live Thought’”, *Terrorism and Modern Literature* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2002).

- 8 Roger Griffin, "Introduction", *Fascism: Critical Concepts*, 5 volumes, eds., Roger Griffin with Matthew Feldman (Routledge, London: 2004), vol. I, 6. On debates over the 'fascist minimum' see also Roger Griffin, ed., *International Fascism: Theories, Causes and the "New Consensus"* (Hodder, London: 1998); Aristotle Kallis, ed., *Fascism: A Reader* (Routledge, London: 2001); recently, António Costa Pinto, ed., *Rethinking the Nature of Fascism: Comparative Perspectives*, ed., António Costa Pinto (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2011), Part 1.
- 9 "Editorial Introduction", *A Fascist Century*, ed., Matthew Feldman (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2008), xviii; italics in original.
- 10 "The Fascination of Fascism: A Concluding Interview with Roger Griffin", *ibid.*, 208.
- 11 Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton University Press, Oxford: 2006), 33.
- 12 Emilio Gentile, "The Sacralization of Politics", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 1/1 (2000), 22; italics in original. More recently, see Hans Maier, ed., *Totalitarianism and Political Religions*, 3 volumes (Routledge, London: 2001, 2003); and Richard Shorten, "The Status of Ideology in the Return of Political Religion Theory", *Journal of Political Ideologies* 12/2 (2007).
- 13 See, for example, Marla Stone, "Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution", *Journal of Contemporary History* 28/2 (1993); Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy* (University of California Press, Oxford: 1997); Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Maternities: Italy, 1922–1945* (University of California Press, London: 2001); and Tracy H. Koon, "The Kingdom of the Word", reprinted in Griffin with Feldman, eds., *Fascism*, vol. IV. Rejoinders include Tobias Abse, "Italian Fascism: Political Religion, Political Ritual or Political Spectacle? Emilio Gentile and his Critics", *South European Society and Politics* 3/2 (1998); and David Roberts, "Fascism, Modernism and the Quest for an Alternative Modernity", *Patterns of Prejudice* 43/1 (2009).
- 14 Kate Ferris, *Everyday Life in Fascist Venice, 1929–1940* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2012), 13.
- 15 Mussolini's Autobiography, cited in Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2007), 220.
- 16 Ezra Pound, "Notes for CXVII et seq", *The Cantos* (Faber, London: 1998), 816.
- 17 John Pollard (2008), "Clerical Fascism: Context, Overview and Conclusion", *Clerical Fascism in Interwar Europe*, eds., Matthew Feldman and Marius Turda, with Tudor Georgescu (Routledge, London: 2008), 232.
- 18 David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), 317. See also *Charisma and Fascism*, eds., António Costa Pinto, Roger Eatwell, and Stein Ugelvik Larson (Routledge, London: 2006), esp. "Part 2. The Leaders".



- 19 Christopher Duggan, *Fascist Voices: An Intimate History of Mussolini's Italy* (Bodley Head, London: 2012), xi, xvii.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 210–211, 321.
- 21 Edgardo Sulis, cited in *ibid.*, 235.
- 22 George Mosse, cited and described in “2. Mosse and Fascism”, *What History Tells: George L. Mosse and the Culture of Modern Europe*, eds., Stanley Payne, David J. Sorkin, and John S. Tortorice (University of Wisconsin Press, London: 2004), 45 and 111, respectively.

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# Part I

## Pound's Fascist Conversion



# 1

## Introduction

**Abstract:** *This chapter sets out the main themes, archival materials and socio-political context bearing upon Ezra Pound's embrace of fascist ideology in the mid-1930s. It also identifies some of the historical context underpinning Pound's propaganda for fascism in Britain, Italy and, ultimately, Nazi Germany, while also providing an overview of the 'new historicist' methodology to be pursued across Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45.*

Feldman, Matthew. *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.  
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Any judgment of MUSSOLINI will be in a measure an act of faith, it will depend on what you *believe* the man means, what you believe that he wants to accomplish.

I don't believe any estimate of Mussolini will be valid unless it *starts* from his passion for construction. Treat him as *artifex* and all the details fall into place.

—Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (1935)

That is what the jew is THERE to produce, war and more war between goyim/

UNTIL

UNTIL oh UNTIL all the goyim simultaneously wake up to the cause of the trouble and determine to wipe out the root cause of war, namely YIDDERY [...] Why not have the OPEN war against the war-causers before annihilating all other races; or reducing ALL other races to slaves, and the jew's slaves Roosevelt and Churchill are so obligingly reducing the British and Americans to compulsory slaughter, or compulsory labour; or compulsorily having their houses destroyed in reprisals ...

Pound, "Corpses of Course", 26 January 1945'

This short study examines the changing character of Ezra Pound's Anglophone fascist propaganda between 1935 and 1945. The expression of Pound's political faith during these years, bookended by the introductory epigraphs above, witnessed a slide in emphasis from the expression of fascism as "construction" and spiritual regeneration in the 1930s to conspiratorial anti-Semitism and pro-Axis fanaticism by the end of World War II. As this suggests, the violent march of fascist movements in these years provides a crucial trajectory for Pound's extensive propaganda efforts. Yet that said, even before embracing fascist ideology, like so many millions of others in the wake of World War I, Pound's views were radicalized by momentous international events in Europe. Accordingly, this introduction sets out an all-too-often neglected contextualization of Pound's voluminous propaganda over this decade. Bringing a range of primary and secondary sources into dialogue with his turn toward fascism (used here with a small 'f' to denote the generic ideology), implied throughout is that, given the seductions of interwar fascist 'belief', even the most idiosyncratic poet

could become a mainstream propagandist for the revolutionary political faith of fascism.

Long recognized as a quintessential modernist and composer of some of the twentieth century's most admired verse, during these years Pound nonetheless turned his literary talents to composing propaganda for, in particular, the British Union of Fascists; the Partito Nazionale Fascista; and ultimately, the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (hereafter BUF, PNF and NSDAP, respectively). Since then, the very unlikelihood of such a turn of events may be one explanation why scholars and critics have but scratched the surface of Pound's activism for European fascist movements. In short, the time has come to empirically drill down into Pound's archives and historical environment deeper than heretofore. In revealing a range of previously overlooked materials, this book proposes a new view of Pound – new both to general readers and to specialists in 'Pound studies' alike – as a significant propaganda producer and strategist for fascist movements between summer 1935 and his arrest for treason in spring 1945. Put another way, the arc of Pound's propaganda descended from free and self-subsidized publicism in the mid-1930s, endorsing fascism in broadly aesthetic and economic terms, to earning his living by broadcasting pro-Nazi anti-Semitism by the final war years – exemplified by the rhetoric from 26 January 1945 above, written only a day before the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Simply put: what happened?

For something seismic did indeed take place in Pound's worldview. This is indicated by recently released British government papers on Pound's propaganda: two files compiled by MI-5 released to The National Archives in November 2002, covering fully 54 years and concluding only with obituaries clipped in the wake of Pound's 1972 death. At the beginning of the file in December 1918, MI-5 stated that "there is no ground to regard the above with suspicion, and his sentiments are pro-ally." Yet by the mid-1930s, the British secret service were systematically opening Pound's mail to Britain; most notably, to Carlo Camagna, editor of the London-based *British-Italian Bulletin*. His intelligence file reported that, following the outbreak of World War II and the interning of Britain's leading fascists from 22 May 1940 following the interrogation of another ideologue to be encountered below, Alexander Raven Thomson, he was named a principal supplier of information to the BUF from abroad.<sup>2</sup> By the next year, wartime British listening stations were transcribing scores of Pound's broadcasts on behalf of Fascist Italy, recording titles

like “Independence Day for Europe” and “The Fascist State.”<sup>3</sup> A separate War Office file then commences with Pound’s US indictment for treason in 1943, “based on his vicious Anti-American broadcasts from ROME which began in 1940 [...] This headquarters will be notified at once should POUND be taken into custody.” As the ensuing flurry of military communiqués make clear, Pound was interned near Pisa, in the British controlled zone, between early May and late November 1945 – before being sent to Washington D.C. for trial, a successful insanity hearing and, subsequently, more than a dozen years’ institutionalization at St. Elizabeth’s asylum.<sup>4</sup>

These sizeable British deposits regarding what military authorities were already describing as the ‘Pound Case’ in 1945 all merit closer scrutiny. In the interests of concision – heavily bearing upon this study throughout – however, only a two-page document from the British archives demands further quotation at the outset. Shortly following his arrest and extensive interrogation by hot-on-the-trail FBI agent Frank Lawrence Amprim, Pound made the following declaration on V-E Day, 8 May 1945:

I am not anti-Semitic, and I distinguish between the Jewish usurer and the Jew who does an honest day’s work for a living.

Hitler and Mussolini were simple men from the country. I think that Hitler was a Saint, and wanted nothing for himself. I think that he was fooled into anti-Semitism and it ruined him. That was his mistake. When you see the “mess” that Italy gets into by “bumping off” Mussolini, you will see why someone could believe in some of his efforts.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly revealed in a surprising newspaper interview given on the same day, Pound compared Hitler with Joan of Arc, declaring: “Like many martyrs, he held extreme views.”<sup>6</sup> This sacralized view of the Axis leaders, so in keeping with approaches to fascism as a political religion, had been a staple of Pound’s propaganda since his only meeting with Mussolini a dozen years earlier. More to the point, as international relations plummeted in the later 1930s and into the war-torn 1940s in Europe, Pound’s commitment to the Axis cause only continued to intensify – with his undeviating defense of the ‘infallible’ Mussolini, and later Hitler, as will be shown, best explicable in terms of fascism’s deliberately cultivated ‘secular faith’. Generally speaking, of course, things can always turn out differently than they actually did; historical actors have an agency, and events a contingency, which belies some of the more assured



retrospective accounts of history. Thus when drilling down deeply into Pound's motives and circumstances, it is important to remember that his scope for action was limited by the outbreak of World War II, insofar as he was wholly sutured to Mussolini and the Fascist regime by then. In short, Pound's devotion to what he understood to be the political faith of fascism meant that his personal fate was inextricably bound up with the Axis.

Considering his V-E day statements and countless other examples from the preceding decade, the guiding explanation of Pound's commitment pursued here – reinforced by propaganda texts, broadcasts, payments, correspondence and position papers – offers an overlooked motivation for his remarkably extensive collaboration with fascism: belief. He took fascist ideology seriously, and in return was taken seriously by leading activists in several far-right movements. Providing a key historical backdrop, moreover, Pound demonstrably marched in lockstep with key points of Italian Fascist policy – from Benito Mussolini's 1932 decennial celebrations to the final defeat of the Axis. In revisiting this misjudged case of a leading modernist propagating the 'political faith' of fascist ideology, it will be argued here that, although eccentric (as was always his wont), Pound's belief in fascist ideology was no mere aberration or fall into madness. Pound's proselytizing was both sincere and freely undertaken; it was, equally, historically consequential and explicable theoretically. With respect to the latter, in adopting the lens of 'political religion' theory, furthermore, Pound's ideological devotion to fascism will be shown to be in close keeping with self-understandings of fascist praxis at the time, from ideologues in Britain to many of the previously-unseen diaries by everyday Italians employed in Christopher Duggan's brilliant *Fascist Voices*: "For me he [Mussolini] was 'the man of Providence,' the culmination of Italy's history, the person in whom that history finds its consummation and meaning. He was the sun of my life."<sup>7</sup>

In pursuing these points, the ensuing six sections empirically recount Pound's propaganda activities for fascism: first in an unofficial and unpaid capacity for various revolutionary right movements from 1935 to 1940; then in terms of paid work for fascist regimes, initially for Mussolini's Fascists, and then, as shown in conclusion section, for the Nazi-satellite Salò Republic between late 1943 and the end of World War II. Before turning to these years, however, the next section sets out a backdrop for Pound's embrace of fascist ideology. Thereafter, neglected publications for fascist movements and all manner of files from the Ezra

Pound Papers at Yale's Beinecke Library take pride of place in providing several major revisions to established wisdom on Pound's Anglophone propaganda. These materials are supplemented by a 1,518-page FBI file and Department of Justice files, alongside a generous helping of relevant critical studies. Together, these texts collectively reinforce the sense that, with few exceptions, critics have not taken Pound's engagement with fascism seriously. This is manifested by the serial inaccuracies encountered in the following sections; but still more so, is evident in persisting accounts stressing either Pound's propagandistic incomprehensibility or political naivety more generally – views long since set out by Wyndham Lewis' judgment of Pound's evangelistic outlook making him a “revolutionary simpleton” in 1927, or Gertrude Stein's verbal brush-off of Pound as a “village explainer” in 1933.<sup>8</sup> In contesting these established views on propaganda by emphasizing Pound's evangelizing not just for modernist art but “modernist” politics as well, this study builds upon the intellectual and methodological framework used to such powerful effect by the principal book in this area to date, Tim Redman's 1991 *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism*, which argued that “Pound's activity on behalf of Italian [F]ascism needs to be understood historically and with a great deal of specificity.”<sup>9</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (Stanley Nott, London: 1936 [1935]), 33–34; and Pound, “Anon: ‘Corpses of Course’: Typescript”, 26 January 1945, “Ezra Pound Papers”, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Library, YCAL MSS 43, 130/5425.
- 2 MI-5 files on Ezra Pound, The National Archives, KV2/875, 31a.
- 3 World War II Summary of World Broadcasts, Section 3B, Italy Abroad, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Caversham, 7 July and 15 November 1941, respectively.
- 4 War Office cable, 19 September 1943, The National Archives files on Ezra Pound, WO 204/12602; hereafter *TNA/WO*, 1a. For a good overview of Pound's 1945 incarceration and subsequent institutionalization, see Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1970), 408–444; hereafter *Stock/LEP*.
- 5 Pound's typescript declaration to FBI interrogators, 8 May 1945, *TNA/WO*, 13a and 13b; available online at: [casarrubea.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/pound-depositione-8-maggio-1945.pdf](http://casarrubea.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/pound-depositione-8-maggio-1945.pdf). See also a longer, more formal

- statement of 6 May 1945 contained in *TNA/WO*, 13c–13h, versions of which are reproduced by Noel Stock in *Helix* 13/14 (1983), 129–132; Richard Sieburth, “Ezra Pound: Confession”, *The Paris Review* 128 (1993), 194–206; and Omar S. Pound, Robert E. Spoo, and Dorothy Pound, eds., *Ezra and Dorothy Pound: Letters in Captivity, 1945–1946* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1999), 59–68.
- 6 Pound, interview with Edd Johnson, 8 May 1945, partially reprinted in *Stock/LEP*, 407.
- 7 Zelmira Marazio cited in Christopher Duggan, *Fascist Voices: An Intimate History of Mussolini's Italy* (Bodley Head, London: 2012), 189.
- 8 For Wyndham Lewis' phrase in *Time and Western Man*, and that of Gertrude Stein in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* six years later, see Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos and Steven Adams, eds., *The Ezra Pound Encyclopedia* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 2005), 180 and 281, respectively.
- 9 Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), 10.; hereafter Redman/EPIF.

# 2

## Approaching Pound's Fascism: Development of an Ideologue

**Abstract:** *This chapter analyzes some of the longer-term drivers for Pound's turn toward European fascism between the wars, especially with respect to his artistic experiences and interest in 'social credit' economics. Critical discussions of Pound's work on the 'Malatesta Cantos' is presented for its influence upon his later politics, as is his Fascist 'conversion' during winter 1932–33 – culminating with his only meeting with Mussolini on 30 January 1933 – reflected in his 1935 (but written in February 1933) study, Jefferson and/or Mussolini.*

Feldman, Matthew. *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

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'Ma qvesto,'

said the Boss, 'divertente.'

Catching the point before the aesthetes had got there;

Having drained off the muck by Vada

From the marshes, by Circeo, where no one else wd. have drained it.

Waited 2000 years, ate grain from the marshes;

Water supply for ten million, another one million 'vani'

That is rooms for people to live in.

XI of our era.

Pound, "Canto XVI", *The Cantos* (1934)<sup>1</sup>

Before analyzing manifestations of Pound's political faith between 1935 and 1945, several leading explanations for what led him to initially embrace fascist ideology merit revisiting. While his populist American background may have played some role in his later support for the trans-class ideology of fascism, surely more important was an oft-cited radical temperament.<sup>2</sup> Denouncing the decadence of *belle époque* culture upon his August 1908 arrival in London, it was not long before his artistic commitment to overthrowing the recent past placed him amongst the 'verse revolutionaries' on the eve of the Great War, attempting to sweep away the debris of a moribund system and effect a clean break with their immediate artistic predecessors.<sup>3</sup>

In Vincent Sherry's characterization, just this kind of "radical modernism" marked out Pound's war against convention, first for Imagism and then for Vorticism – manifested in everything from his dress sense to his voluminous correspondence.<sup>4</sup> Even in these pre-war years Pound was a "solitary volcano", in W.B. Yeats's memorable phrase.<sup>5</sup> Advertising the aesthetically uncompromising journal *Blast* in spring 1914, Pound, neither a friend of Christianity nor a foe of hyperbole, proclaimed its coming marked the "End of the Christian Era".<sup>6</sup>

Even prior to the murderous caesura of the Great War, Pound's "cultural missionary work" had thus earned him the reputation as a chief sloganeer and promoter of a modern movement calling for no less than "general revolution in all the arts."<sup>7</sup> Were the term 'propaganda' not employed narrowly here as ideologically advocating the beliefs of an established institution – which the diverse strands of modernism never achieved, but are instead better viewed as "a climate of thought, feeling and opinion" – it might be observed that Pound had long been

a 'propagandist' for esthetic modernism.<sup>8</sup> This went beyond advocating the "New Method in scholarship" as a "progenitor of modernist periodical studies" – with Pound averaging fully one journal publication per week between 1912 and 1920 – during the explosion of 'little magazines' in these years.<sup>9</sup> Being a modernist editor, *enfant terrible* and fixer (Pound's tireless promotion of diverse modernists included H.D., Robert Frost, Ernest Hemingway, Archibald MacLeish, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce and many more) meant that, in George Bornstein's recent view, Pound "perhaps did more than any other single person to help create the movement we know as modernism".<sup>10</sup> Amongst contemporary scholars, Pound is frequently cited as *the* pivotal modernist patriarch; consider, for example, Peter Gay's two criteria for modern artists in his *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy*:

first, the lure of heresy that impelled their actions as they confronted conventional sensibilities; and, second, a commitment to a principled self-scrutiny [...] The jaunty slogan that Ezra Pound introduced for his fellow rebels before the First World War, "Make it New!", tersely summed up the aspiration of more than one generation of modernists.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, in a syndrome that Griffin identifies as a necessary engine in the development of "programmatically modernism", like so many millions of others in Europe at this time Pound was politically radicalized by the slaughter of the Great War.<sup>12</sup> Surveying the human and socio-economic wreckage left after the first of Europe's two-part suicide attempt between 1914 and 1945, Pound memorably described the evolution of his society as "botched" in his 1920 *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*:

There died a myriad,  
And of the best, among them,  
For an old bitch gone in the teeth,  
For a botched civilization.

In an apt summary of this period, Redman explains:

When Pound's close friend, the sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, was killed in action at Neuville St. Vast on June 5, 1915, Pound was shaken to his core and forced to reevaluate his thinking about the relation of the artist to society. That and [New Age editor Alfred] Orage's persistent efforts, including introducing Pound in 1918 to the unorthodox economist Major C. H. Douglas, led to an important shift in Pound's thinking, announced in his review of Douglas's *Credit Power and Democracy* in *Contact*, 4 (Summer 1921): "The symbolist position, artistic aloofness from world affairs, is no good now."<sup>13</sup>

With the regeneration of Western civilization now critically overdue – as registered, above all, by the apparently senseless slaughter of 1914–18 – the artist could no longer sit on the sidelines, but needed to take to the stage of history as playwright *and* historical actor. For Pound, in the 1920s and early 1930s, this was to be manifested in two very different ways.

First, beyond justly castigating critics for presenting a “divided image” of Pound “as if the poet who helped create modernism were one thing, and the fascist who broadcasted in favor of Mussolini were another,” Serenella Zanotti’s has helpfully highlighted the importance of what both fascism and communism called the ‘new man’; something akin to mythical warriors for the Modern Age, equally comfortable with revolutionary violence and spiritual appeals to a revitalized culture.<sup>14</sup> Following Pound’s recasting of *The Cantos* in the 1920s (the first three “Cantos” had been published by Harriet Monroe’s *Poetry* in 1917), his epic poem would increasingly lionize individual leadership as the primary engine of history. In what would shortly become Pound’s lifetime project, figures as diverse as Odysseus, Thomas Jefferson, Cosimo de Medici and Confucius all featured in this role. Of special relevance here is Lawrence Rainey’s discussion of “The Malatesta Cantos” (*Cantos* VIII–XI), locating the genesis of this ‘heroic’ paradigm in *The Cantos*: Pound’s research on the exemplary ‘Renaissance Man’, Sigismondo Malatesta (1417–68). While the first draft was written before Fascism’s ‘March on Rome’ in October 1922, Pound’s research toward a second draft was carried out just as Mussolini was consolidating his rule in Italy. Parallels between the two were not lost upon him at the time, argues Rainey, with Sigismondo’s “restless individuality and unbridled will” coming at a “crucial moment in Western cultural history”; and pivotally, providing a template for “a new man who would address the endemic crisis that was gripping liberal bourgeois culture.”<sup>15</sup>

Scholars today generally agree that the “Malatesta Cantos” sequence represented a new direction for Pound’s poetry; that he “was being truly revolutionary” in deciding to place “the vital interests of the individual person” at the center of *The Cantos*.<sup>16</sup> By mythicizing the historical figure of Sigismondo, Stephen Sicari stresses that “the Malatesta Cantos mark the beginning of Pound’s extension of the wanderer’s journey toward a political goal.”<sup>17</sup> Pound’s research on Sigismondo in the Rimini archives in Spring 1923, moreover, was significant for another reason: it marked his first real engagement with Italian Fascism. As Pound was to later

recount in *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, citing one of many Fascist slogans he was to employ in his own writing, “NOI CI FACCIAMO SCANNAR PER MUSSOLINI [we’d get capped for Mussolini],” said my hotel-keeper in Rimini years ago, thinking I knew nothing about the revolution and wanting to get it into my head.” The hotel-keeper apparently doubled as Rimini’s Comandante della Piazza and accordingly managed to get Pound library access to consult the otherwise confined Sigismondo manuscripts. Pound, impressed that his tardy request had been immediately fulfilled, praised the Comandante’s “sense of responsibility”; ability to “cut the red tape” of bureaucracy; and most of all, his “devotion” to the “regenerated Italy.”<sup>18</sup> In Zanotti’s fitting summary, “Mussolini was presented as a modern Malatesta whose ‘passion for construction’ grew into a work of art: the fascist state.”<sup>19</sup>

While researching the life and achievements of Sigismondo, Pound consulted a 1912 biography by the Nietzschean journalist Antonio Beltramelli, later an ardent Fascist. (The latter subsequently described Sigismondo as a “warrior” with the “heart of a poet” in a book Pound read and incorporated into the significantly revised ‘Draft B’ of “The Malatesta Cantos”.) That text, in turn, led him to Beltramelli’s 1923 biography of Mussolini, titled *L’Uomo Nuovo* [*The New Man*].<sup>20</sup> Of course, Beltramelli was not alone in this sacralized rendering of “the Boss”; only a year later, for instance, in one of the first Anglophone books to appear about Italian Fascism, even the liberal, one-time Italian Prime Minister Ivanoe Bonomi concluded: “The source of Fascism has been largely due to Mussolini. One of his critics has described him as ‘a great artist in action’.”<sup>21</sup> This was most certainly not ‘politics as usual’. Crucially for Pound, in *The New Man*, Sigismondo was described as Mussolini’s forerunner – both of whom hailed from the village of Romagna – each personifying a new, revolutionary *zeitgeist*. The quattrocento autocrat was to the flourishing Renaissance what the PNF dictator was to the Fascist revolution: the embodiment of a new civilization, an “artifex” only fully comprehensible via faith. And it is here, Lawrence Rainey further posits, that Pound’s increasing emphasis upon the ‘new man’ fused the historicity of Sigismondo’s actions to his initial experience with Fascism in Spring 1923. In this way, the “Malatesta Cantos” are not only the story of a ‘new man’ in history, now placed at the center of the Cantos, but may be seen as an “augury” for the aesthetic devotion Pound would later attach to Mussolini, as he had to Sigismondo:



*davano fed a quisti annuttii, [placed great faith in these annunciations,]*  
 All I want you to do is to follow the orders,  
 They've got a bigger army,  
 But there are more men in this camp.

The mythicizing of Mussolini as a new man constructing a 'new civilization,' in both Italy and Europe more generally, becomes an essential foundation for Pound's later propaganda.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, these core motifs, suggests Rainey "– experience, faith, action – were fundamental to Pound's understanding of literature and its social functions, and they furnished the framework in which he assimilated his emerging interest in Fascism and Mussolini" between the wars.<sup>23</sup>

By the early 1930s, Pound's endorsement of Italian Fascism perceptibly increased in both speed and commitment. By winter 1931–32, for example, the "Italian awakening" was praised, if opaquely, in the pages of the *New Review*.<sup>24</sup> While still rhetorically restrained, over subsequent months positive references to Italian Fascism began appearing not only in Pound's private letters, but in some of his public texts as well; initially, it seems, mainly those in Italian. Then, in April 1932, he met the founder of Futurism – a precursor and sometime ally of Mussolini – Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, returning with handfuls of "futurist and fascist licherachoor" which helped, in Humphrey Carpenter's estimation, "in pushing him over the brink into active support of Mussolini".<sup>25</sup> An unsuccessful request for an interview with the Duce swiftly followed, with Pound seeking to discern as well as to praise, in person, the "obstacles overcome by the Fascist effort (marsh-draining, restorations, etc.)."<sup>26</sup> That same month, an unrealized film project on the achievements of Fascism with the pro-Fascist director Ferruccio Cerio was planned (but never completed). Then, still later that year, a letter to Langston Hughes was dated "25 Luglio 1932 – Anno X" – a reference to the post-October 1922 calendar marking the new era of Fascist Italy.<sup>27</sup>

Then, pivotally, in December 1932 Pound became one of the 3.8 million visitors to "the first of many exhibitions put on by Mussolini's regime that employed avant-garde artists in the communication service in the regime": the *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* (hereafter MRF, which opened in Rome on 29 October 1932).<sup>28</sup> This decennial celebration of Italy's 'New Order' was a landmark expression of Fascism's burgeoning political religion, recounting – with the aid of Futurists as well as other artists close to the regime, like the sculptor Mario Sironi and the architect Adalberto Libera – the development of the movement's wartime birth,

revolutionary activities from 1919 to 1922, and establishment of 'order' following Mussolini's 'March on Rome'. In Jeffrey Schnapp's admirable summary:

The aim of the fifteen "historical" rooms was to make palpable to visitors the emotions of awe and terror associated with the revolutionary violence of [F]ascism-as-movement so as to then perform a sort of "return to order," associated with [F]ascism-as-state, as the visitor left behind the building's periphery to march through four final spacious rooms aligned along the central axis: a Hall of Honor, containing a reconstruction of Mussolini's first Milanese office, the Gallery of the Fasces, featuring the banners of individual Fascist groups, the "Mussolini room", containing a reconstruction of his second Milanese office, and a *Sacrarium*, celebrating the "martyrs" of the revolution. This complex of nineteen rooms occupied the entirety of the ground floor of the Palazzo delle Esposizioni. The building's second floor was dedicated not to the past, but to the regime's present and future plans. It contained a room representing the activities of Fascist organizations abroad, a library with 5,000 volumes concerned with Fascism, and three small halls dedicated to the regime's achievements in the fields of labor, agriculture, transportation, industry, and commerce.<sup>29</sup>

In Claudio Fogu's cognate reading, the Decennio was "a paradigmatic visualization of *fascist modernism*"; and still further, in terms of "the fascist sacralization of politics, the historic exhibition provided a crucial point of intersection between the spontaneous cult of the Duce and the organized cult of [F]ascism."<sup>30</sup> The corresponding effect upon Pound was electric. Pound's first English reference to Mussolini as the 'Boss' appeared in A.R. Orage's recently launched 'little magazine', *The New English Weekly*, on 5 January 1933, while glowing references to the Decennio featured two days later in his local Italian newspaper, *Il Mare*.<sup>31</sup> Although he had approached Mussolini as early as 1924 and privately praised him as early as 1926, the MRF was clearly a spur toward further action. Thereafter, Pound quickly renewed his request to meet with Mussolini.<sup>32</sup>

Having been rebuffed in April 1932, Pound finally gained an audience with *Il Duce* on 30 January 1933; 'ideogramatically' at the exact same time the Führer first sat down with his cabinet, officially commencing the Third Reich. If Fascism had intrigued Pound before meeting Mussolini, he became enchanted, converted even, then and there. Mussolini had described Pound's gift – his recently published *A Draft of XXX Cantos* – as "divertente [amusing]" (later immortalized in "Canto XLI", cited in

this chapter's epigraph); a spurious remark perhaps, comments Noel Stock, but one which was, nevertheless for Pound, "proof of Mussolini's brilliance and of the fact that the cantos were mea[n]t for strong men."<sup>33</sup> Enthusiastic references to Mussolini's "genius" and the "constructive" nature of Italian Fascism were to suffuse Pound's work from then on, whether in his prose or poetry. In this light, it is unsurprising to find that Pound lifted passages for his *Eleven New Cantos* (published by Faber in 1934, comprising "Canto XXXI" to the aforementioned "Canto XLI" from *Dux*, a 1930 hagiographical biography of Mussolini by the latter's sometime mistress, Margherita Sarfatti.<sup>34</sup> Still, Pound's veritable sacralization of Mussolini remained largely confined to personal correspondence and still-occasional references in print over the next 18 months. Broadly speaking, this period was one of excited advocacy rather than systematic propaganda. Yet the memory of that meeting with "the Boss" would long remain with Ezra Pound, while politics and economics increasingly commanded both his time and interest. By the end of 1933, as he commented to James Laughlin, "but as Muss[olini] sez, the homo economicus AIN'T [i.e. does not exist], an' I spose I am drifted into the totalitarian attitude." Pound's source for this statement, revealingly, was Mussolini's widely circulated appeal to the "revolutionary spirit" in Italy a fortnight earlier on the subject of Fascist corporatism:

The economic man does not exist. Man is integral, he is political, he is economic, he is religious, he is saint, he is warrior. Today we are taking another step forward on the road of the Revolution [... toward] a totalitarian State, a State which absorbs all the energy, the interests and the aspirations of the people, in order to transform and uplift them.<sup>35</sup>

As suggested by the above letter to Laughlin, a final consequence of Pound's interwar rejection of *art pour l'art* is radical economics. Although highly impressed with social credit doctrine as advanced in the self-taught economist C.H. Douglas's 1921 *Credit Power and Democracy*, it took the World Economic Crisis in the 1930s to make Pound an activist for what Roxana Preda rightly calls "the economic avant-garde."<sup>36</sup> Pound's analysis of Douglas' exchange rate disparity – the heterodox, arguably incorrect, A + B Theorem<sup>37</sup> – quickly led him to the view that, under capitalist development, surplus value went to money lenders and economic non-producers; "usurers", in short. While propagating the "new economics" of social credit in every outlet available to him at the time, Pound increasingly perceived these ideas as being closely allied to his

modernist project of cultural renewal. It was not just that Douglas made a place for the arts and “cultural heritage” in his economic system; even more so, over the 1930s, social credit ideas (later augmented by those of Silvio Gesell’s concept of ‘stamp scrip’) came to feature prominently in *The Cantos*. Tellingly, Douglas’ A + B Theorem is reproduced effectively verbatim in “Canto XXXVIII”.<sup>38</sup>

While not the place to revisit a continuing debate in Pound studies, it is likely, in Alec Marsh’s summation, that “Pound’s general inability to get a hearing for his synthetic ‘Volitionist Economics’ made him turn steadily rightward.”<sup>39</sup> Of the three ideologies on offer between the wars, baldly put, Pound adjudged that Fascist corporatism most closely resembled his economic ideas.<sup>40</sup> In turn, this had several manifestations directly bearing upon his propaganda from 1935. As shall be further emphasized, many of Pound’s texts and broadcasts for fascist movements champion his increasingly unorthodox variant of “social credit”. Yet the social creditors, largely comprising this latter group of rogue economists, also increasingly propounded an anti-Semitism that underpinned their diagnosis of an alleged usurer’s conspiracy. This soon dovetailed with more extreme forms of anti-Semitism once Pound started corresponding with biological racists like Arnold Leese, founder of Britain’s Imperial Fascist League. Umistakeably, Pound’s views on Jews and Judaism deteriorated sharply in the 1930s. For example, as late as 1927 he declared to his parents: “Jews!!! oooo sez I ‘ates the jews? Ask him why he thinks I ‘ate the jews. I hate SOME JEWS but I have greater contempt for Christians.” A decade later, Pound was inversely enjoining Lina Caico to “Get down to USURY/ the cause WHY western world vomits out the jew periodically [...] THE TOTAL race is a peril”.<sup>41</sup> Pound’s anti-Semitism further deepened in the ensuing years, becoming even more implacable and vituperative during World War II.

Despite fits and starts, as Leon Surette has persuasively shown, Pound increasingly accepted Judeophobic arguments – not as a radicalization of a childhood prejudice (which may well have existed anyway), but as a historically contingent response to socio-political debates and developments between the wars.<sup>42</sup> This can be empirically triangulated to the mid-1930s, with some incisive circumstantial evidence provided by Miranda Hickman’s short essay on Pound and fascism. In November 1934, for example, Pound protested to Leese that racial prejudice was incompatible with the individualism that “men of my generation or older” viewed as a “sacred principle”.<sup>43</sup> This exchange came

at an important point in Pound's thinking on the issue; during winter 1934-35, John Drummond was acting as a research assistant for him on the "jew prob". Yet Leese's response to Pound's queries on the issue was categorical: "Your 'sacred principle' is a facet of Jewish propaganda." Pound responded on 9 November with a ten-page typed letter, seeming to accept parts of Leese's biological racism:

how the hell can a man be anti-usurer and pro-jew/

The two words aren't identical / but the ground covered is 80% the same

To bloody hell with equality/ and as it don't exist, cant exist, and never has existed/ WHY bloody well worry about it.

This declaration was followed, insightfully, by another, two-page typed letter after lunch, in which Pound explicitly linked his economic program to biological anti-Semitism: "I like yr/ answers to Volitionist 8// [...] Hell, I dont want the bloody ARMENOIDs, but I dont see how you can send 'em all to the Abatoirs [sic]/ with the present mechanism available."<sup>44</sup> While Pound naturally could not have known it then, just such a "mechanism" would shortly become a reality during the Final Solution across wartime Europe, including northern Italy between 1943 and 1945. As discussed in Part II, many of these anti-Semitic themes found their way into Pound's wartime broadcasts. The following excerpt from script #19, for instance, compiled in Leonard Doob's groundbreaking "*Ezra Pound Speaking*" (dated 23 March 1942) bears striking similarities to his earlier letters to Leese: "I think you lose by not thinking about this problem as RACIAL. Yes, I know I went at it from the economic part of the picture. Brought up on American principles; no prejudice against any man for race, creed, or color". By this time, however, Pound's conspiratorial views on Jews were unequivocal, as borne out in his conclusion to "But How? Second Item":

against consciousness exploitation, against monopoly, against bank deals and swindles. Against EVERY race in Europe that takes the responsibility for being a nation and administering openly, as a government in the eyes of the people. Against the crawling slime of a secret rule, a secret and IRRESPONSIBLE rule, that takes NO responsibility for the welfare of races, and nations, but eats like a cancer into the heart and soul of all nations. Even that whereof its central staff is composed.<sup>45</sup>

In now turning to Pound's initial engagement with fascist ideology in the mid- to late 1930s, it merits keeping in mind that Pound's economic

radicalism, admittedly nuanced and complex, played a notable role in fostering an anti-Semitism that was ultimately difficult to distinguish from Nazi propaganda.

As noted, Pound's interest in Italian Fascism – and in particular his hero worship of “the Boss” – had been incubating since the mid-1920s. He had privately praised Mussolini in a well-known letter to Harriet Monroe in November 1926, and he would increasingly do so to an ever-widening circle of correspondents over the ensuing decade. Even before meeting Mussolini in 1933, Pound's views had started to change. In Redman's apt phrase, by the early 1930s “Pound's politics were beginning to creep into his poetry”. Reflecting this, in a March 1931 Italian interview he contrasted Italy's “new virility” with Britain's “blatant idiocy”, claiming that when “strong, live energy is unleashed in Italy, a new renaissance comes forth”.<sup>46</sup> This gravitation toward fascist ideology was redoubled by Pound's awe at the MRF's ‘temple’ to Mussolini and the Fascist Revolution in late 1932, later announced with the breathless question in “Canto XLVI”: “Didja see the Decennio?” Following his audience with the Duce, Pound increasingly addressed Italian Fascism in his journalism, offering positive accounts of the “new Italy” in newspapers like the *New York World Telegram* (“Presenting Some Thoughts on Fascism”, 14 November 1933) and *The Chicago Tribune* (“Mussolini Defines State As ‘Spirit of the People’”, 9 April 1934).<sup>47</sup> Neither were ‘little magazines’ immune from his enthusiasm. Some of his earliest advocacy for Fascism appeared in T.S. Eliot's *The Criterion*; for example, in July 1933 Pound explicitly compared Mussolini to Sigismondo Malatesta. Intriguingly, Pound's praise followed a broad sweep of ‘decadent’ culture elsewhere in Europe, prompting a question his turn to propaganda was to address, even embody, over the next dozen years: why are some artists “‘driven’ to all sorts of excessive opinion, or ‘into the arms of’ groups who are highly unlikely to be of use to them?”<sup>48</sup>

In the terms employed here, this was endorsement – attempted sacralization, even – of Mussolini's Italy, but not yet propaganda *strictu sensu*. At this time, Pound was neither paid nor employed by ideological institutions; he was not penning these celebratory sentiments by request or to deadline, nor knowingly participating in any wider far-right propaganda strategy. But neither does this mean that Pound's understanding of Fascism was incoherent. By 1934, he had been living in Italy for a decade, exposed daily to Fascist rituals and media hyperbole. It was impossible to ignore. Many critics nonetheless persist in asserting that there “is

little in Pound's thought that is quintessentially Fascist"; instead, his was merely a "totalitarian form of the cult of personality".<sup>49</sup> Yet it takes little effort to show that the latter was fundamental to, and even inseparable from, Fascism's creation of an operative political religion. With Gaetano Polverelli taking over Mussolini's press office in the early 1930s – with whom Pound corresponded between 1932 and 1942 – general overviews of Fascist Italy note that "much greater emphasis was placed on the cult of the Duce."<sup>50</sup> This "cult of personality" was grasped perfectly well by Pound and millions of others in Fascist Italy. It was not only that Pound signed letters to Mussolini 'With devoted homage' following their meeting. As David Heymann's FBI-sourced appendices revealed nearly 40 years ago, the clue is in letters sent after Party Secretary Achille Starace's November 1933 decree: Pound's next four letters to Mussolini are headed in the then-mandated capitals: 'DUCE'.<sup>51</sup> Writing to his friend Odor Por in April 1934, Pound went on to praise the "elasticity" of Fascist praxis and its "constructive spirit" while six months later, to another "new economist", Pound exclaimed: "The boss is really a great man (got the view of whole man, not merely of Doug's engineering slice or homo economicus.) [...] Mussolini is THE GREAT PEDAGOGUE/ he knows, as none of us have know[n], how to GET it into people[']s heads, en masse!"<sup>52</sup> Pound's private sentiments mirrored largely positive public opinion at the time – broadly speaking, including Britain and the US prior to the Abyssinian invasion – as even suggested by Studabaker's 1927 Buick range, "The Dictator".<sup>53</sup>

Nor is it the case that "Pound diverges consistently and significantly from the mainstreams of European [f]ascist thought". Since Pound was American, argues Bill Freind, he could not, *ipso facto*, be a 'nationalistic' Italian. Were things so cut-and-dried, there could be no William Joyce (aka 'Lord Haw-Haw'), nor fellow modernist Francis Stuart, both broadcasters for Nazi Germany – let alone the other seven radio broadcasters later indicted alongside Pound for treason.<sup>54</sup> Thousands more sympathizers and collaborators felt that a civilizational regeneration was possible under fascist hegemony in Europe; in fact, it was the consistency of these accounts at the time that is striking, and was held by nationals and non-nationals alike. Concluding another Anglophone survey of Fascism by a long-time resident in Italy, for instance: "If 'Avanti' was not the motto of Socialism the Fascists could make it theirs; as it is, reintroducing faith and belief as the basis of man's life they seem to point to higher moral, political and economical conquests. The only motto that can befit the

black shirts movement is therefore *Sursum corda* [*Hearts lifted*; taken from the preface to the Catholic mass].”<sup>55</sup> Moreover, many even believed that corporatism, Fascism’s economic ‘third way’ between capitalism and communism via national cooperation between all classes, was to be the foundation of this European renaissance. Thus, writing in 1934, the self-proclaimed ‘left-wing fascist’ Ugo Spirito asserted:

Fascism recognizes the value of the universalist demand which lies at the heart of the so-called ideology of the liberal and socialist International, and proclaims the need for a genuine International based on corporative principles.<sup>56</sup>

That Pound included a chapter on the “new economics” in his pro-fascist ‘coming out’ book, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (cited in the first epigraph to Chapter One), should thus come as no surprise: he was hardly alone in his ideological faith.

In further tracing Pound’s convergence with Italian Fascism, the remainder of this section will demonstrate that Pound accepted key parts of fascist ideology as it evolved in 1930s Europe. Rather than significant divergences, in his unpaid propaganda work from late 1935, Pound’s propaganda is aptly expressed in a letter to Camillo Pellizzi: “the Regime up and PROVED I damn well KNEW what I was saying and that the Regime and I were in perfect accord.” Consequently, Pound’s adherence to the PNF’s political faith was unreserved at the end of this period of *gratis* propaganda; some three years later, Pound explained to Polverelli: “I have no sympathy with the reactionary forces in Italy. I am, as you possibly know PRO-MUSSOLINI 100%.”<sup>57</sup> Becoming ever more explicit, such statements were often reciprocated by important ideological functionaries, both before and during World War II. It is thus highly unlikely that officials in Fascist Italy seriously questioned Pound’s loyalty, let alone suspecting he was, in David Heymann’s words, some sort of “double agent”. Hugh Kenner’s magisterial account, *The Pound Era*, despite assiduously steering clear of Pound’s politics, likewise suggested that Pound’s well-known iconoclasm may have been responsible for this supposed mistrust: “Unlike the propagandist who says what he is told to, he was offering his own highly specialised account, so crammed with apparently unrelated allegation that some Italian officials are said to have wondered if he were transmitting code under their noses.”<sup>58</sup> In stark contrast, extant manuscripts – especially those catalogued with the “Ezra Pound Papers” held in Yale’s Beinecke archives – offer a very



different perspective. A revealing counter-example, explored in detail in Part II, was expressed by Pound's 'handler' at Radio Rome in 1941, Prince Ranieri di San Faustino: "remember that you are an important person in the Ministero [della Cultura Popolare] and indispensable for our Propaganda"<sup>59</sup>

Pound's transition from advocacy to propaganda in 1935 also coincided with key changes in Fascist Italy, both internally and externally. Ominously, Pound started the year with his first shortwave radio broadcast on 11 January 1935 praising, according to one listener, the "economic triumph of fascism."<sup>60</sup> On this key point, Pound's daughter has offered corroborating evidence: "On January 11, 1935 Ezra Pound gave his first short-wave talk to the United States, announced in the *Radio Corriere* of January 6, under 'Le Trasmissioni Italiane per il Nord America', *Conversazione di Ezra Pound, su 'come il Duce resolve il problema della distribuzione'.*" Writing to fellow social creditor and recently appointed editor of the 'little magazine' *New English Weekly*, Philip Mairet, Pound proudly noted that PNF censors "turned me loose uncensored. They did not emend a word of the text I offered 'em."<sup>61</sup> Substantiating this view, and similar to the many hundreds of previously neglected files containing Pound's wartime speeches, Yale's Beinecke Library archive holds a record of Pound's first propaganda broadcast for Fascist Italy. Pound's typescript commences:

Mr Ezra Pound broadcast from Rome on Friday midnight (8.P.M. New York) 11 Jan., the new short wave transmission direct to America, reaffirming his faith in Italy as pace-maker to other nations, again citing Mussolini's Milan speech to the workers, and saying in brief what he had said at greater length in the January "Criterion" [...] Mr Pound believes, emphatically as usual, that there is a radical difference between Mussolini's promise of social justice and the talk or promise of any other public man. The difference being, in his opinion, that Mussolini keeps his promises.<sup>62</sup>

Mussolini's 6 October 1934 speech to Milanese workers, republished in English in the next year, characteristically posed two alternatives to "the one the masses have already accepted: namely clear, explicit, sincere adhesion to the spirit and institutions of the Fascist Revolution". These allegedly rejected options were hostility and indifference, with the latter especially unsatisfactory for the "indifferent have never made and never will make history". Considering Pound's interest in 'great men' shaping history – among them Confucius, Sigismondo and now Mussolini – it should come as little surprise to find that he was quite taken with the

phrase, reusing it twice in 1935 alone, as in the self-reference to his earlier radio broadcast contained in *Social Credit: An Impact*:

“Intellectuals do *not* have any ideas, they get only the spare parts of ideas.” (Rome broadcast, 11th January 1935).

“The indifferent have never made history, they have never even understood any history.” (*idem.*)<sup>63</sup>

Pound's 1935 broadcast for EIAR (Ente Italiano Audizioni Radiofoniche; colloquially known as 'Radio Rome') was the last he delivered for Mussolini's regime until the circumstances created by Italy's joining of World War II on 10 June 1940. In part, this was due to Pound's well-known eccentricities and the regime's corresponding wariness in employing him. Pivotal, PNF views on propaganda had only become decisive for EIAR broadcasting during 1935, with the establishment of a government ministry answering directly to Mussolini (soon emerging as the Ministry of Popular Culture, or 'Minculpop'), by then encompassing the 'new media' of film and, still more influentially, radio. Thereafter, broadcasters needed the support of radio producers less than regime functionaries.<sup>64</sup> This meant that Pound's propagation of Fascism was closely monitored; although a recognized 'friend', he was a resident alien in Italy. Furthermore, this effective embargo persisted despite the fact that he was in contact with many of the senior regime figures across the 1930s, comprising a veritable *Who's Who* of Fascist Italy: the aforementioned Mussolini, Polverelli and Pellizzi; but also Galeazzo Ciano, Giuseppe Bottai, Ubaldo degli Uberti, Carlo Delcroix, Carnelio Di Marzio, Edmondo Rossoni, Margherita Sarfatti, Alberto de Stefani; and of course, the National Fascist Party (PNF), Ministry of Communications, Minculpop, and its less monopolistic predecessor, the Ministry of Press and Propaganda.<sup>65</sup> Finally, the year 1935 was equally decisive regarding Fascist foreign policy. On 3 October, Mussolini launched Italy's invasion of Abyssinia, forcing unprecedented sanctions by the League of Nations; and more importantly, the consequent breakdown of the so-called Stresa Front attempting to contain German expansionism in central Europe – both precipitating the formation of the Nazi–Fascist Axis following the 'Berlin Agreement' of 25 October 1936. This point represented the zenith of domestic popularity for Italian Fascism and as exemplified by the war crimes, race laws and new alliances accompanying the founding of Fascism's 'empire' in East Africa, represented a watershed for an already militaristic regime.

Likewise with Ezra Pound's portentous year, with "Anno XIII" now pre-printed on his private stationery. (The Fascist regime had restarted the Christian calendar with Mussolini's March on Rome in 1922.) On 5 March 1935, a translated excerpt from one of Mussolini's speeches appeared in the Pounds' hometown paper, the Chippewa Falls *Herald-Telegram*.<sup>66</sup> More significantly still, in spring 1935 *Jefferson and/or Mussolini: L'Idea Statale, Fascism as I have seen it* was published by the London-based firm of Stanley Nott – toward which Pound provided a \$100 subvention (just under \$2,000 today when adjusting for inflation) – asserting of his now explicitly termed "propaganda" for Mussolini's Italy to his inquisitive publisher: "I mean what I wrote".<sup>67</sup> According to Surette's useful survey, the book was penned between 9 and 22 February "in response to his interview with Mussolini on 30 January 1933" – further underscoring the significance of that fateful meeting.<sup>68</sup> This sense is compounded by some of the unpublished manuscripts compiled during the nearly 30 months between completing *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* and its publication. Pound certainly did not sit on his hands during this interim between public advocacy and propaganda. Alongside frequent endorsements of the "regenerated Italy" in poetry and prose between 1933 and 1935, for example, further typescripts housed in Yale's Beinecke archives include unpublished texts such as "Fascism 'Or the Direction of the Will'"; "The 'Menace' of Fascism"; "Fascism"; "Fascist/Econ"; "Public Works Under the Fascist Regime"; "The Anti-Fascist Letch"; "Gli Antifascisti [The Anti-Fascist]", and "Moneta Fascista". All the while, to be sure, Pound was energetically pursuing publication of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*; his April 1935 Foreword to the book defiantly maintained that "40 publishers have refused it".<sup>69</sup>

Doubtless these unprecedented rejections owed much to his fanciful connection between two 'great men' in modern history who, for Pound, personified the respective revolutionary tendencies of Jefferson's eighteenth-century US and Mussolini's twentieth-century Italy: "the will toward *order*". "This is not to say I 'advocate' fascism in and for America, or that I think fascism is possible in America without Mussolini", Pound continued; instead, the inspiration of Mussolini's firm-handed leadership deserved American praise and recognition.<sup>70</sup> This view motivated, in turn, the declarations of faith suffusing *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*. For instance, Fascism's "continuing revolution" ensured the "welfare" of an "organic" and "STRONG ITALY", entailing the "only possible foundation" to secure "the good life in Europe". Similar effusions were

applied to Mussolini as well, from his love of action and impulse toward control, to a genius for either debunking insincere proposals or going straight “for fellow’s major interest” – signs of authority reaffirming “the [F]ascist conviction that he is more likely to be right than anyone else.” In Pound’s accounting, the proof was in the “constructive” pudding, specifically Mussolini’s “material and immediate effect”: “grain, swamp drainage, restorations, new buildings, and, I am ready to add off my own bat, AN AWAKENED INTELLIGENCE in the nation and a new LANGUAGE”.<sup>71</sup> This appreciation was mutual, furthermore. Camillo Pellizzi, later head of the Institute of Fascist Culture during World War II, praised Pound’s “illuminations and intuitions” of Fascist Italy’s work-in-progress “piece of art” in a review of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* on Valentine’s Day 1936. Pellizzi concluded his review in a leading Italian daily, *Il Corriere della Sera*, with the striking assertion: “Pound, with this booklet, has acquired a well-deserved right of citizenship in our new civilization.”<sup>72</sup>

Glorification of Mussolini as a centrifugal “artifex” may seem like far-fetched rhetoric today, but the trope of ‘Mussolini as artist’ – molding the nation according to his creative will – remained a staple theme of Fascist propaganda. “The Fascist movement owes very nearly everything to Mussolini”, wrote the non-aligned journalist Giuseppe Prezzolini, praising that “true type of Italian, the condottiere”, Mussolini, whose “adventurous spirit” and “urge for action at any price” meant he could be truly considered a “patron” of the New Italy.<sup>73</sup> Pro-Fascist accounts were even more explicit in casting Mussolini in sacral terms, often including “his capacity for converting and reforming without destroying that which should be persevered, as an art”. Or, as *Il Duce* also averred in his 1939 *The Official Life of Benito Mussolini*: “My art is the art of arts,” he states, “the most difficult of all; I manipulate a substance which is not inert, but the most unsteady and delicate – man”.<sup>74</sup> In this sense, Pound was but an expatriate believer amongst many millions of Italians deifying “the Boss” – to the extent of decoupling Mussolini, the Roman “Hero of Culture” (in the words of a 1933 book dedication from none other than Sigmund Freud), from the very real iniquities exacerbated by the regime.<sup>75</sup> Mussolini as socio-political prophet, as intra-class conductor, or as sculptor of Italian nation, all featured heavily in PNF propaganda; so much so, in fact, that Fascist failings were often met by the clichéd phrase ‘if only Mussolini knew’. Alongside several earlier statements in speeches and writings, Mussolini explicitly encouraged this characterization as

the “artist of modern Italy” during his well-known interviews with Emil Ludwig during 1932:

“It is faith that moves mountains, not reason. Reason is a tool, but it can never be the emotive force of the crowd. To-day less than ever. To-day people have not so much time to think as they used to have. The capacity of modern man for faith is illimitable. When the masses are like wax in my hands, when I stir their faith, or when I mingle with them and am almost crushed by them, I feel myself to be a part of them. All the same, there persists in me a certainly feeling of aversion like that which the modeler feels for the clay he is moulding. Does not the sculptor sometimes smash his block of marble into fragments because he cannot shape it to represent the vision he has conceived? Now and then this crude matter rebels against the creator!”

After a pause, he went on:

“Everything turns upon one’s ability to control the masses like an artist.”

In *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, Pound criticized Ludwig’s *Talks with Mussolini* as the merely “popular picture” advanced by an uncommitted intellectual, even if the conception of Mussolini as political artist remained a key ingredient in Pound’s devotion to Italian Fascism.<sup>76</sup>

Addressing Pound’s turn toward fascist ideology, some scholars have argued that around 1935 his “mental condition deteriorated precipitously” – in this case, a retroactive diagnosis of Delusional Disorder and manic mood disorder.<sup>77</sup> Perhaps; but then again, that is impossible to accurately adjudge. A more contextual view is raised, by contrast, in Roxana Preda’s insightful “Social Credit in America: A View from Ezra Pound’s Economic Correspondence, 1933–1940”. There, Preda highlights the pivotal setbacks for proponents of social credit during the late 1930s, leaving any meaningful application of the “new Economics” quite implausible in both the US and beyond. These crises also reached their zenith during 1935: from the death of sometime ally and New Mexico Senator, Bronson Cutting, in May; to the 10 September 1935 assassination of another potential collaborator, the Louisiana demagogue Huey ‘Kingfish’ Long. Beyond US borders, the September 1935 election of another ‘radio priest’ in Alberta, Canada, William Aberhart, similarly raised another unpalatable *status quo ante*. Despite his social credit background, like those few of his American colleagues in politics, Aberhart “had been unable to implement the necessary measures” to effect fundamental economic change within the capitalist system.<sup>78</sup> If the indications in 1935 were bad, even worse was to come with the

second-term re-election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in November 1936 and the corresponding washout of the notorious radio priest Father Coughlin's short-lived Union Party. Everywhere he looked, Pound saw defeat for his preferred economic model. Taking stock of FDR's landslide victory in 46 (of then 48) American states – representing the widest presidential margin of victory in US history – Pound confessed to Gorham Munson: “Till 1940 we are INSIDE the nude eel [the “New Deal” ....] any opposition is sheer waste of nrg//”.<sup>79</sup> Alongside his prolific correspondence and the writing of his most economically oriented Cantos during these years, *The Fifth Decade of Cantos* (Cantos XLI–LI), the remainder of Pound's irrepressible energies would be steadily directed elsewhere.

With respect to the critical period of 1935–36, ultimately, both contemporaneous and historical accounts agree that these months coincided with the PNF's height of public support; once more, grandiosely reinforced by a constant stream of pageantry celebrating Fascism's political faith. From this perspective, one suspects that countless other Fascists at the time would have had similar diagnoses of rebirth from European ‘decadence’; for example Asvero Gravelli, director of the Fascist journal *Antieuropa* (with whom Pound corresponded in 1940):

Fascism transcends democracy and liberalism. Its regenerative action is based on granite foundations: the concept of hierarchy, the participation of the whole people in the life of the State, social justice through the equitable distribution of rights and duties, the injection of morality into public life, the prestige of the family, the moral interpretation of the ideas of order, authority and, and freedom.<sup>80</sup>

Notwithstanding his iconoclastic written expression, it is Pound's thematic congruity with Fascist propaganda that is striking, not more contingent divergences. In light of sanctions by the League of Nations following the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in early October 1935, in fact, it is difficult to otherwise interpret Pound's unsuccessful project for an alternative “international organization” later that same month: this was an informed ideologue attempting to place his words at the service of Fascist expansionism.<sup>81</sup> Despite intuiting Pound's fascist activism as “reactionary” for an increasingly “nihilistic” Italian dictatorship, Burton Hatlen made a key point long ago that still bears heeding: in Pound's propaganda texts from the later 1930s, “almost all the major themes of fascist ideology” are present as he “dutifully followed the party line”.<sup>82</sup>

Bearing out Hatlan's position on the development of Pound's ideological propaganda advancing along party *lines* – for there were always several self-representational modes under the PNF<sup>83</sup> – vitally, was an apostolic proactivity that was ever more tightly yoked to Fascist territorial and ideological expansionism.

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, "Canto XLI", *The Cantos* (Faber, London: 1998), 202.
- 2 On Pound's populist American background, see Wendy Flory, *The American Ezra Pound* (Yale University Press, London: 1989); and on his revolutionary temperament more generally see, for example, Vincent Sherry, *Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis and Radical Modernism* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1993), chs. 2 and 4.
- 3 Helen Carr, *The Verse Revolutionaries: Ezra Pound, H.D. and the Imagists* (Jonathan Cape, London: 2009), 3.
- 4 See Sherry, *Radical Modernism*, ch. 1; Carr, *The Verse Revolutionaries*, 207ff; and on Pound's correspondence, see the revised, 1950 collection edited by D.D. Paige, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound* (Faber and Faber, London: 1971).
- 5 See Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound*; hereafter *Carpenter/ASC*. This phrase is also employed by John Tytell, *Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano* (Bloomsbury, London: 1987).
- 6 Pound, cited in Richard Cork, *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age, Vol. 1: Origins and Development* (University of Berkeley Press, London: 1976), 307 n.55.
- 7 Alec Marsh, *Ezra Pound: Critical Lives* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 42, 46; hereafter *Marsh/EPCL*. See also Sean Francis, "'Now for a large-mouthed product': Ezra Pound and the Poetics of Promotion", *Paideuma* 34/2–3 (Fall/Winter 2005).
- 8 Peter Gay, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy from Baudelaire to Beckett and Beyond* (Vintage Books, London: 2009), 4.
- 9 Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines: An Introduction* (Yale University Press, London: 2010), 4–6.
- 10 George Bornstein, "Modernism", *Ezra Pound in Context*, ed., Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2011), 374; hereafter *Nadel/EPIC*.
- 11 Gay, *Modernism*, 3–4.
- 12 See Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism* (Palgrave, Basingstoke: 2007), 62ff.
- 13 Tim Redman, "Pound's Politics and Economics", *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*, ed., Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1999), 252.

- 14 Serenella Zanolini, "Fascism", *Nadel/EPIC*, 376; for a similar view, see David Barnes, "Fascist Aesthetics: Ezra Pound's Cultural Negotiations in 1930s Italy", *Journal of Modern Literature* 34/1 (2010), 20. On Fascism's attempt "to regenerate the Italian people, to create a 'new man', a new race of Italian dominators and conquerors, builders of a civilization offered to the peoples of the white race as both the solution to the crisis in Western civilization and as the expression of a new civilization", see Emilio Gentile, "The Fascist Anthropological Revolution", *Culture, Censorship and the State in Twentieth Century Italy*, eds., Guido Bonsaver and Robert Gordon (Legenda, Oxford: 2005), 22.
- 15 Lawrence Rainey, *The Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (Yale University Press, London: 1998), 120. For a dissenting view, see Chris Chapman, "'Do You Want Any More of this Archaic Information on Folks, up to 1745?': Rethinking Ezra Pound's Italian Renaissance", *Textual Practice* 25/3 (2010).
- 16 A. David Moody, *Ezra Pound, Poet: A Portrait of the Man and His Work, 1885–1924* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2007), 367.
- 17 Stephen Sicari, *Pound's Epic Ambition: Dante and the Modern World* (State University of New York Press, Albany: 1991), 70, 89.
- 18 Ezra Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (Stanley Nott, London: 1936 [1935]), 26 and 128.
- 19 Zanolini, "Fascism", *Nadel/EPIC*, 378.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 118.
- 21 Ivanoe Bonomi, *From Socialism to Fascism: A Study of Contemporary Italy* (M. Hopkinson and Company, London: 1924), 138–139.
- 22 Pound, "Canto X", *The Cantos*, 47.
- 23 Rainey, 126; see also Rainey, *Ezra Pound and the Monument of Culture: Text, History and the Malatesta Cantos* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1991), 74.
- 24 Lea Baechler et al., eds., *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose*, 11 volumes (Garland, London: 1991), V, 329; hereafter *EPPP*.
- 25 Humphry Carpenter, *A Serious Character: : The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988), 489–490; hereafter *Carpenter/ASC*, 489–490..
- 26 Pound's original letter of 28 April 1932 is partially reproduced in Niccolò Zapponi, "Ezra Pound e il fascismo", *Storia Contemporanea* 4/1 (1973), 452.
- 27 Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London: 1970), 305; hereafter *Stock/LEP*. For Pound's letter to Langston Hughes using Italian Fascist dating, see David Roessel, "A Racial Act: The Letters of Ezra Pound and Langston Hughes", *Paideuma* 29/1–2 (2000), 25.
- 28 Catherine Paul, "Italian Fascist Exhibits and Ezra Pound's Move to the Imperial", *Twentieth Century Literature* 51/1 (2005), 69.
- 29 See Jeffrey T. Schnapp, "Mostre", online at: [www.jeffreyschnapp.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Mostre.pdf](http://www.jeffreyschnapp.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Mostre.pdf), 63, 65; and Schnapp, "Fascist



- Modernity and the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution”, *Fascism Aesthetics, Culture*, ed., Richard Golsan (University Press of New England, Hanover, NJ: 1992).
- 30 Claudio Fogu, *The Historic Imaginary: Politics of History in Fascist Italy* (University of Toronto Press, London: 2003), 167, 163; italics in original. See also Marla Stone, *The Patron State: Culture and Politics in Fascist Italy* (Princeton University Press, London: 1998), chs. 2 and 3; Emily Braun, “Sironi in Context”, and Mark Antliff, “Fascism, Modernism, and Modernity”, both reprinted in *Fascism: Critical Concepts*, 5 volumes, Roger Griffin with Matthew Feldman, eds. (Routledge, London: 2004), vol. III.
- 31 *EPPP/VI*, 7.
- 32 On Pound’s 1924 request for Mussolini’s patronage via the sculptor Nancy Cox-McCormick, see Rainey, *The Institutions of Modernism*, 139–141; and for his praise of Mussolini to Harriet Monroe in November 1926, see Pound, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound*, 279.
- 33 *Stock/LEP*, 306.
- 34 Philip Cannistraro and Brian Sullivan, *Il Duce’s Other Woman* (Morrow, New York: 1993), 342. For the abridged English edition of *Dux*, see Margherita Sarfatti, *The Life of Benito Mussolini*, trans. Frederic Whyte (T. Butterworth, London: 1925).
- 35 Pound to James Laughlin, 27 November 1933, *Ezra Pound and James Laughlin: Selected Letters*, ed., David M. Gordon (Norton, London: 1994), 6; and Benito Mussolini, “On the Corporate State”, 14 November 1933, *Four Speeches on the Corporate State* (Laboremus, Rome: 1935), 10, 24–25. I am grateful to Archie Henderson with his assistance on this passage, online in Italian at: [www.polyarchy.org/basta/documenti/mussolini.1933.html](http://www.polyarchy.org/basta/documenti/mussolini.1933.html).
- 36 Roxana Preda, “Social Credit in America: A View from Pound’s Economic Correspondence, 1933–1940”, *Paideuma* 34/2–3 (2005), 204.
- 37 For a critique of Pound’s economics as “neither analytically sophisticated” nor “economically sound” – put bluntly, “the A+B Theorem is mistaken” due to “double counting” – see Alessandro Lanteri, “Douglas, Gesell and the Economic Ethics of Ezra Pound”, *The History of Economic Ideas* 19/1 (2011), 147–148, 151.
- 38 Pound, “Canto XXXVIII”, *The Cantos*, 190ff.
- 39 *Marsh/EPCL*, 122.
- 40 An incisive reading is offered by Alec Marsh’s *Money and Modernity* (University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa: 1998), ch. 3; while a more superficial account has been recently provided by Meghnad Desai, *Route of All Evil: The Political Economy of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 2006).
- 41 Pound, letters of 1 November 1927 and 3 August 1938 cited in, respectively, *Ezra Pound to His Parents: Letters 1895–1929*, eds., Mary de Rachewiltz, A. David Moody and Joanna Moody (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2010),

- 638; and Roxana Preda, ed., *Ezra Pound's Economic Correspondence, 1933–1940* (University of Florida Press, Gainesville: 2001), 215; hereafter *Preda/EPEC*.
- 42 Leon Surette, *Pound in Purgatory: From Economic Radicalism to Anti-Semitism* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana: 1999), ch. 11; see also David Ten Eyck, *Ezra Pound's Adams Cantos* (Continuum, London: 2012), chs. 1 and 5.
- 43 "Fascism", in Miranda Hickman, ed., *One Must Not Go Altogether With The Tide: The Letters of Ezra Pound and Stanley Nott* (McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston: 2011), 289–293.
- 44 Pound to Arnold Leese, two letters of 9 November 1934, "Ezra Pound Papers", Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 43, 29/1229; hereafter YBL. "Volitionist 8" refers to Pound's questionnaire, widely sent out from 8 August 1934; reprinted in *Preda/EPEC*, 255.
- 45 Pound, "But How? Second Item", 23 March 1942, "Ezra Pound Speaking": *Radio Speeches of WWII*, ed., Leonard W. Doob (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1978), #19.
- 46 Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), 87; hereafter *Redman/EPIF*. Pound's translated interview with Francesco Monotti is also in *ibid.*, 76–77.
- 47 *EPPP/VI*, 101, 166.
- 48 Pound, "Murder by Capital", *ibid.*, 56.
- 49 Bill Freind, "'Why Do You Want to Put Your Ideas in Order?': Rethinking the Politics of Ezra Pound", *Journal of Modern Literature* 23/3–4 (2000), 545–546; see also Thomas Cody, "Adams, Mussolini and the Personality of Genius", *Paideuma* 18/3–4 (Winter 1989).
- 50 John Whittam, *Fascist Italy* (Manchester University Press, Manchester: 1995), 89.
- 51 According to Heymann, Pound sent more than 50 items to the Duce alone; see the first appendix to David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), 317; hereafter *Heymann/LR*.
- 52 *Preda/EPEC*, 94–95, 122, 124. Pound's reference to "homo economicus" is again derived from Mussolini's 14 November 1933 speech, "On the Corporate State", 24.
- 53 Benjamin L. Alpers, *Dictators, Democracy, and American Public Culture: Envisioning the Totalitarian Enemy, 1920s–1950s* (University of North Carolina Press, London: 2003), 1–2.
- 54 Freind, "'Why Do You Want to Put Your Ideas in Order?'" 547. On Francis Stuart, see Brendan Barrington, ed., *The Wartime Broadcasts of Francis Stuart, 1942–1944* (Lilliput Press, Dublin: 2000).
- 55 Aline Lion, *The Pedigree of Fascism: A Popular Essay on the Western Philosophy of Politics* (Sheed and Ward, London: 1927), 234.
- 56 Ugo Spirito in Roger Griffin, ed., *Fascism: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1995), 69. This volume offers convincing

- demonstration of the regenerative – or in Pound's terms, “constructive” – impulse at the heart of fascist ideology; for Mussolini's Italy, see excerpts, 23–88.
- 57 Pound to Camillo Pellizzi, 26 January 1937, *Preda/EPEC*, 203; and Pound to Bruno de Peverelli, President of Rome's English-language *Weekly News*, 12 January 1940, YBL 13/573.
- 58 *Heymann/LR*, 99; and Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (Faber and Faber, London: 1972), 466.
- 59 Pound to Prince Ranieri di San Faustino, 11 September 1941, YBL 46/2020.
- 60 *Redman/EPIF*, 158.
- 61 Mary de Rachewiltz, “Fragments of an Atmosphere”, *Agenda* 17/2-3-18/1 (1980), 161; and Pound to Philip Mairet, 13 January 1935, *Preda/EPEC*, 132.
- 62 Pound, “Mr. Ezra Pound Broadcast ...: typescript”, [11 January] 1935 (misdated 1941), YBL 132/5583. For the speech in question, declaring the World Economic Crisis “not a crisis in the traditional sense of the term, it is the passage from one phase of civilization to another”, see Mussolini, “To the Workers of Milan”, 6 October 1934, *Four Speeches on the Corporate State*, 38; available in Italian online at: [www.ilcovo.mastertopforum.net/-vp8654.html?sid=4770c636599fafo2c5b7](http://www.ilcovo.mastertopforum.net/-vp8654.html?sid=4770c636599fafo2c5b7).
- 63 Mussolini, “To the Workers of Milan”, 39–40. Pound's other references to this speech include, for example, the January 1938 “For a New Paideuma” declaration in *The Criterion*: “I take it that the ‘indifferent have never made history’, and that the paideuma makes history”, William Cookson, ed., *Ezra Pound: Selected Prose, 1909–1965* (Faber, London: 1973), 254. I am grateful to Archie Henderson for his assistance with this and the preceding note.
- 64 See Philip Cannistraro, “The Radio in Fascist Italy”, *Journal of European Studies* 2/2 (1972); and Giuseppe Richeri, “Italian Broadcasting and Fascism, 1924–1937”, *Media, Culture and Society* 2/1 (1980).
- 65 “Guide to the Ezra Pound Papers”; entries for each are provided in Philip Cannistraro's *Historical Dictionary of Fascist Italy* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1980).
- 66 *EPPP/VI*, 255.
- 67 See Hickman, ed., *One Must Not Go Altogether With The Tide*, letters 10 and 17.
- 68 Leon Surette, *Dreams of a Totalitarian Utopia: Literary Modernism and Politics* (McGill-Queen's University Press: London: 2011), 221.
- 69 Pound's unpublished typescripts are listed in the “Guide to the Ezra Pound Papers”; the earliest, from February 1933, “Fascism or Direction of the Will”, has been surveyed in Rainey, *The Institutions of Modernism*, 126–128. See also Pound's “Finally A Foreword”, the frontispiece to the second edition of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*.
- 70 *Ibid.*, 98–99.
- 71 *Ibid.*, 28, 34–35 66, 110, 73–74.

- 72 Camillo Pellizzi, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 14 February 1936, cited in Luca Gallesi, "Il Carteggio Pound-Pellizzi negli anni del fascismo", *Nuova Storia Contemporanea* 6/3 (May–June 2002), 70–71. According to Gallesi, Odor Por facilitated Pellizzi's review of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*. I am grateful to Andrea Rinaldi for his assistance with this passage. Pound swiftly thanked Pellizzi for his "valentine in the Corriere", 15 February 1936, YBL 40/1688.
- 73 Giuseppe Prezzolini, *Fascism*, trans. Kathleen Macmillan (Methuen, London: 1926), 55–57.
- 74 Giorgio Pini, *The Official Life of Benito Mussolini*, trans. Luigi Villari (Hutchinson, London: 1939), 236–237.
- 75 Piero Melograni, "The Cult of the Duce in Mussolini's Italy", *Journal of Contemporary History* 11/4 (1976), 233.
- 76 Emil Ludwig, *Talks with Mussolini* (Little, Brown and Company, Boston: 1933), 126–127; and Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, 13.
- 77 Wendy Flory, "Pound and Anti-Semitism", *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*, 287.
- 78 Preda, "Social Credit in America", 217.
- 79 Pound to Gorham Munson, 2 December 1936, *Preda/EPEC*, 199.
- 80 Asvero Gravelli, cited in Griffin, ed., *Fascism*, 66–67. For Pound's correspondence with *Antieuropa*, see YBL 2/76; Pound's short text for *Antieuropa* in late 1939 is reproduced in *EPPP/VII*, 469.
- 81 Pound's "League or Convention of Peoples" was "deposited at the office of Mussolini" in October 1935, *Heymann/LR*, 101; this text, dated "Roma, ottobre 14/15 XIII", is reproduced Niccolò Zapponi, *L'Italia di Ezra Pound* (Bulzoni Editore, Rome: 1976), 205–207.
- 82 Burton Hatlen, "Ezra Pound and Fascism", *Ezra Pound and History*, ed., Marianne Korn (National Poetry Foundation, Bangor: 1985), 155, 157.
- 83 See, for example, Alexander de Grand, *Italian Fascism: Its Origins and Development* (University of Nebraska Press, London: 1989), ch. 10, arguing (156): "the Fascists never completely opted for a single style."

# 3

## Unpaid Propaganda ‘for a Decent Europe’, 1935–40

**Abstract:** *Treating the five years before the outbreak of World War II, this chapter considers Pound’s turn toward writing gratis propaganda on behalf of Fascist Italy and the British Union of Fascists. Textual discussion of 65 texts written between winter 1935–36 and spring 1940 is also treated with an eye to the synergy between Pound’s propaganda and ideological points raised by European fascist movements, ranging from the invasion of Abyssinia to the increased endorsement of anti-Semitism in the later 1930s. Pound’s propaganda writings for the BUF (Action, British Union Quarterly) and Fascist Italy (the British-Italian Bulletin), respectively, are further contextualized through his extensive correspondence with leading figures in both movements.*

Feldman, Matthew. *Ezra Pound’s Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.  
DOI: 10.1057/9781137345516.

I am telling you that nonsense is being talked about the Roman Empire a.d. 1937.

Pound, "Europe MCMXXXVI", *The Globe* (1937)<sup>1</sup>

Fascism's 'empire of the spirit' quickly turned corporeal following Italy's undeclared war on Abyssinia *Africa Orientale Italiana* between 1935 and 1941, or Italian East Africa; now Ethiopia and parts of present-day Eritrea), in contravention of a 20-year 'Treaty of Friendship' signed in 1928. Many in Europe were caught off guard by Fascism's ruthless invasion on 3 October 1935; yet many in Italy were not. Some three months before the outbreak of the conflict, Pound had already compared Abyssinian territory to the US's 1803 Louisiana Purchase from France, declaring: "a war in Africa is better than one in Europe."<sup>2</sup> Italian propaganda consistently emphasized many of the same points as Pound; to take but two examples of Anglophone publications deriving from Fascist Italy, Achille Bossi thus concluded his lengthy pamphlet, "Notes by an Italian on the Abyssinian Question": "in East Africa Italy is fighting for her existence [...] This policy, which aims to give Italy larger possibilities of life, and to strengthen in Europe the foundations of peace, is the policy of Mussolini."<sup>3</sup> Nor were such views restricted to Italians – Fascists or otherwise. Another pamphlet alongside dozens of others on the issue, penned by the Briton Henry Cunliffe Hopkinson – a colonial medic previously based in Nigeria – claimed that an "embittered" Abyssinia, little more than a "nation of slave traders", had consistently demonstrated "unfair discrimination against Italy". Given its own imperial rapacity in Africa and elsewhere, for Hopkinson "the moral admonitions of British statesmen against aggression not only annoy Italy intensely, but appear to savour of hypocrisy [...] consequently] the bitter attacks on Britain in the Italian press have ample justification."<sup>4</sup> Quite clearly, Pound was hardly alone, or out of political step, in his views on the issue.

Scholars have convincingly shown that perspectives like H.C. Hopkinson's were little more than Fascist propaganda, sanitizing both the racism-suffused Italian colonialization across Saharan Africa (extending to both then-Somaliland and present-day Libya) no less than the war crimes accompanying the Abyssinian conquest – the latter extending to "use of mustard gas, the bombing of Red Cross hospitals and ambulances, the execution of captured prisoners without trial", and more.<sup>5</sup> As much touted by Italy's 'civilizing mission', slavery ensnared some 20% of

Abyssinia's population, but forcibly occupying the remaining 8 million Ethiopians was scarcely a helpful response. Nor did Italy succeed in abolishing slavery in its other African colonies. Instead, atrocities and reprisal killings, mass internment and colonial racial laws (including outright apartheid; penalties for mixed marriages; and forced domestic labor) were Italy's companions in conquest.<sup>6</sup> These outrages were swiftly recognized by the League of Nations which, within a week of the invasion, declared Italy the aggressor and passed mild economic sanctions against Italy – led by British diplomatic efforts). Ultimately every League member joined this unprecedented, if largely toothless, condemnation (save Italy, of course; Hitler's Germany had withdrawn from the League of Nations in November 1933). In turn, this led to Fascist charges that the League was “an essentially political organ” that failed to honor the traditional ‘white man's burden’; namely,

the old contrast between a barbarian people's right to independence and right of more evolute [sic] people to extend to them the benefits of civilisation and to exploit for the good of all, the unworked resources of the country [...] will it not be acknowledged that it is right that, whilst the United States hold to the Monroe Doctrine and Japan is establishing herself in Asia, the European Nations and therefore, Italy, should look upon Africa as their most natural field of expansion?

For Pound, the world's hostile reaction was but further proof of Fascist superiority. Writing to, amongst others, Massachusetts Republican Representative George Tinkham following the conclusion of hostilities on 9 May 1936, Pound declared: “Mussolini certainly has had a great triumph and in his age and generation is a great man. Any man who can successfully defy England and the League of Nations, representing 52 nations, is a man of strength and he has my admiration”.<sup>8</sup> As with defiance of the League, so too with economic autarky; the exporting of European conflict; and the ‘civilization’ of ‘savages’: in each theme, Pound marched in lockstep with Fascist propaganda over the Italo-Abyssinian war. In contemporaneous letters, in fact, he was quite explicit on this point, in terms of both motivation and tactics. Writing to his Italian sometime-collaborator, Odon Por, on 4 January 1936, for instance, Pound declared, “I think Italy OUGHT to have Abyssinia. There is no contrasto between me and the govt. on that point”. He continued:

I want a strong Italy because I see it as ESSENTIAL to a calm and civilized Europe. That position allows me to be both VIGOROUSLY pro Italian AND

friendly with anybody else who behaves decently. It is also more USEFUL to Italy, that I sh[oul]d take that stand [...] I am sending copy of Brit/ Ital/ Bulletin might be useful for you to have article I did for Camagna; as showing how far I go for Italy.<sup>9</sup>

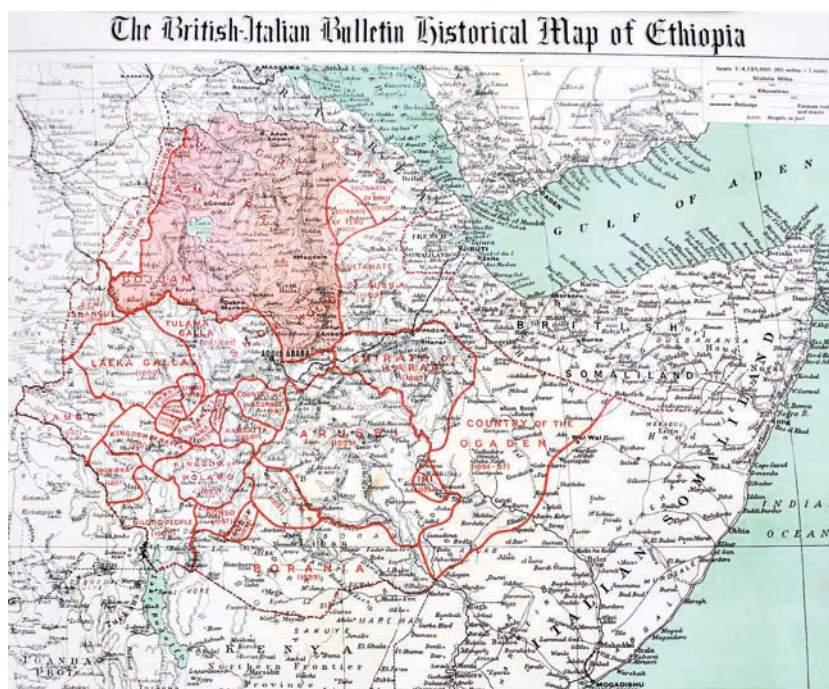
Pound's reference to Carlo Camagna and the short-lived *British-Italian Bulletin* highlighted an important change in his support for Fascist Italy. As stressed earlier, Pound had fully 'converted' to Fascism's political religion by the winter of 1932–33. Yet only after the start of the Italo-Abyssinian War, it seems, did he feel emboldened to consistently tout Fascism's cause. Put another way, the Abyssinian War may be seen as the catalyst in Pound's embrace of propaganda for an organ of Fascist Italy; in this case, Britain's headquarters for the Fascist abroad. In a series of insightful letters to Camillo Pellizzi, then heading the "well disposed" (to Pound) *Fasci Italiani all'Estero* in London, the poet's motivations were clearly and emphatically expressed.<sup>10</sup> After criticizing the functionaries Luigi Villari's and Dino Grandi's supposedly tepid commitment to the Fascist revolution, Pound exclaimed on 8 April 1936: "It is only the men who NEEDED the NEW Italy who are a [use] to us. The rest have gradually to crumble away from the new growth". This sentiment was redoubled in Pound's subsequent letter to Pellizzi – written the same day Mussolini announced the establishment of the Fascist empire to thousands of cheering Italians in the Palazzo Venezia – "There are TWO kinds of people in Italy, those who have tolerated and/or exploited fascism and those OF US who NEEDED the new Italy to breathe in."<sup>11</sup>

Unusually for Pound, he commenced writing on the "regeneration of Italy" *pro bono* for the *British-Italian Bulletin*, as he declared upon recommending these texts to an academic from his alma mater, Hamilton College: "I am not being paid, and I am not hired by Italy to write Italian propaganda."<sup>12</sup> Nor was this outlet, a weekly two pages inserted in the official organ of the London Fasci Abroad, *L'Italia Nostra* [*Our Italy*], intended to be "mere propaganda". Rather, as publicly proclaimed "To our British Friends" across many of the *British-Italian Bulletin's* front pages during its yearlong existence (between 8 November 1935 and 24 October 1936), the insert aimed to advance "the Italian side of the Ethiopian dilemma". In coming to write nearly weekly for the *British-Italian Bulletin*, Pound had almost certainly been introduced to the editor of *L'Italia Nostra*, Carlo Camagna, via Pellizzi in later 1935; his first article appeared in the insert's Christmas Special that year. Revealingly, this issue was the only one to be sold as a standalone pamphlet (for two pence), and – unlike the previous



seven inserts at two pages or the remaining issues, running to four sides after 27 December – the 20 December 1935 issue ran to eight pages. It also contained a color map of Abyssinia which Pound specifically praised in a letter to Camagna from early January 1936, since “ONE error of most propaganda is that it thinks too much about being propaganda and not enough about GETTING READERS and keeping ‘em interested. You dont want to convert the CONverted, but the unconverted”<sup>13</sup> (see Figure 1).

By this time Pound was clearly trying to “convert” neutrals as best he could. This extended to his correspondence with various US policy-makers – edited collections of letters from the period include now-published correspondence with congressmen George Tinkham, William Borah and Bronson Cutting – as well as Senator James Pope, then-chairman of the isolationist ‘Nye Commission’ on banking reform. Writing to



**FIGURE 1** *Color map of Abyssinia, cited in Pound's mid-1930s correspondence. Reproduced from the British-Italian Bulletin Christmas Special insert for the London-based Italian newspaper, L'Italia Nostra, 20 December 1935*

the latter on 9 January 1936, Pound restated his views on the Abyssinian war by referring to the *British-Italian Bulletin's* Christmas Special:

The practical way to peace is via a strong Italy/ and by the damned English learning to live if not among equals at least among European nations whom she can[']t unmercifully bully on ALL and every occasion. [...] Qualified English ADMIT that “Abyssinia will have to GO”[.] We couldn't have semi-nole scalping settler in perpetuity. If the League yatter mean[t] anything they wd/ offer mandate to Germany who wants or needs colonies. Will England do that? I doubt it. But the question might be raised, does Germany want to assist Italy in settling Abys/ under League Mandate?

MAP of Abyssinia, with dates when majority of population were conquered is very good tonic for British pretenses. A lot since 1900 and most since 1885. FACTS!!! very useful.<sup>14</sup>

While not exactly “[q]ualified English”, this Christmas Special alone contained friendly articles by the aforementioned Henry Cunliffe Hopkinson and other pro-Fascists and British Italophiles like Herbert Vivian (“the vast regeneration of Italy, which Fascism has swiftly and satisfactorily imposed”, according to his flattering *Fascist Italy* from 1936<sup>15</sup>) and Major E. W. Polson Newman (“the introduction of a civilising influence into Ethiopia”). Like the latter, Pound's article from that Christmas Special, “Twelve Years and Twelve Years: A Keystone of Europe”, was strategically provided front-page billing to assert: “A strong Italy is the key-stone of Europe for peace, for the good life, for civilization. No man living has preserved the Peace of Europe as often as has Benito Mussolini”.<sup>16</sup> In Camagna's words to Pound, the issue was “an unhoped for success”, which had “entirely sold out in two days”. Camagna then requested further contributions from Pound, resulting in 28 articles across the remaining 42 weekly *British-Italian Bulletin* inserts for *L'Italia Nostra*.<sup>17</sup>

Prior to offering an archival account of Pound's Anglophone propaganda output over the next 100 months – concluding with the collapse of the Salò Republic in April 1945 – it first merits summarizing some of the themes pursued across the remainder of this study. As a leading modernist, Pound's propaganda texts and, later, broadcasts were always unconventional: this was true both before his conversion to fascist ideology as well as in his writings from St Elizabeths asylum after World War II. As a natural corollary of this political faith – one shared, moreover, by millions of Italian Fascists, and indeed tens of millions of activists in other interwar fascist movements – Pound consistently advocated signature policies, whether for Mussolini's PNF, Mosley's BUF or, later, Hitler's

'New Order'. This was manifested, in the various Anglophone outlets in which he appeared, by Pound often being the most frequent contributor to the publication or program in question. Moreover, regime leaders and propaganda functionaries heard him out, if not always seriously – less on account of his literary stature or notoriety as an avant-garde artist, but in light of his considered strategies for advancing fascist propaganda. Furthermore, if only to demonstrate his growing distance from politically independent economics as he embraced fascism, Pound's letter to the US-based "new economist", Hugo Fack, written a day after his first publication with the *British-Italian Bulletin*, is especially revealing:

you hamper MY propaganda by not showing more readiness to play ball [...] there is the IDEAL held up in Fascism of a FUTURE when the state will be able to SIT BACK and do nothing. Practically/ until a NATION has autarchia/ i.e. CAN produce what it needs/ it is open to be blackmailed by ANY stronger force/ as Italy is NOW by England, i.e. international USURY [...] Mussolini's first great technical feat was possibly the denial of the "homo economicus" an abstract entity, un-kin to the plain human being.<sup>18</sup>

In turning to Anglophone journalistic contributions for the PNF and BUF in the 1930s, an apt point of departure are Pound's December 1935 letters to Carlo Camagna astride his first, 20 December, article for the *British-Italian Bulletin*. Several of his assertions cited in the paragraph above are powerfully affirmed in Pound's inimitable style. Responding to a 7 December 1935 invitation to write in defense of the Abyssinian invasion, Pound stressed in his reply to Camagna on 9 December: "I certainly do not want payment for anything I can write in this cause. Put whatever sum you might think of paying me into some fund for LA PATRIA, yours by birth, and mine by love and from long hospitality received."<sup>19</sup> Favoring an 'autarkic' Italy, another letter from December 1935 queried if Camagna would be amenable to a kind of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* sequel, arguing that fascism necessarily assumed different manifestations in each country. Yet at the same time, "propaganda must (as I see it) emphasize the universals, not the contingents". "A STRONG ITALY is essential to the good life", Pound continued, "FOR European civilization FIRST problem is Italian AUTARCHIA. I believe I am more use, more appui [support] when speaking from PanEuropean view point. Strong ITALY FOR the sake of DECENT world civilization." Should Camagna have failed to appreciate his emphasis, Pound added a postscript to his 30 December missive:

any time you think it useful you can print or say that I consider anything I wrote in the Bulletin not as service to Italy but as SERVICE TO THE PEACE AND SANITY of Europe, and that I decline to take any pay for it.

(This if you have to counter accusations that I have been bought by fascism etc.)<sup>20</sup>

Finally, and also portending the darkening of Pound's ideological rhetoric to come, another, undated letter from December 1935 asks Camagna about "ONE of the currents of abuse of Italy"; namely, rumors of an imminent defeat of Italy abroad or, worse, of Mussolini ousted domestically: "CAN you get any PROOF that it comes from Russia via JEWS?"<sup>21</sup> Camagna apparently remained silent on the request – Mussolini's racial laws targeting Jews, in any case, were not enacted until 1938 – but, all the same, anti-Semitism would continue to roil European fascist policies in the 1930s, which was increasingly reflected in Pound's propaganda for interwar Italian and British fascist movements.

At the start of 1936, Pound took aim at the League of Nations – that "criminal falsity", "corrupted by every underground financial pressure in Europe" – in his second *British-Italian Bulletin* article, "A World Liability".<sup>22</sup> In keeping with Italophile opinion following the illegal attack upon Abyssinia, Britain came in for special criticism given its ostensible "coercion" of other League members in levying sanctions against Fascist Italy. A small cabal of conspirators were to blame for this state of affairs, Pound explained in another article on 25 January 1936, "No Tame Robots in Fascist Italy: The Intellectual Frontier":

the problem of Italy is MORE than the problem of Italy. The enemies of the New Italy are the enemies of all Europe. They are in especial and in a most virulent way the enemies of England. And the sooner England understands this, the sooner the British people understand this, the sooner will we proceed to a new and a saner Europe.<sup>23</sup>

The Fascist revolution had rid Italy of its usurious enemies, Pound pronounced a week later. "Mussolini has preserved a gold *measure*, in a sense, for his currency; but that currency is based on Italy's faith in the Duce", declared a Pound more and more at odds with any recognizable form of social credit: "the Lira springs from the *will* of the nation."<sup>24</sup>

After four weeks' silence, Pound returned to the *British-Italian Bulletin* with "Why I Live in Sunny Rapallo: A Matter of Degrees". Despite the title, it was not the weather inducing Pound's praise, but instead the triumph of Italy "in the year XIV" of Fascism; namely, "the combination:

Economic freedom, civic responsibility. In the new Italian Paideuma you will find, I think, an intolerance of civic indifference and of economic illiteracy". Proof of this rested, Pound felt, not only in debates within regime journals like *Critica Fascista*, *Civiltà Fascista* and *La Vita Italiana* – some of the periodicals he received at this time, retained amongst his papers at the Beinecke archives – but in Pellizzi's review of his *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* earlier that month, demonstrating "a healthier state of mind, a higher state of civilisation and mental alertness, than ever I encountered in London."<sup>25</sup> If this ebullience smacked of propaganda, Pound told readers in his subsequent contribution, well, it was. Yet this was no mere Fascist propaganda, but instead a kind of civilizational agitprop:

I am not writing Italian propaganda, any more than I am writing British propaganda. I am if you like, writing European propaganda for the sake of a decent Europe wherein the best people will not be murdered for the monetary profit of the lowest and rottenest, and wherein the divergent national components might collaborate for a sane unstarved civilisation.<sup>26</sup>

Britain and France were impeding this "decent Europe" – or at least nefarious elements within these countries – and both needed, urged Pound in his column the next week, "to be "PURGED".<sup>27</sup>

Remaining with his European theme over April 1936 – while throughout spring contributing to the *British-Italian Bulletin* almost weekly – Pound argued that "Italy is leading Europe toward a more decent civilization" through a new "action of mind".<sup>28</sup> Far from any "demo-liberal" or "chaotic democracy", this was predicated upon Fascist-style "Organic Democracy": "Is this Italian propaganda, social credit propaganda, Democratic propaganda; or is it a simple statement set down with the minimum of bias, in the interest of national and international sanity?"<sup>29</sup> By this time, Pound was virtually unrecognizable as a social credit activist, for the latter was in "stasis"; instead, his advocacy aimed at inducing a "A Rising Civilisation" right across Europe, captured in his article's title that week.<sup>30</sup> Between these two texts, moreover, "The Fascist Ideal" made clear what was at stake: "The trouble with Europe, A.D. 1936 is that the rest of the Nations have not caught up with Italian ORGANISATION", itself was powered by a "Fascist ideal of RESPONSIBILITY [which] is vastly higher than the ideal of liberty."<sup>31</sup>

The apparent chasm between *laissez-faire* liberty and Fascist responsibility was further widened in May 1936, when Italy concluded its

conquest of Abyssinia. In “New Italy’s Challenge”, Pound correspondingly distinguished between “the fascist state and the usury State”; the former naturally represented by Italy, and the latter by Britain: “The principle of LIFE, of continuous renewal and renovation functioning IN ITALY, is both unknown and unheralded in the English press.”<sup>32</sup> Significantly for Pound, the US was becoming indistinguishable from Britain regarding allegedly dishonest practices, ranging from banking and the arms trade to the press, international affairs and even political representation. As once-important differences between British and Americans collapsed under the all-pervasive force of usury, both places – and other democracies as well, like France – were ever more negatively contrasted with Fascist Italy: “The Italian Government is for the people far more than any other Government in Europe or America. It is my firm belief that the Italian government for the past decade, and ever since the March on Rome (1922), has been for the people steadily and unflinching.”<sup>33</sup> No matter that even the pretense of multiparty elections had long been scotched under Mussolini; it was Fascist Italy, unlike Anglo-American degradation, that had dealt an initial death-blow to usury. As Pound moved to fiercely distinguish between decadent liberalism and regenerative fascism, an image of parasitical finance became increasingly visible in his *British-Italian Bulletin* articles. Usury was increasingly associated with the stereotypical face of the Jew.

One of the earliest examples of Pound’s anti-Semitic publicism originated in his aforementioned pamphlet from 1935, *Social Credit: An Impact*:

Usury and sodomy, the Church condemned as a pair, to one hell, the same for one reason, namely that they are both against natural increase. Dante knew this and said it. It is registered in the Merchant of Venice, where Shylock wants no mere shinbone or elbow [...] It is our generation’s job so to hammer a few simple truths into the human consciousness that no Meyer Anselm can efface them.

As I have shown elsewhere, the presumed ethnicity of Pound’s usurers meriting a “delousing” was steadily emerging in his mid-1930s journalism.<sup>34</sup> At first, this was approached through literary allusion, exemplified by the appropriation of Shakespeare’s Shylock, the Jewish financier seeking his ‘pound of flesh’ in *The Merchant of Venice*. Such symbolism quickly found its way into the *British-Italian Bulletin*; for example, “A Civilising Force on the Move” contrasts “Italy (in the year XIV of her New Era)

as building a new type of civilization, probably preferable to that which ended in mass murder in 1914/1919” with other ‘powers’ seeking “another little war for the benefit of Messieurs Rothschild”.<sup>35</sup> Yet if references to stereotypes from Enlightenment Europe were too old or arcane, more recognizable Jewish figures were soon used as synecdoches for *British-Italian Bulletin* readers. Another target of this durable anti-Semitic trope was then-French Premier Raymond Blum, a socialist and long-assimilated Frenchman, dubbed by Pound “a Jewish Ramsey MacDonald” in a letter to George Tinkham.<sup>36</sup> More opaquely in his journalism, by mid-1936 “the Blum mentality” – that is, actions in defense of “international swindlers” – was negatively contrasted with Fascist Italy’s drive toward economic autarky.<sup>37</sup> Over time, such anti-Semitic dog-whistles became less a feature of Pound’s economic views than another article of faith in his fascist propaganda.

By the final issue of the *British-Italian Bulletin* on 24 October, Pound’s burgeoning anti-Semitism was becoming more pronounced, if still quite unlike the biological racism habitually employed by what Jeffrey Herf has usefully termed Nazism’s “Anti-Semitic Consensus”. For Pound, by contrast:

In order to eliminate all irrelevance and any racial red herring I propose to introduce a Jewish word of abuse into the article. Every straight Jew uses the term “schnorrer” in disparagement of a particular type of humanity. The sniggering of the schnorrer press when Italy aligned the lira can serve also as a tribute to Rome.<sup>38</sup>

Yet with Abyssinia now conquered, the insert’s *raison d’être* no longer existed. Although Pound protested its closure in private and public over the ensuing months – twice in September 1936 he wrote: “A free forum for the discussion of European affairs is a vital necessity, even if there are only four pages of it”<sup>39</sup> – the *British-Italian Bulletin*’s apparent usefulness had come to an end by autumn 1936. In terms of fascist propaganda, however, Pound’s activism would only increase.

If October 1936 witnessed the closure of Pound’s first avowedly propagandistic outlet for fascism, it also saw the onset of his work for Sir Oswald Mosley’s British Union of Fascists. The latter had recently changed its emblem to an encircled lightning flash; had changed its stance on Jews to open anti-Semitism; and had changed its name to the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists (then as now, shortened to BUF). Prior to these substantial changes, in fact, Pound had regarded

the BUF as too conservative. In the first of 16 letters to ‘The Leader’ between 1934 and 1940, Pound insisted that fascism entailed “physical courage and action” rather than the BUF’s “intellectual cowardice (and sloth)”. Instead, Pound upbraided Mosley: “You could have an international significance IF you wd/ look forward. Instead of playing around with the theatrical side of fascism [...] You have got to do MORE than merely lie down in the wake of Italian fascism. You have got to be at least contemporary with ANNO XII.” Signing this letter “impartially yours”, Pound evinced concern that the BUF had not effectively adapted fascism’s ‘universal’ ideology to the specific context of interwar Britain.<sup>40</sup> Writing in 1934 to another leading figure in the BUF, Alexander Raven Thomson, Pound objected that Mosleyite fascism in Britain had failed to show “that Fascism is a great and magnificent URGE to regeneration, THROUGHOUT the whole bally show, LIVING, how to live, etc.” This was compounded by an inability to demonstrate the movement’s national distinctiveness: “You have BRITISH humans to work on. I don’t think you have shown ENOUGH sense of the difference [...] you can’t talk Italian to or in [F]ascist dialect when presenting to a different people”.<sup>41</sup> That BUF functionaries like Thomson were being paid for their services also troubled Pound who, writing to a known opponent of the BUF, the social creditor John Hargrave, initially found Mosley to be a “PSEUDO/fascist”.<sup>42</sup> Yet less than two years later Pound wrote to Odon Por, having changed his tune: “if you note the B.U.F. you will see that Os Mos/ and Co are more reasonable and their papers a damn sight more INTELLIGENT than the Soc/ cr/ suburban gazettes”.<sup>43</sup> That Pound had become a leading contributor to BUF publications by this time was a good reason for his praise of their publications; but it was not, surely, the decisive one. So what changed?

For one, contextually speaking, international tensions in Europe between 1934 and 1936 rose palpably. Italian Fascism had conquered Abyssinia and established an empire in East Africa. Significantly, Mussolini’s son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano, Minister for Minculpop’s short-lived predecessor, the Ministry for Press and Propaganda, characterized “the Italo-Ethiopian War as the most systematic and most successful campaign to date”. In a victory speech on 22 May 1936, Ciano then vaingloriously set out the aims for Fascist propaganda – otherwise “expressed by a single word: TRUTH” – “*In this period of glory in which we have the fortune to live, may the Ministry for Press and Propaganda be, and increasingly become, the centre which collects and radiates the forces*



of the great revival which derives its name from the Duce.”<sup>44</sup> The effects of British-led sanctions through the League of Nations’ aegis, furthermore, had helped drive Mussolini into the arms of Hitler, resulting in the formation of the Axis in October 1936. By then, both friends and enemies of fascism in Europe had become more vociferous, with lines in the Iberian sand drawn after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936 and, less violently, across British roads in East London as well, with the ‘Battle of Cable Street’ occurring that October. During this crucial months Pound’s commitment to fascism deepened, while the fortunes of social credit economics started seriously flagging. Still more personally, dwindling publishing outlets also mattered to Pound – a situation that was to get much worse over the coming years. Still undeterred, responding to Pellizzi’s praise for his “splendid bits” on the “creative novelty” of Fascist Italy in the *British-Italian Bulletin* several months after its closure, Pound offered: “I shall be delighted to carry on as soon as some sort of OPENING presents itself and STAYS open.”<sup>45</sup>

That very lack of a journalistic opening for fascism in Italy was filled by a *carte blanche* invitation from the British fascist Angus MacNab, who praised Pound’s writings for the *British-Italian Bulletin* – “whose policy has our whole-hearted support” – and then promised: “You are always entitled to 3000 words”.<sup>46</sup> MacNab’s pledge followed Pound’s first article for the *Fascist Quarterly* (only appearing in 1935 and 1936), declaratively titled “A Social Creditor Serves Notice”. Pound’s text detected a convergence in BUF policy with the “new economics”; both recognizing the “different phases of the SAME great revolutionary PROCESS occurring SIMULTANEOUSLY in different parts of the world at different levels of civilization”. If his support for fascism in Britain “embarrasses” fellow social creditors, like Hargrave’s Green Shirts or their economic progenitor, C.H. Douglas, then “so much the worse for that organization”.<sup>47</sup> Beyond announcing his growing divergence from social credit, Pound’s acceptance of MacNab’s offer heralded another 38 propaganda texts for BUF publications over as many months – as the coming war progressively shut down Pound’s non-Italian outlets (excepting, until 1942, Pound’s sometime column for the *Japan Mail & Times* and a few scattered Anglophone pieces). Pound was amongst the most frequent contributors to BUF propaganda during this period, and at the height of his activism for British fascism could declare to the ablest of the BUF’s editors, Raven Thomson – MacNab having left with William ‘Lord Haw Haw’ Joyce and several others to form the miniscule National Socialist League – that

there was “not anything of mine that runs counter to B.U. Nothing CONSCIOUSLY does so.”<sup>48</sup>

In terms of BUF policy over the second half of the 1930s, Pound would know. In addition to receiving numerous pamphlets and journals produced by Greater Britain Publications, Pound was a subscriber to their middlebrow weekly, *Action*; offered his propaganda and translation services free of charge; and regularly dealt with leading British fascists – even attending Oswald Mosley’s public meeting in Lewisham on 9 November 1938; in the words of *Action* that weekend, “nodding his approval at each answer that Mosley gave.”<sup>49</sup> Quite apart from Pound’s expansive activities on behalf of the BUF, scholars of fascism have judged the party’s ideological program to be more cogent than that of other interwar movements in Europe. Notwithstanding various reasons for this – from the particular intellectuals in leadership positions to the BUF’s above-its-weight dissemination of propaganda materials; not forgetting the liberal context of Britain, both long-term and between the wars – Stanley Payne’s panoramic overview of the ‘fascist epoch’ stresses this standout feature of BUF ideology:

Like other fascist movements in satisfied imperial powers, the BUF never preached war and expansion, but peace and prosperity. Mosley was obsessed with overcoming social, economic, and cultural decadence, and he believed that only the disciplined nationalism and new cultural dynamism of a fascism on the Italian model could achieve it. The BUF was one of the most thoroughly programmatic of all fascist movements, with elaborate corporatist economic proposals.<sup>50</sup>

Seconding Payne’s view that the “BUF programme represents one of the clearest statements of policy ever to be put forward by a fascist group”, another scholar of fascism, Roger Eatwell, cites as evidence Raven Thomson’s *The Coming Corporate State* and Mosley’s 1938 *Tomorrow We Live*.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, Pound explicitly endorsed these two texts in his 1939 “The Criterion Passes”. Noel Stock also reports that he assisted in heavy revisions to Thomson’s re-issued pamphlet, *The Coming Corporate State*, while the latter then “edited and rearranged Pound’s *What is Money for?* to make it suitable for British Union readers, and it was published in April 1939 by Mosley’s Greater Britain Publications”.<sup>52</sup>

This degree of collaboration accords with another previously unpublished letter to Oswald Mosley: “I am willing to be of MORE use. And I am not incapable to taking suggestions as to HOW”, Pound wrote, offering free publication of his “Usury” Canto, although “this is something

that anyone else wd/ have to pay” to print.<sup>53</sup> Written in 1935, “Canto XLV”, or “Usura” – a term that, in the wake of the 1938 Italian Race Laws, Pound would give an explicitly anti-Semitic meaning to via the Hebrew synonym *neschek*<sup>54</sup> – never appeared in the BUF press, though its poetic contents were distilled in many other prose publications at this time.<sup>55</sup> One example is the aforementioned “The Criterion Passes”: “The forces of hell and kikery are not only wide but minute”; and another, “USURY has become the dominant force in the modern world”, concludes Pound’s stand-alone pamphlet (advertised in Spring 1939 for twopence), *What is money for?*: “Usury is the cancer of the world, which only the surgeon’s knife of Fascism can cut out of the life of the nations.”<sup>56</sup> This sentiment is almost identical to that advanced by Thomson during these years – in Julie Gottlieb’s considered view, “the leading ideologue of the movement” – like that espoused in *The Coming Corporate State*: “Money power is the greatest economic power in the modern world; such power should only be in the hands of clean and responsible Government, empowered by the people to use it in the national interest.”<sup>57</sup> To reformulate this change in Pound’s undertakings: whereas in 1922 he was famously editing T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and commanding top dollar for Cantos published in *Poetry* and other leading literary journals, by 1938 Pound was editing Raven Thomson’s work and unsuccessfully offering *gratis* publication of his “Usura” sequence to the BUF press.

As a result of his participation, even cursory reference to BUF texts between February 1937 and April 1940 reveals Pound’s influence upon their propaganda – no less than his proximity to the party’s ideological stance on issues ranging from anti-Semitism and perceived socio-cultural decadence to ‘third way’ politics and economics. (Surprisingly, his first two publications for *Action*, the 20 February and 6 March 1937 notes “From Ezra Pound”, as well as his longer, final text for that journal, the 25 April 1940 “Lies and National Policy”, have not been previously identified by bibliographers.) The launch issue of the *British Union Quarterly* in 1937 – featuring Pound’s analysis of “NESCHEK, the corrosive usury”, alongside contributions by Wyndham Lewis, Raven Thomson and Vidkun Quisling – also featured Angus MacNab’s glowing review of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, as well as a recommendation of that text in the journal’s concluding bibliography. *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* would be included in all subsequent bibliographies provided by the *British Union Quarterly*, while Pound’s influence surely also impacted upon the subsequent bibliographical inclusion of “new economists” Christopher Hollis

from 1937 and McNair Wilson from 1938, amongst others. Pound's contribution to that first issue of the *British Union Quarterly*, "Demarcations", was quickly praised in the Blackshirts' weekly press for its "machine-gun rattle of staccato prose" which, like his more general writings, "always remind me of the fiery Paul of the Acts of the Apostles".<sup>58</sup> By November of that year, his first full-length article for *Action*, "Social Credit Asses", was given front-page billing. Over the next month, the *British Union Quarterly* published another three of Pound's articles, in addition to a short review of his "Towards an Economic Orthology" – a line from which was recycled to advertise the issue as a whole: "This is the only English review in which I am able to read the writings of the other contributors."<sup>59</sup> All the same, sharp contractions in length and quality befell the *British Union Quarterly* thereafter. Yet slowing the journal's decline were frequent contributions from Pound's intellectual stable, ranging from Montgomery Butchart and John Drummond (twice) in 1938 to Rev. Henry Swabey's "From Just Price to Usury" article in 1939.

Redoubling the prominence given to Pound and his fellow "new economists" was the BUF's endorsement of social credit. Virtually absent from BUF propaganda for the first five years of the movement, from 1937 social credit texts and translations by Pound and his circle appeared frequently, extending to reviews of Christopher Hollis' *We Aren't So Dumb* in 1937; C. H. Douglas' *The Alberta Experiment* in 1939; and most strikingly, Henry Swabey's lengthy 1939 review of the little-known Silvio Gesell's *Natural Economic Order*. BUF staff also got into the act as well; in September 1937, Arthur Reade – like Pound, Thomson and Mosley, a prolific writer for the Blackshirts – published a revealing two-page analysis in *Action*.<sup>60</sup> Entitled "National Socialism and Social Credit", Reade argued that both movements fought on "the same front" (namely an "Economic Nationalism" attacking the "fraud of usury"), and specifically referred to Odon Por and Pound as figures often appearing in both social credit and "National Socialist" (i.e. fascist) publications. A number of similar examples helped to shape BUF propaganda in the movement's final years, when circulation and membership again began to rise into the tens of thousands following the BUF's hemorrhaging of support in the middle 1930s.<sup>61</sup>

The apogee of Pound's economic influence upon the BUF is surely represented by the stand-alone pamphlet, "British Union and Social Credit". Subtitled "*The argument in favour of the employment of the Douglas method when British Union has ended the Usury System*", William

Chambers-Hunter's 1939 text seemed to channel Pound's economic ideas: "It is not only possible to believe in social credit and to belong to the British Union; I go further and say that if we believe in social credit we must realise that only through British Union have we any hope of the executive instrument, through which a nation 'free of Usury' can be built." This "executive instrument" under the aegis of fascism, for Chambers-Hunter, looked increasingly like Nazi Germany rather than Britain or the US: "We will have been returned to power authorized to pass an Enabling Act so that we can govern in order that the will of the people shall be carried out."<sup>62</sup> That Pound was on the same page is suggested by his note of encouragement to Chambers-Hunter, reassuring him in April 1939 – "Hardly ANY detail can be effective propaganda" – while explicitly praising Chambers-Hunter's "British Union and Social Credit" in "Banks are a Blessing", since "[e]ven Social Credit might be unnecessary once a corporate state had arrived at a true sense of the nature of money."<sup>63</sup>

Quite apart from engagement with other far-right movements, unmistakably, Pound's relationship with the BUF in the second half of the 1930s was historically significant. Yet little space is given over to British fascism in Carpenter's 900+ page biography, departing from the common assumption that Pound's writings "were tangential to the main issues of [f]ascism"; and moreover, that "he remained extraordinarily ignorant of the real nature of [f]ascism itself."<sup>64</sup> As borne out by the close convergences on 'third way' economics, Pound's propaganda for the BUF consistently mirrored fascist ideology generally, and British permutations of fascism in particular. This was so much so that the latter was dubbed the "'local version' of totalitarian thought" in "The Criterion Passes".<sup>65</sup> Rejection of liberal democracy is similarly emphasized in Pound's 30 December 1937 article in *Action*:

a Parliament could be of some use, even if you didn't divide it up according to trades and professions [i.e. Fascism's corporate state], even if you hadn't the energy to let the best doctors, the best manufacturers, the best steel workers, railway workers, etc. meet by themselves and discuss their particular wants BEFORE joining in a central consultative body.

Pound's subsequent article noted that the BUF "will not appeal to the City of London" and other "parasites" because fascism "takes the form of the just price" – a position synonymous with Mosley's "national organization of the Corporate System" as expressed, for example, in "The

Leader's' pamphlet on taxation: "Government on big issues is delegated to the City of London, and Parliament occupies itself with the small and irrelevant issues which are suited to a nineteenth century debating society". Under the BUF, concluded Mosley, there would be "a system in which power rests with the people's Government and not with the financier, and within which the nation's credit is used for the nation's purposes and not for the financial racket."<sup>66</sup> As this suggests, Pound's rhetoric on Jews – while sometimes linguistically encoded through reference to Shakespeare's Shylock or to specific, wealthy Jews in Britain and the US – was closely in keeping with the attempted nuance and appeal to highly selective 'facts' clearly marking BUF anti-Semitism in the later 1930s:

This Movement does not attack Jews by reason of what they are, it resists them by reason of what they do. (1936)

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We do not persecute the Jews because of their race.

We do not oppose the Jews because of their religion.

We do not attack them for what they are.

WE DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST THEM BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY DO. (1937[?])

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Usury is bitterly condemned in the Talmud, but it is specifically permitted against, Gentiles, and there are many other passages permitting acts against the "Goyim," which are crimes when perpetrated against Jews. (1939)

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A race may possibly be held responsible for its worst individuals. The Jewish race has not for ages taken responsibility for the enforcement of its own law [...]. If a man is going to be anti-Semite, let him be objectively anti-Semite. Let him gather as many facts as he can, and not blink them. (1938)

The first of the above excerpts from BUF pamphlets is by William Joyce; the final is by Ezra Pound roughly two years later.<sup>67</sup>

"Nowhere is the decadence of Parliamentary systems more blatant" than in economic mismanagement, Pound later opined in *Action*: "The British tax system is black infamy and the sooner at least a nucleus of literate Englishmen know why it is black infamy, the sooner England will take the road toward national health". Following Germany's *Anschluss* with Austria, and the ascendancy – if not yet European domination – of Nazism amongst previously independent fascist movements, virtually all obstacles to "national health" had become identified with Jewry.

“International usury is not entirely Jewish, but the evil done by the Jewish elements in international bleeding is enough to explain hatred of Jewry ten times over”, Pound’s “Infamy of Taxes” explained:

branding of this ulcer was lost for the non-German world by being embedded in “Mein Kampf,” a book full of what seemed to the Anglo-Saxon public to be ranting and rhetoric but which the event has proved to be a work of genius, the language needed and effective to stir the German people into reorganising against their enemies.<sup>68</sup>

Another part of this National Socialist “language” was *Leihkapital* [loan capital]. Pound began using the phrase in early 1938 after encountering it in Wyndham Lewis’s 1931 *Hitler* (for it seems Pound had only encountered translated fragments of *Mein Kampf* by this time). It was to become a frequent term in his wartime propaganda broadcasts, like that of 15 March 1942: “The big Jew is so bound up with this Leihkapital that no one is able to unscramble that omelet”.<sup>69</sup> Whereas in 1934 Pound had referred to Germany’s Führer as “Shitler”, like other fascists in Western Europe and the US, his position changed markedly over the 1930s. In fact, as was argued long ago – even if leaving the crucial historical context largely unremarked – Pound’s turn to “favorable remarks” on Hitler occurred around the formation of the Axis with Nazi Germany and the crucial shift in the European balance of power during 1936.<sup>70</sup> By the time of the ‘Sudeten Crisis’ over Czechoslovakia in summer 1938, for Pound, the National Socialist “reorganising” of Germany prompted the question: “can you or can you not get comparable results with a rotten system (usuriocracy thinly disguised by a vote that none of you believes in) or have you got to alter the structure of your political mechanism?” Pound’s answer to that question, a spirited attack upon liberalism in the same article, was quite categorical: “There are no good liberals [....] The essence of Liberalism consists in lying about usury, and refusing to connect morals with matters of money.”<sup>71</sup>

In keeping with BUF attacks upon ‘decadent’ liberalism and ‘alien’ capitalism on the eve of World War II, Pound’s propaganda advocated financial governance via sub-divided guilds, to be achieved through a revolutionary renewal guided by will, strong leadership, and ideological faith. In these and other respects, Pound was far closer to interwar fascist theory and practice than has been previously maintained. An undoubted idiosyncrasy of expression with respect to his views, for both scholars and others enquiring into the ‘Pound Case’, seems to have obscured and

indeed marginalized the close correlations between these ideas and fascist policy – whether for Mosley’s BUF or for Mussolini’s PNF. At times in the critical literature, it is as if Pound was the only modernist, or the only anti-capitalist intellectual between the wars, to have embraced fascist ideology. As this study has shown, however, quite the opposite was the case: Pound was both informed and mainstream in advancing fascist propaganda during the later 1930s. This was clear enough at the time, even if scholarship has occluded the extent of this committed relationship. With empirically grounded and contextually mindful hindsight, in fact, it is equally clear that Pound had yet to hit his stride in the propagation of the fascist faith.

Once his 65 texts for the *British-Italian Bulletin* and, in particular, the BUF press are placed alongside the wider trajectory of European fascism, both Pound’s language and sentiment are striking for their affinity with what he called “the Fascist ideal”: “The Fascist creed is that a man ought to make a positive contribution to the general well-being”, which he summarized by recourse to a PNF cliché: “liberty itself is a duty”, not a right. Appearing two days after occupying the remainder of ‘rump’ Czechoslovakia, and four days before Nazi Germany similarly seized the Memel region from Lithuania – together triggering an Anglo-French ‘guarantee’ of Poland’s territorial integrity – Pound’s article assumes added resonance when placed in this wider context, as does his contrast between fascist ideology’s “will system” with “pro-liberty propaganda, exuded by the nastiest and fattest organs of plutocracy”.<sup>72</sup> Thus, only when Pound’s propaganda is decoupled from European events in the later 1930s, or decontextualized from the wider thrust of fascist ideology as it appeared in journals and newspapers at the time, is it possible to see his activism as somehow *sui generis*. Rather, Pound was in harmony with the fascist movements on whose behalf he freely and enthusiastically wrote in the later 1930s. Before considering Pound’s return to Anglophone propaganda for Italian Fascism in a paid capacity during the war, a last example from the BUF, published only a fortnight before Germany’s dismemberment of Poland and the outbreak of World War II, exemplifies his convergence with fascist ideology.

For most in Europe, the drift to war was almost palpable during the hot summer of 1939. Back in April, Fascist Italy occupied the Kingdom of Albania, which it had dominated over the past generation. Then, on 22 May, the Pact of Steel was announced with Nazi Germany. Perhaps the most aggressive treaty ever inked, it pledged mutual assistance between



the Axis powers in economic, military and foreign policy spheres. By mid-August 1939 Winston Churchill, not yet Prime Minister of an embattled Britain, was inspecting the Maginot Line defenses of his French allies. Marshal Foch's prophetic words were ringing true, nearly 20 years to the day he spoke them with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles: "This is not a treaty. It is an armistice for twenty years". Global attention turned toward Danzig and the 'Polish Corridor', which Hitler was now demanding at gunpoint. For its part, as an ultra-nationalist movement nonetheless recognizing a clear ideological affinity with Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, the BUF cleverly took an isolationist, pseudo-pacifistic approach in its propaganda. Still, "given the deterioration of relations with the fascist powers and the development of the military crisis between 1938 and 1940", notes Richard Thurlow, fascism was increasingly considered to be a "dangerous fifth column" in Britain: "Since Munich the BUF had not criticised a single action of the fascist dictators, and their continuing appeasement policy was increasingly viewed as suspicious."<sup>73</sup>

In this atmosphere of looming war, each week the BUF published its 'house journal', *Action*, usually running to 20 pages and a circulation of roughly 14,000. After several years of falling membership and limited circulation of party propaganda in the mid-1930s – helped by internal splits and typically negative publicity in the mainstream British press – the BUF's popularity was slowly recovering through its hands-off, 'Mind Britain's Business' campaign in the months leading to World War II.<sup>74</sup> By summer 1939, the large majority of *Action* writers were weekly contributors, genuine believers soon to be arrested and interned under the wartime Defence Regulation acts. The BUF's most frequent overseas contributor, of course, was not included in the May 1940 round-up of fascists in Britain. Nevertheless, in the crisis-filled year before the outbreak of another European war, Pound was consistently 'on message' for Mosley's Blackshirts. Recognizing this himself in a letter to Raven Thomson in mid-1939 intercepted by MI-5, Pound asserted: "'Action" seems to be full of people saying what I would say, and having learned the main points I have been preaching (I mean me along with the others)."<sup>75</sup>

Again recalling the context surrounding Pound's propaganda for the BUF demonstrates the proximity of his views with that of the movement's. A closer look at issue number 182 of *Action*, from 19 August 1939, emphatically bears out this point.<sup>76</sup> The front page was given over to the 'war conspiracy' announced in the pro-Axis headline: "Mosley Denounces Blank Cheques for Baltic Crooks!" Also on the front page

was news that a “Jewish Bank Crashes”, while “peaceful settlement of his dispute with Poland” was held out as “Hitler Opens Negotiations over Danzig”. On page 3, Jorian Jenks, a leading staff writer for the BUF, asked in a page-long editorial “Does Panic Inspire Democratic Policy?”, and on page 5 the Rev. Nye denounced British policy regarding its guarantee to Poland. Pages six and seven were respectively given over to lamenting the loss of 1,300 British farms and praising the German fishing industry under National Socialism. Printed over the BUF’s banner at the bottom of these pages were the slogans: “NATIONAL SOCIALISM IS NATIONAL SERVICE” and “THE ALTERNATIVES: BRITISH UNION OR OBLIVION”. The subsequent two pages contain anti-Semitic claims against the recently deceased war “profiteer” and “typical Jewish financier” Fritz Mannheimer; against US Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau and “the many Jews in the administration of the New Deal”; as well as decrying the liberalism of Britain’s Lord Samuel (also Jewish). Pages two and ten contain the similar “News from the Capitalist World: They say ...” and “Behind the News”, respectively, with the latter – placed above the phrase “BREAK THE TYRANNY OF MONEY POWER” – carrying the paper’s three leaders, the final two dealing with “bloodsuckers” making “enormous profits” off the nation’s preparations for war. Revealingly paired on page 12 were the half-page articles “Jews Invade Market Stalls” and “Flight of Capital Continues” – the latter lamenting the “confidence trick” of financial devaluation – while page 13 asserts, in the cognate article “Money Kings Exploit Patriotism”: “We demand that the traitors be cast from the seats of power, and their financial masters delivered up for judgment”.

Other items of note in this issue of *Action* include excerpts from Mosley’s *To-morrow We Live*; a page devoted to BUF women’s activism; Henry Williamson’s serialized memoirs of the Great War; and two half-page articles on page 18: “Hunger and Humiliation: The Fruits of Usury”; and “While Parliament Blathers Finance Prepares for War”, both arguing that (as per the latter) “the war of international finance against National Socialism, is proceeding. To-day east and west, all the corrupt forces of usury are being called up to further a war of conspiracy, so that out of the shambles of civilisation may arise the dark spirit of Judaic Communism”. The final item of *Action*’s final page on 19 August 1939 – also concerned with so-called ‘international finance’ and profiteering allegedly turning Cyprus into “A Moneylenders’ Paradise” – pondered, “does Financial Democracy ever display anything but exasperating tardiness in protecting

producers from usurious exploitation? The benighted Cypriots should realize that they must help to save Shylockocracy". More broadly, these different articles were sutured around clear ideological tenets by the BUF, announced by the unusual inclusion on page 15 of "The Ten Points of the British Union". These points were in keeping with the messages Pound had indeed "been preaching", embracing "The Corporate State"; "British Credit and Jewish Finance"; "Work and Wages"; and more (see Figure 2).

Like Jorian Jenks and Oswald Mosley, Ezra Pound also had his own page in *Action's* 19 August 1939 issue (as usual, found on page 11). About a third of this page comprises Jorian Jenks' enthusiastic review of Pound's BUF pamphlet *What is Money for?* The rest is given over to Pound's "Mr. Chris. Hollis In Need of a Guide". This article soon departs from its putative subject (Christopher Hollis' 1930s economic opinions and political company) to denounce the "decay of England" at the hands of the "gun buzzards"; to praise Hitler as a "psychic" (ostensibly over the revision of the Versailles Treaty); and most strikingly, to declare that war in and over Poland would invariably lead to "yowling about three thousand pogroms". "The natural civilizer of Russia is Germany", Pound continued, and "[w]hat the pore bloody Poles think they would get from England or Frogland in case of a conflict is to me very not clear. Are Mr. Leon Bloom's [sic] coreligionaries and chippy-chasers going to enplane en mass and fly into Poland?". The League of Nations' refusal of self-determination over Danzig and the Polish Corridor, in turn, risked the "rising exasperation of aryan America with Cohen [...] and the lot of 'em". For Pound, Christopher Hollis and his ilk advocated no totalitarian revolution against the socio-economic *status quo*, meaning that they had to accept the "old usury's consequences, that is mass-murder, and greater mass murder and the total destruction of Europe to make way for a totally judiazed catholic church, a totally talmudized ethics, a totally talmudic, that is to say, mercantilist system".<sup>77</sup>

As the entire 19 August 1939 issue of *Action* makes plain, on every major point of BUF policy Pound was in agreement. Moreover, insofar as the "local version" of fascism in Britain reflected the more general thrust of fascist ideology and practice across much of Europe in the lead-in to World War II, Pound was both an outspoken and unapologetic devotee. Commenting upon *Action's* 19 August 1939 issue, in fact, another intercepted letter from Pound to Thomson several months later stressed: "I cd. do with a few more copies of that issue. Have you an export permit for issues after Oct. 1st? I don't think any have reached me since then. I

# THE TEN POINTS OF BRITISH UNION

- 1. Patriotism & Reaction**  
**BRITISH UNION** is loyal to King, Queen and Empire. Our standards are the British Flag and we are proud to call ourselves British. Therefore we stand for unqualified loyalty to Government, its constitution and its life.
- 2. Action**  
**BRITISH UNION** stands for Action in Government. With Parliamentary Government, **BRITISH UNION** will see Government power in fact and then to carry out the will of the people. Government will depend on the vote of the people and will be responsible to the whole British.
- 3. British Union Movement**  
**Ours** objectives united in a voluntary movement to bring about a British Empire which will be a Union of Nationalities. We have no racial, religious or class prejudices. We are British first and foremost. We are proud of our British Empire and we will see that it is the greatest and most advanced area of the world, and that it is the greatest and most advanced area of the world, and that it is the greatest and most advanced area of the world.
- 4. The Corporate State**  
**BRITISH UNION** will solve the problem of unemployment and poverty by the establishment of the Corporate State. This new organization will increase production and will guarantee the welfare of the people. It will be based on National Corporations, controlled by the Government, workers and consumers. It will be based on National Corporations, controlled by the Government, workers and consumers. It will be based on National Corporations, controlled by the Government, workers and consumers.
- 5. Work and Wages**  
**The** Corporate State will mean a larger home market for industry and commerce. It will mean a larger home market for industry and commerce. It will mean a larger home market for industry and commerce.
- 6. The Empire and Peace**  
**BRITISH UNION** will build a self-sufficient Empire (including from the international struggle for peace, which brings war-making and war.

WHEN IN LONDON BE SEEN AT THE Portland Hotel HIGH STREET, ST. MARK'S SQUARE, New London, The London and the best New Restaurant and Lounge Bar for the night. See a complete menu at the bar. See a complete menu at the bar. See a complete menu at the bar.

## Policy Page

### SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT—WHAT IS WRONG

#### THE FIRST DUTY

**W**hat, whether any human was or thought in politics would not make his first duty, to create an instrument of Government by which he could carry out the promise he had made, and the policy for which he had been elected. To all the old parties clamour to resist this principle of elementary honesty, and to denounce as the devil of liberty, in the actual execution of the policy they desire. As a result the vote has become more and more meaningless, and fewer people take the trouble to exercise it as they learn by bitter experience that, no matter the party for which they vote, they never by any chance secure the policy for which they have voted. *Faintly* creates the picture of a man who is the people that in a democracy this system can never deliver the goods, and like all systems it involves the parliamentary system unless only to produce its own extinction.

In the light of honesty it will ever be regarded as a curious and temporary aberration of the human mind that great nations should elect a Government to do a job, and should then elect an Opposition to stop them doing it.

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**CONTACTS AT MEETINGS**

If you see the same person appearing at a particular meeting week after week you would begin to realize that the person was abnormally and they appeared at the places that were being advertised.

Meetings are the places which advertise British Union. Thousands of people make a regular habit of coming to British Union meetings. Thousands more have attended by accident and have been surprised to find they were advertising British Union.

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## QUESTION BOX

**I**f a Government has the power to act by order, does it then injure the freedom of debate and the right of minorities?

**H**ow do the people restrain control of a British Union Government when giving it "power of action by order"?

**I**f a Government has the power to act by order, does it then injure the freedom of debate and the right of minorities?

**H**ow do the people restrain control of a British Union Government when giving it "power of action by order"?

**I**f a Government has the power to act by order, does it then injure the freedom of debate and the right of minorities?

**H**ow do the people restrain control of a British Union Government when giving it "power of action by order"?

**ASK YOUR NEWSAGENT TO STOCK ACTION**

OR SEND HIS NAME AND ADDRESS TO: SANCTUARY PRESS LTD., 14 GREAT SMITH STREET, S.W.1

**SELL IT ON THE DOORSTEP AND BEAT THE PRESS BOYCOTT**

FIGURE 2 "The Ten Points of the British Union", reproduced from page 15 of the BUF's 19 August 1939 edition of Action, referred to in Pound's subsequent writings and broadcasts

don't know what I can write for you. Foreigner better keep out of yr. local affairs in these days?"<sup>78</sup> Although Britain and Italy would not be officially at war until June 1940 – as a direct consequence of Nazi Germany's successful conquest France and the Low Countries earlier that spring – the drift toward a wider European conflict was, by summer 1939, unmistakable. In this sense, Pound was right about the increasing difficulties of corresponding, let alone publishing, with Britain, and indeed, with anyone outside the Axis's sphere of influence: the Second World War in Europe had begun.

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, "Europe MCMXXXVI: Reflections Written on the Eve of a New Era", *Globe* 1/2 (May 1937), Lea Baechler et al., eds., *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose*, 11 volumes (Garland, London: 1991), VII:192; hereafter *EPPP*.
- 2 Pound to W.E. Woodward, 14 July 1935, Roxana Preda, ed., *Ezra Pound's Economic Correspondence, 1933–1940* (University of Florida Press, Gainesville: 2001), 155; hereafter *Preda/EPEC*.
- 3 Achille Bossi, *Notes by an Italian on the Abyssinian Question* (CAUR, Rome: n.d. [1936]), 60, Foligno Collection, Taylorian Library, University of Oxford, 1241; hereafter *Foligno/TL*.
- 4 H. C. Hopkinson, *Fair Play for Italy* (CAUR, Rome: n.d. [1936]), 4, 8, *Foligno/TL*, 1198.
- 5 Richard Pankhurst, "Italian Fascist War Crimes in Ethiopia: A History of their Discussion, from the League of Nations to the United Nations", *Northeast African Studies* 6/1–2 (1999), 83; see also John Gooch, "Re-conquest and Suppression: Fascist Italy's Pacification of Libya and Ethiopia, 1922–1939", *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28/6 (2005).
- 6 See Jon R. Edwards, "Slavery, the Slave Trade, and the Economic Reorganization of Ethiopia, 1916–1936", *African Economic History* 11 (1982); and Sterling Joseph Coleman Jr, "Gradual Abolition or Immediate Abolition of Slavery? The Political, Social and Economic Quandary of Emperor Haile Selassie I", *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 29/1 (2008).
- 7 Alberto Pirelli, *Considerations on the Italo-Ethiopian Conflict* (Istituto per gli studi di Politica Internazionale, Roma: 1936), 11, 7, 17, *Foligno/TL* 1231.
- 8 Pound to George Holden Tinkham, 20 June 1936, "Dear Uncle George": *The Correspondence between Ezra Pound and Congressman Tinkham of Massachusetts*, ed., Philip J. Burns (Orono, National Poetry Foundation: 1996), 19.

- 9 Pound to Odon Por, 4 January 1936, *Preda/EPEC*, 176–177.
- 10 See Luca de Caprariis, “‘Fascism for Export?’ The Rise and Eclipse of the Fasci Italiani all’Estero”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 35/2 (2000).
- 11 Pound to Pellizzi, 8 April and 9 May 1936, “Ezra Pound Papers”, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 43, 40/1688 and 40/1689, respectively; hereafter YBL.
- 12 Pound to Harold W. Thompson (April 1936), cited in Cameron McWhirter, “‘Dear Poet-General and Walloper’: The Correspondence of Ezra Pound and Harold W. Thompson 1936–9”, *Paideuma* 29/3–4 (2001), 116.
- 13 Pound to Carlo Camagna (n.d.) [January 1936], YBL 8/333.
- 14 Pound to Sen. James Pope, 9 January 1936, YBL 41/1751; see also Alec Marsh, *Ezra Pound: Critical Lives* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 137–138. I am grateful to Alec Marsh for his assistance with this letter.
- 15 Herbert Vivian, *Fascist Italy* (A. Melrose, London: 1936), 62. In conclusion, Vivian maintains: “Fascism, however beneficent, must be regarded as a revolution and the revolution continues for the satisfaction of the vital interests of the country”, 277. Needless to say, similar views on the “Corporate State” as the “Promised Land” were advanced in Vivian’s article for the *British-Italian Bulletin’s* Christmas Special, revealingly entitled “Hysteria in England: Reborn Italy Abused, The Geneva Fantasy” 1/ 8, 27 December 1935.
- 16 Major E. W. Polson Newman, “Italy and East Africa”; and Pound, “Twelve Years and Twelve Years”, *British-Italian Bulletin* (hereafter *B-IB*); the latter in *EPPP/VI*, 349. Pound’s subsequent texts for this insert to *L’Italia Nostra* are reprinted in *EPPP/VII*, 16–105. A brief discussion of these inserts is included in Claudia Baldoli’s excellent study, *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain’s Italians in the 1930s* (Berg, Oxford: 2003), 106ff.
- 17 Fascio di Londra (Carlo Camagna) to Pound, 27 December 1935, YBL 6/141. I am grateful to Andrea Rinaldi for his assistance with this information.
- 18 Pound to Hugo Fack, 28 December 1935, *Preda/EPEC*, 169–170.
- 19 Pound to Camagna, 9 December 1935, YBL 8/333.
- 20 *Ibid.*, letters of “II” (probably ‘21’) December and 30 December 1935.
- 21 *Ibid.* (n.d.) [December 1935].
- 22 Pound, “A World Liability”, 11 January 1936, *B-IB* 2/2.
- 23 Pound, “No Tame Robots in Fascist Italy: The Intellectual Frontier”, 25 January 1936, *ibid.*, 2/4.
- 24 Pound, “Italy’s Frame-up”, 1 February 1936, *ibid.*, 2/5; italics in original.
- 25 Pound, “Why I Live in Sunny Rapallo: A Matter of Degrees”, 29 February 1936, *ibid.*, 2/9.
- 26 Pound, “For A Decent Europe”, 14 March 1936, *ibid.*, 2/11.
- 27 Pound, “For a Measure”, 21 March 1936, *ibid.*, 2/12.
- 28 Pound, “The Italian Bank Act”, 4 April 1936, *ibid.*, 2/14. Pound’s preceding article, from 28 March 1936, was entitled “The Treasure of a State”, similarly

- holding that “the Fascist government represents *Italy*. That is to say it represents the people”; italics in original, *ibid.*, 2/13.
- 29 Pound, “Organic Democracy”, 11 April 1936, *ibid.*, 2/15.
- 30 Pound, “A Rising Civilisation”, 25 April 1936, *ibid.*, 2/17.
- 31 Pound, “The Fascist Ideal”, 18 April 1936, *ibid.*, 2/16.
- 32 Pound, “New Italy’s Challenge”, 2 May 1936, *ibid.*, 2/18.
- 33 Pound, “British Labour’s Great Blunder: The Fascist Bogey”, 16 May 1936, *ibid.*, 2/20.
- 34 Pound, “An Impact”, May 1935, reprinted in *Impact: Essays on Ignorance and the Decline of American Civilization*, ed., Noel Stock (Chicago, Henry Regnery Company: 1960), 144; see also my “Make it Crude: Ezra Pound’s Antisemitic propaganda for the BUF and PNF”, *Holocaust Studies* 15/1–2 (2010).
- 35 Pound, “A Civilising Force on the Move: The Bank Reform”, 23 May 1936, *B-IB* 2/21.
- 36 Pound to Tinkham, 12 April 1937, “Dear Uncle George”, 119.
- 37 Pound, “Why Italy Needs No Loan”, 4 July 1936, *B-IB* 2/27.
- 38 See Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy; Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust* (Harvard University Press, London: 2008), ch. 2; and Pound, “A Good Surgeon Does Not Always Amputate”, 24 October 1936, *B-IB* 2/39.
- 39 “Readers of the BIB Listen!!”, 5 and 12 September 1936, *ibid.*, 2/32 and 2/33, respectively.
- 40 Pound to Oswald Mosley, 29 July 1934, YBL 36/1495.
- 41 Pound to Alexander Raven Thomson, *Preda/EPEC*, 96–98.
- 42 Pound to John Hargrave, 3 January 1935, *ibid.*, 129. In J. L. Finlay’s effective summation, Hargrave’s movement, the Green Shirts – dedicands of Pound’s 1935 essay, “Social Credit: An Impact” – were “equally firm in their rejection of both communism and fascism”; see “John Hargrave, the Green Shirts, and Social Credit”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 5/1 (1970), 69.
- 43 Pound to Por, 15 December 1937, *Preda/EPEC*, 210.
- 44 Galeazzo Ciano, cited in W. Vincent Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory: Fascist Propaganda and the Second World War* (Peter Lang, New York: 1998), 1; italics in original.
- 45 Pellizzi to Pound, 24 January 1937, YBL 40/1690; and Pound to Pellizzi, 26 January 1937, *Preda/EPEC*, 203.
- 46 Pound to Angus MacNab, 30 July 1936 and 1 February 1937, YBL 32/1337 and YBL 32/1338, respectively.
- 47 Pound, “A Social Creditor Serves Notice”, *Fascist Quarterly* 2/4 (October 1936), 495, 492.
- 48 Pound to Thomson, 3 April 1938, *Preda/EPEC*, 213. For details on Angus MacNab and the National Socialist League, see Thomas Linehan, *British Fascism, 1918–1939: Politics, Ideology, Culture* (Manchester University Press, Manchester: 2000), 138ff.

- 49 Anon., “Coming Fate of Financial Parasite; Lewisham Audience Cheers Mosley”, *Action*, 12 November 1938; Pound translated Odon Por’s “Systems of Compensation” in *British Union Quarterly* 1/3 (1937).
- 50 Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914–1945* (UCL Press, London: 1995), 305. Other assessments of the BUF include Gary Love, “‘What’s the Big Idea?’ Oswald Mosley, the British Union of Fascists and Generic Fascism”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 42/3 (2007); Philip Coupland, “The Blackshirted Utopians”, reprinted in Griffin and Feldman, vol. IV (Routledge, London: 2004) and more generally, Martin Pugh, *Hurrah for the Blackshirts! Fascists and Fascism in Britain Between the Wars* (Pimlico, London: 2005), 126ff.
- 51 Roger Eatwell, *Fascism: A History* (Vintage, London: 1996), 182.
- 52 Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound Stock* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1970), 303; and Pound, “‘The Criterion’ Passes”, *British Union Quarterly* 3/2 (1939), 72.
- 53 Pound to Mosley, 24 March 1938, YBL 36/1495.
- 54 Ezra Pound, “Canto LII”, *The Cantos* (Faber, London: 1998), 257–258; and Carroll F. Terrell, *A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* (University of California Press, London: 1980), 199–202. That Pound’s use of the term “neschek” was intended to link Judaism to usury is clarified in the long unpublished “Addendum for C” (c. 1941), commencing:
- The Evil is Usury, *neschek*  
the serpent  
*neschek* whose name is known, the defiler  
beyond race and against race. (*The Cantos*, 798; italics in original)
- 55 Pound’s letter to James Laughlin on 1 December 1936 suggests that the term ‘usura’ was to some degree tactical: “the line to take as in my “USURERS have no RACE”, Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988), 533; hereafter *Carpenter/ASC*.
- 56 Pound, “The ‘Criterion’ Passes”, 67; and Pound, *What is Money for?* (Greater Britain Publications, London: 1939), 10–11.
- 57 Julie V. Gottlieb, “Britain’s New Fascist Men: The Aestheticization of Brutality in British Fascist Propaganda”, *The Culture of Fascism: Visions of the Far-Right in Britain*, eds., Julie V. Gottlieb and Thomas P. Linehan (I.B. Tauris, London: 2004), 11; and A.R. Thomson, *The Coming Corporate State* (Greater Britain Publications, London: 1939), 21. See also Matthew McMurray, “Alexander Raven Thomson, Philosopher of the British Union of Fascists”, *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms*, 17/1 (2012).
- 58 B.D.E. Donovan, “Books Read”, *Action*, 23 January 1937. The same reviewer applied adjectives such as “passionate”, “brilliant”, “fascinating” and the like in reviewing Pound’s 1938 *Guide to Kulchur*, *ibid.*, 20 August 1938.
- 59 See, respectively, Pound, “Social Credit Asses”, *Action*, 18 November 1937; Pound, “The Free Dumb of the Press”, *ibid.*, 9 December 1937; Pound, “Thought Resistance”, *ibid.*, 16 December 1937; Pound, “Why Parliament’s



- Gone to Hell”, *ibid.*, 30 December 1937; Pound, “Toward an Economic Orthology”, *British Union Quarterly* 1/4 (1937), 20; and L.C.G., “Books Read”, *Action*, 2 December 1937.
- 60 Arthur Reade, “National Socialism and Social Credit”, *Action*, 11 September 1937.
- 61 G.C. Webber, “Patterns of Membership and Support for the British Union of Fascists”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 19/4 (1984), citing Special Branch estimates that *Action*, the BUF’s “house journal” during the late 1930s, had a peak readership of 20,000 in October 1936 – after membership had peaked at around 50,000 Blackshirts prior to the violent and calamitous ‘Olympia Rally’ on 7 June 1934 – 580 and 599, respectively.
- 62 W.K.A.J. Chambers-Hunter, “British Union and Social Credit” (Greater Britain Publications, London: n.d. [1939]), 3, 5.
- 63 Pound, “Banks are a Blessing”, *British Union Quarterly* 3/1 (1939), 52.
- 64 *Carpenter/ASC*, 553.
- 65 Pound, “‘The Criterion’ Passes”, 61.
- 66 Pound, “Why Parliament’s Gone to Hell”; Pound, “Bury the Corpse!”, *ibid.*, 10 March 1938; and Oswald Mosley, *Taxation and the People* (Abbey Supplies, London: n.d. [1939]), 3, 8.
- 67 William Joyce, *Fascism and Jewry* (B.U.F. Publications, London: n.d. [1936]), 3; E. G. Clarke, *The British Union and the Jews*, 7 (Greater Britain Publications, London: n.d. [1937?]), 7; Anonymous, *Britain and Jewry* (Greater Britain Publications, London, n.d. [1939]), 4; and Pound, “The Revolution Betrayed”, *British Union Quarterly* 2/1 (1938), 38.
- 68 Pound, “Infamy of Taxes”, *Action*, 4 June 1938. For a groundbreaking account of Nazi Germany’s growing influence upon western European fascist movements in the 1930s, see Dietrich Orlow, *The Lure of Fascism in Western Europe: German Nazis, Dutch and French Fascists, 1933-1939* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2009), esp. chs. 4-6.
- 69 Wyndham Lewis’s reference to “Leihkapital” is found in “Hitlerist Economics”, the last section of his *Hitler* (Chatto & Windus, London: 1931); I am grateful to Archie Henderson for his help with this reference. See also Pound, “The Revolution Betrayed”, 40; Pound, “The Nazi Movement in Germany”, *EPPP/VII*, 439; and Pound, broadcasts of 8 and 15 March 1942, “*Ezra Pound Speaking*”: *Radio Speeches of WWII*, ed., Leonard W. Doob (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1978), #15 and #16.
- 70 Ben D. Kimpel and T.C. Duncan Eaves, “Ezra Pound on Hitler’s Economic Policies”, *American Literature* 55/1 (1983), 48.
- 71 Pound, “The Liberal: Request for an Effective Burial of Him”, *Action*, 27 August 1938.
- 72 Pound, “Was the Ideal Liberty?”, *Action* 18 March 1939.

- 73 Richard Thurlow, “The Security Service and British Fascism”, *British Fascism, the Labour Movement and the State*, eds., Nigel Copsey and David Renton (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2005), 39–40.
- 74 Webber, “Patterns of Membership and Support for the British Union of Fascists”, 580.
- 75 Pound to Thomson, 5 July 1939, MI-5 files on Ezra Pound, The National Archives, KV2/876, 20a; hereafter *TNA/KV2*.
- 76 Citations from *Action*, 19 August 1939, 1–20.
- 77 J.J. [Jorian Jenks], “Money Made Easy: Ezra Pound’s Pamphlet Reviewed”; and Pound, “EZRA POUND writes: Mr. Chris. Hollis in Need of A Guide”, *Action*, 19 August 1939, 11.
- 78 Pound to Thomson, 6 December 1939, *TNA/KV2/876*, 25a.

# Part II

## Pound at War



# 4

## Reappraising the ‘Pound Case’, 1940–45

*Abstract: Turning to World War II, this shorter chapter approaches serial misunderstandings in the ‘Pound case’, many of which are derived from the patchy historical record on his wartime activism. In setting out the areas to be discussed over the second part of this book, this chapter introduces many of the key figures with whom Pound worked at Fascist Italy’s EIAR, in addition to emphasizing both the difficulty of separating Pound’s poetry from his other writings, as well as his general importance to the Axis war effort – particularly Anglophone radio broadcasting.*

Feldman, Matthew. *Ezra Pound’s Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

DOI: 10.1057/9781137345516.

## LIBERTY A DUTY

## FASCIO

A thousand candles together blaze with intense brightness. No one's candle damages another's. So is the liberty of the individual in the ideal and fascist state.

Pound, "A Visiting Card" (1942)<sup>1</sup>

During World War II, Ezra Pound used his best weapons, his words, to fight the Allies as a radio propagandist for Fascist Italy. In the final days of war in Europe, he was arrested on charges of treason and imprisoned in an outdoor cage next to military rogues at the US Army Detention Training Center near Pisa. Following his FBI interrogation in early May 1945, Pound began drafting one of his most memorable poetic sequences, *The Pisan Cantos* – highly controversial recipient of the 1949 Bollingen Prize – while at the same time sparking a remarkable public discussion about exactly what should be done with him.<sup>2</sup> By 1945, what was already being called the 'Pound Case' was acting as a lightning rod for debate, seeming to bear out Pound's wartime view to his close collaborator, Adriano Ungaro – a University of Leeds lecturer of Italian from 1933 to 1940, and then chief Anglophone censor at Radio Rome during World War II<sup>3</sup> – "All the U.S. runs on 'poic'nality'/ they are MOSTLY below the level of ideas/ can[']t understand an idea/ all they can get is SO/ and SO SAID SO." Yet the full dimensions of Pound's wartime activities were largely unknown then, and little better understood today. As suggested in Part I, much of what is known owes to the groundbreaking scholarship of Tim Redman – even if his archival discoveries have not been meaningfully advanced to date. Moreover, the largest gap in the critical literature is indicated in Pound's letter to Ungaro, cited by Redman without full awareness of its implications. Here Pound implies a far more extensive role in Axis propaganda than his published wartime broadcasts and Italian texts: "I like Morelli's reading of my stuff. *The anonymous stuff is in some ways better than the personal/* When anonymous I can be omniscient/ when I speak in my own voice I have to be modest and stick to what I have seen first hand."<sup>4</sup>

Even without access to exhaustive manuscript evidence now capable of painting a far clearer picture, some of Pound's less charitable detractors were already howling for blood in 1945. Did Pound deserve the same kind of public execution as Mussolini? A number of his contemporaries

certainly thought so. One, contributing to *The New Masses'* 1945 Christmas Special, in a text entitled 'Should Ezra Pound Be Shot?', argued yes, for in "his wildest moments of human vilification Hitler never approached our Ezra [...] He knew all America's weaknesses and he played them as expertly as Goebbels ever did."<sup>5</sup> This advocate of frontier justice, ironically enough, was Arthur Miller, later the playwright of the celebrated anti-McCarthy allegory from 1952, *The Crucible*. His view was not to prevail for, on 21 December 1945, Pound was declared legally insane. In early 1946, he was then transferred to St Elizabeths Asylum, where he would spend the next dozen years in captivity and a vexing legal limbo. In the decades since, debates over Pound's wartime actions and subsequent institutionalization have bitterly divided critics, often shedding more heat than light on pertinent issues of sanity, culpability and treason.<sup>6</sup> As evidenced by the letter to Ungaro above, one thing shared by both his defenders and critics alike is that none have been able to establish precisely what Pound did, and said, during World War II. Alongside Redman's work, Noel Stock's authorized biography remains the most reliable survey of this period. Nevertheless, gaps in the historical record impeded Stock's account of this period – despite several tantalizing hints contained therein:

Pound entered into his job as broadcaster with the same zeal he had always brought to any subject that claimed his attention. He wrote messages for others to read, slogans for a war of nerves against England, advised on how to present propaganda and even suggested that a chair be established to enable him to teach this art – but whether these things occurred after America had entered the war, I cannot be certain. Judging by the indictment drawn up against him by the American government in 1945, some at least of these activities took place after the country was at war. That he was useful to the Italian propagandists is borne out by the fact that they used him in chats with other speakers.<sup>7</sup>

Given this extraordinary set of circumstances – one of the US's leading 'personalities' on trial for allegedly (for he was never convicted) treasonous radio broadcasts – most would agree with Benjamin Friedlander's recent view that Pound's radio broadcasts were "one of the central facts of his life". Yet it is striking how little is actually known about them. In attempting an explanation, Friedlander considers that these scripts and recordings "have an aberrational status among Pound scholars, who for many decades received them with embarrassment and apologetics,

segregating them from Pound's other prose and from his poetry".<sup>8</sup> This may well be the case, even if the present account emphasizes that no such distinction between Pound's prose and poetry – at least during World War II – remains tenable. In addition to the wealth of previously unexamined manuscripts at Yale's Beinecke Library archives employed here, what the FBI themselves referred to as Pound's "bulky file" will also be used, alongside supporting documentation from BBC's Written Archive Centre and The National Archives in London. These reveal a very different side of Pound as a committed, strategic and significant propagandist for Fascism's wartime Ministry of Popular Culture. The latter, in Guido Bonsaver's view, was "a well-oiled propaganda machine" and, especially in terms of censorship, "a careful arbitrator of Italy's cultural production."<sup>9</sup> In approaching Pound's wartime propaganda efforts for the oft-shorthanded 'Minculpop', Part II necessarily commences with a lengthy discussion addressing persistent misunderstandings concerning Pound's fascist activism. Ensuing sections will then survey his propaganda strategies and techniques, followed by Pound's little-known activism for the Salò Republic.

Throughout, it will become clear that longstanding academic views on Pound's propaganda need substantial correction. His undertakings were born of far more than the significant, twin considerations of financial need and restricted travel; rather, he self-consciously toed the Party line out of loyalty and belief in the Axis cause. Commenting upon this period, Frances Stonor Saunders's passing impression is much closer to the mark than wide swathes of Pound scholarship: "There is too much future, and nobody but me and Muss and half a dozen others to attend to it," Ezra Pound once declaimed. Mussolini had been Pound's idol for twenty years. He kept a scrapbook of his life and work" and, after meeting the Duce, "had been so pleased that he hung the official notice granting the interview on the wall of his apartment in Rapallo".<sup>10</sup> Pound's propaganda activities also mirrored those of Fascist Italy at the time, itself increasingly indistinguishable from Nazi propaganda – especially with respect to anti-Semitic rhetoric.

A good indicator of Pound's commitment is provided by the above epigraph from "A Visiting Card", first published in English by John Drummond in 1952, which continues: "In August, 1942, the following elucidatory statement was heard on the Berlin radio: the power of the state, whether it be Nazi, Fascist, or Democratic, is always the same, that is – absolute; the different forms of administration are merely a matter of

the different activities which one agrees not to allow.”<sup>11</sup> It scarcely needs stressing that the European ‘New Order’ under Nazi hegemony was long making a mockery of all such equivalences in practice; already by this time, and historically unprecedentedly, being Jewish, gay, disabled, a Roma and Sinti traveler or any other socio-political ‘undesirable’ meant mass murder through shooting, gassing or overwork in the thousands of concentration camps scarring wartime Europe. While it bears restating that this study is less concerned with what Pound did or did not know during this time, or in either damning or exculpating his fascist propaganda during these critical years – and even less so his mental health or guilt – the following sections attempt to put the record straight by charting his Anglophone wartime propaganda via the continued perspective of fascism as a political religion.

“A Visiting Card” is thus relevant not only as an expression of that very fascist creed, but also as evidence of Pound’s continuing propaganda efforts for Fascist Italy. For “Carta da Visita” was originally published in Italian in December 1942 and was, along with Pound’s Italian translation of the Confucian *Ta Hio*, sent to Mussolini personally, with a covering note explaining they were “expressions of fascist faith”.<sup>12</sup> One of Pound’s few published prose texts during World War II was written that autumn; during a period that, amongst others, E. Fuller Torrey’s 1984 *The Roots of Treason* has asserted was a lull in Pound’s broadcasting (which he dates between 26 July 1942 and 18 February 1943). Having apparently consulted neither Pound’s extant texts at Yale nor the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service’s 42 broadcasts recorded at this period of supposed “quiescence”, Torrey seems to base his reading upon the large gap between scripts numbered 59 and 60 reproduced in “*Ezra Pound Speaking*”.<sup>13</sup> To date, this remains the most authoritative reproduction of speeches, containing 120 scripts transcribed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) between October 1941 and Pound’s indictment for treason on 26 July 1943. Even so, Doob’s 1978 work only scratches the surface of Pound’s wartime propaganda.

Finally, as further stressed below, there was no clear distinction between Pound’s wartime propaganda and his other contemporaneous writings – including the only Cantos written during the war, the long-unpublished and long-untranslated “Canto LXXII” and “Canto LXXIII”. In the case of a six-page radio typescript from 20 August 1942, “Evidence”, both the date given and the themes addressed correlate closely to “A Visiting Card”:



the fascist concept of individual glory is on the model of LIGHT/

put a thousand candles together and they give a considerable light/ NO single light in any way damagin[g] the light of the other candles [...] There is more scope for the individual in the corp/state than in any splay footed inorganic drivvlin democracy that the world has yet seen [...] Occupied fr/ would have been unoccupied before now; if left to the Axis decision/ The SANE world is copying fascism here there and everywhere / ALL that you do well inside Eng/ is part of Mosley's program/ "To morrow we live" [...] Have [you] YET read the Protocols [*of the Elders of Zion*]/? Have you ANY conception of what fascism IS?<sup>14</sup>

As this manuscript suggests, in terms of Pound's wartime propaganda for Fascist Italy, there is a great deal more to say.

Italy had remained on the sidelines in September 1939, only joining the "stab in the back of France" on 10 June 1940, with German victory already imminent and Churchill's defiant speech following the Dunkirk evacuation, "we shall not flag or fail [...] we shall never surrender", delivered the previous week.<sup>15</sup> As an outgrowth of of Fascist Italy's unpreparedness for total war in 1940, writes Vincent Arnold, "the Ministry of Popular Culture lacked a comprehensive plan for wartime propaganda".<sup>16</sup> As noted above, there is some evidence that Pound started writing for the radio at just this time; that is, at the outset of Fascist Italy's disastrous participation in World War II. The earliest text seems to be an untitled, four-page typescript headed "1." with crayon in the top right margin. While Pound's wartime numbering system for his broadcasts is all but impossible to reconstruct, this text appears to date from the Italian entry into the war, opening: "It is my firm believe that this war was unnecessary. It need never have started. It was started by a small number of men; who need not have started it."<sup>17</sup> As with many of the literally thousands of radio texts, items and slogans contained in Pound's papers at the Beinecke archives, it is unclear whether this early text was ever transmitted; quite possibly, it was written in hopes of securing work with Minculpop. At any rate, as will be detailed below, Pound had been consistently espousing several propaganda strategies. The first of these was closer collaboration with Nazi Germany, especially in terms of anti-Semitic discourse and active participation in a 'New Europe'. Clearly a junior partner in the Axis by 1940, Pound's vision for Fascist Italy was to provide a cultural lead via radio, press, and music. These components will be briefly described below, prior to concluding this chapter with a look at Pound's specific views on producing effective propaganda for Radio Rome.

Even before the outbreak of war, Pound had gravitated toward the biological anti-Semitism and militaristic expansionism of Nazi Germany. To be sure, he was hardly alone in doing so in late 1930s Italy. As Paul Baxa has persuasively shown, Hitler's week-long state visit in early May 1938 provided a "triumphant fascist spectacle" whereby the "kindred spirit" of Nazism and Italian Fascism were "sacralized through a series of ceremonies". Less tangibly, if no less importantly, Hitler's visit "was designed to send a message to the rest of the world about the character and destiny of fascism. Coming as it did in a triumphant moment in fascist history [Germany's 11 March 1938 takeover of Austria], the visit reinforced the notion of fascism as the *avant-garde* of political movements."<sup>18</sup> Even the stridently anti-fascist journalist in exile, Max Ascoli, observed the same year that both fascist regimes "announced to the world that they are fore-runners and the founders of a new civilization [... fascism] can dare to be a religion, to invent new rituals, to deny the Jewish and the Christian heritage which is the basis of our civilization."<sup>19</sup> Within months, the "staunchly biological–deterministic" "Manifesto of Racial Scientists" was published by a leading newspaper, *Giornale d'Italia* – with the "spiritual racism" and anti-biologism guiding previous Fascist policy now "fiercely denied". This announced a "Nordicist" anti-Semitism under Mussolini's explicit direction.<sup>20</sup> Published on 14 July 1938, this terse declaration laid the groundwork for the Racial Laws that autumn, which were eugenically racist and quintessentially Nazi: "The population of Italy today is of Aryan origin and its civilization is Aryan [...] The Jews do not belong to the Italian race."<sup>21</sup>

Shortly afterwards, against the advice of military experts, Mussolini signed the aforementioned Pact of Steel on 22 May 1939, affirming "the inner affinity between their ideologies and the comprehensive solidarity of their interests [...] in the midst of a world of unrest and disintegration, to serve the task of safeguarding the foundations of European civilization."<sup>22</sup> In an historical irony worthy of fiction, *Il Duce*, who had launched Italian Fascism on the back of his interventionist journalism during World War I, now tried to fend off calls by radical Fascists to immediately join World War II – for he still needed to convince a more conservative establishment (primarily monarchy, church and military). As Elizabeth Wiskermann long ago claimed, as late as winter 1939, "scarcely any Fascist leader" was pro-Nazi; whereas with the latter's success in overrunning France and the Low Countries, regime functionaries "were all enthusiasm at least for intervention." Apart from

political elites, Paul Corner adds that this sentiment was anathema to the general populace, for whom the “prospect of fighting alongside the Nazis was almost universally unpopular.”<sup>23</sup> Ultimately, it was only when “the Germans turned western Europe upside down” in spring 1940 that Mussolini decided to invade south-eastern France, thus “driv[ing] generals and king into war by telling them they need not fight.” For one, given Britain’s willingness to continue fighting – principally including, at least until D-Day in June 1944, the Mediterranean theatre of operations – and considering the Italian military’s utter inadequacy at the time, as made plain by battlefield debacles in France (June 1940), Greece (October 1940) and North Africa (November 1940), Mussolini’s “megalomaniacal” participation in World War II would quickly prove to be a fatal mistake.<sup>24</sup> Mere months into Italy’s disastrous war, concludes another scholar of Fascism, “[o]nly Mussolini’s personal prestige was still strong enough to hold the regime together.”<sup>25</sup>

Correspondingly, Pound seems to have followed much the same path of radicalization vis-à-vis Nazi Germany as many other fascists. As recounted in Part I, his acceptance of biological anti-Semitism was first publicly announced around this time. In fact, a year to the very day that the *Giornale d'Italia* published its “Manifesto degli scienziati razzisti” Pound concluded a letter to Joseph Ibbotson, president of his Alma Mater in the US, Hamilton College, with a provocative swastika under his signature. That summer, he also attended the 1938 Venetian Biennale, where he later asserted “in the teeth of current snobbisms” that the Nazi-coopted exhibition designed by Ernst Haider “was the best pavilion there.”<sup>26</sup> Another snapshot of this turn is revealed in Pound’s correspondence with the musician Gerhart Münch, with whom he worked on the ‘Vivaldi Revival’ in Fascist Italy during the 1930s. Their extant letters were strictly concerned with matters musical and artistic until 12 April 1938 when Münch, by then back in Germany, revealed that he was considering closer collaboration with the Nazi Party. “Do for God’s sake work WITH THE PARTY, the party is right and is the future”, Pound replied three days later – echoing Mussolini’s well-known prophecy that the twentieth century was to be “a century of the right, a fascist century” – “And the future is RIGHT”.<sup>27</sup> Commenting upon his contemporaneous essay for *Germany and You*, “European Paideuma”, to Münch on 25 October 1939, Pound displayed a canniness quite at odds with prevailing notions of his political “naiveté”:

I have been tempted to come up to Berlin and write, I mean I have FELT the temptation to offer my services [...] The only trouble with my coming to Germany is that it wd. probably make it impossible for me to carry on any useful political work in the U.S. afterward, and the U.S. neutrality etc. is more use to Germany than my services. Still I am for being as useful as possible. Can you get in touch with H.R. Hoffmann Riedenerweg I. Starnberg. He gets out a mimeograph bulletin in English. Everyone needs MORE knowledge of jew finance and of the WAY it works.<sup>28</sup>

Six weeks earlier Pound had written to Rolf Hoffmann, “a German editor of propaganda magazines (for which he hoped to write) that ‘this war is a war of jews against Hitler.’”<sup>29</sup> By early December 1939, with his American subscription to *Germany and You* delayed by the war – as Pound often lamented, especially as his family’s much-needed income checks ceased arriving by mid-1940 – he requested “special literature” from Hoffmann in order to “prove certain things about Germany instead of merely believing them”. Pound then added: “I was solemnly told by a diplomat two months ago that I wd. be killed if I went to Berlin. I had told him I had a strong impulse to go there.”<sup>30</sup> As with Ibbotson above, Pound’s pro-Nazi views were not only expressed to German ultra-nationalists, but to American elites as well. Thus, the day after Germany’s invasion of Poland, Pound wrote to Massachusetts Congressman George Tinkham: “UNTIL the present kike government of England is damn well licked the Aryan population/ especially rural population of Eng/ will never get a square deal”.<sup>31</sup> More of the same followed in the closing months of 1939, reports John Tytell: “He wrote James Laughlin that in his view ‘Roosevelt represents Jewry’ and signed his letter ‘Heil Hitler’. To Cummings he wrote that ‘Germany is 90% right in the present show’. He wrote Congressman Horace ‘Jerry’ Voorhis that if war began it was the fault of ‘international usury’ ”.<sup>32</sup> To the isolationist senator Burton K. Wheeler, Pound was similarly concise on 19 July 1940: “if Germany moves fast enough it may be postponed for 15 years” – the “it” referring to Americans being “slaughtered for Hazard, Hambro and Rothschild”. (During World War II, an increasing number of Pound’s letters would bear the ‘Heil Hitler’ salutation to known pro-Nazis like Rolf Hoffmann and William Joyce; to the latter, insightfully, Pound wrote: “A poem has to be good in 200 years/ or it is bad. Quite different technique for talk that has to take effect NOW or never [...] I think I was right to transmit from Rome/ I know this country and do not know Germany; and can not speak German well enough to make my ideas clear.”)<sup>33</sup>

By summer 1940, at which point he seems to have been submitting radio typescripts to Radio Rome prospectively, Pound's anti-Semitism had become quite extreme:

The MORE the material cost of the war falls on the men who started it, the better and the sooner we have a sane Europe [...] Letting the BIG JEWS into America is equivalent, as I see it to breaking a test tube full of typhus or plague germs. Turning it loose on territory not yet immunized. I shd/ like to prevent ANOTHER 20 years uneasiness.<sup>34</sup>

Fascist Italy was now at war, growing daily closer to Nazi Germany ideologically, militarily and 'racially' in the formation of the Axis 'New Order'. Pound was likewise discerning an increasing convergence between his long-held economic theories and fascist practice. In the same unpublished letter to Hoffmann cited above, Pound declared of the Third Reich's Minister for Economics: "FUNK'S declarations are absolute vindication of all the economics I have written during the past 20 years". Pound's belief that his economic theories had been adopted by fascist practice was equally emphatic in a penultimate letter to Congressman Tinkham on 7 November 1940 – just as confirmation was hitting the newswires of Roosevelt's landslide re-election over Republican challenger Wendell Willkie for an unprecedented third term – "As you may have noticed both Funk and Riccardi are now quoting me without being aware of it [...] or at any rate I am orthodox for 1940 instead of being a lone voice."<sup>35</sup> At the end of October 1940 Pound made a similar declaration to the Japanese poet, Katue Kitasono, who had facilitated his occasional articles for the *Japan Times*.<sup>36</sup>

While Pound's 11 articles for the *Japan Times*, published between December 1939 and October 1940, are perhaps better understood as expressions of financial need rather than fascist propaganda, Pound's FBI file nevertheless reveals that he sent a prospective *Japan Times* article to Minculpop on 10 May 1940. In the same letter, the FBI translated a report from the hard-liner Alessandro Pavolini to his Ministry, noting that Pound "has been offered the position of correspondent in Italy for the 'Japan Times'. Before accepting this position he would like to know the political leanings of said newspaper, and who are the financial backers, and particularly if said newspaper is connected with Jewish elements."<sup>37</sup> While not his first for the *Japan Times*, the likely article in question, "Why there is a war in Europe", was far more political than those previously comprising his "Letter from Rappallo [sic]" series.

Praising Mussolini's Italy as "the first occidental nation to believe that among the first rights of a man or a country is the right to keep out of debt", Pound continued: "This point of view both pained and shocked the international usurers. The tension became unbearable in 1938 when Dr. Schacht openly stated (during Hitler's visit to Rome) that 'money which is not issued against exchangeable goods is mere printed paper'".<sup>38</sup> Although beyond the scope of this study – for Imperial Japan was a reactionary autocracy, not a fascist state – similar Italian articles over 1940 repeated these sentiments. This is exemplified by Noel Stock's summary of Pound's text for the Fascist student newspaper, *Libro e Moschetto*, expounding upon the "duty of the studious section of the population not only to obey but to savour the high intellectual value of Fascism in action and to analyse and respect the wisdom of the Duce". In light of his increasing financial concerns, Redman rightly notes that "a lot of Pound's correspondence during this period involves attempts, direct or indirect, to promote work for himself."<sup>39</sup> Yet it bears reiterating that this had to be work for the 'right' outlets (that is, free from "Jewish elements"). Financial strain and belief in the Axis cause were not mutually exclusive, of course; instead, they were twin drivers for Pound's increasingly significant fascist activism.

The wartime months preceding Pound's propaganda broadcasts for Fascist Italy also established key links with regime functionaries. In addition to reproducing letters to several of these – including Mussolini, Count Ciano, and other Fascist leaders – C. David Heymann reports that Pound presented a "publications project" to the Ministry for Popular Culture in November 1939. He continued to discuss the matter with Camillo Pellizzi, rightly perceived by Heymann to be "his tightest bond with a high-ranking Fascist official".<sup>40</sup> Their exchange over 1940 touched upon Pound's work on the *Ta Hio*, recommended translations of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* and even revision of the Italian educational curriculum. Pellizzi, having been appointed by Mussolini as President of the Institute for Fascist Culture in April 1940, disarmingly wrote to Pound that "in the matter of books we must take some initiative: not only forbid certain books, but secure the publication in Italian of others." Several of Pound's works ultimately would be translated into Italian during the war – to some degree, at least, a further testament to his influence and acceptance amongst the Fascist regime.<sup>41</sup> Still more relevant here, moreover, was the gift of a radio by Pound's friend Natalie Barney at the end of March 1940, which he found a "devil of an invention. But got to be faced".

In terms of propaganda, it seems Pound first attempted to face radio as early as the next month. Relying upon Niccolò Zapponi's scholarship, Carpenter reports that Pound visited Minculpop on 25 April 1940, stressing that "the absolute domination of the Jews in the North American press and publishing' made it quite impossible to have the Italian viewpoint aired there [... thus] 'those few Americans who see the truth'" needed to "illuminate their own fellow-citizens."<sup>42</sup> Pound may well have been initially turned down in his various attempts to directly collaborate with the regime, for the evidence here is inconclusive. He certainly persisted in his efforts: Pound's FBI file reports that he wrote to Pavolini on 11 November 1940, requesting a meeting to discuss "an improvement in the Italian propaganda against anti-Fascism. Pound states that more propaganda must be directed to the United States in order to combat the anti-Fascism there."<sup>43</sup> This approach appears to have been far more successful – registered by an ensuing flurry of correspondence with (and within) Minculpop in late 1940, also summarized by the FBI – yet supporting details for Pound's transition to full-time broadcasting over winter 1940–41 are, frankly, inadequate. This is but a symptom of the wider uncertainties over Pound's activities during World War II, which led his daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz, to complain as long ago as 1980: "Pound's radio broadcasts have never been faced squarely."<sup>44</sup> The degree to which this is the case historiographically, especially when contrasted with long-neglected archival holdings relating to Pound's radio propaganda, shall be adjudged in the next chapter.

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, the opening of "A Visiting Card", William Cookson, ed., *Ezra Pound: Selected Prose, 1909–1965* (Faber, London: 1973), 276. "LIBERTY A DUTY" was one of Mussolini's favored mottos.
- 2 Amongst the many texts on this subject, Robert A. Corrigan's "Ezra Pound and the Bollingen Prize Controversy", *Midcontinent American Studies Journal* 8/2 (1967) provides a helpful bibliography of 1949 publications debating Pound's award, 52ff. On the composition of *The Pisan Cantos* in 1945, see Ron Bush, "Modernism, Fascism and the Composition of Ezra Pound's *Pisan Cantos*", *Modernism/Modernity* 2/3 (1995); and "Art Versus the Descent of the Iconoclasts: Cultural Memory in Ezra Pound's *Pisan Cantos*", *ibid.*, 14/1 (2007).
- 3 According to Cecil Brown in 1942, Adriano Ungaro "hated England, and to him freedom was 'being told what to do.'" See "America's Fifth Column

- in Europe”, *Liberty Magazine* (Rye, NY), 4 July 1942, 25; and *University of Leeds Calendar*, 1967/68, 112. I am grateful to Archie Henderson for this information.
- 4 Pound to Ungaro, 27 June 1941, excerpted in Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), 211; hereafter *Redman/EPiF*; italics added.
  - 5 Arthur Miller, cited in Wendy Flory, “Pound and Antisemitism”, *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*, ed., Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1999), 285.
  - 6 The wide range of accounts covering these well-documented years include Julien Cornell, *The Trial of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1966); Harry Meacham, *The Caged Panther, Ezra Pound at St Elizabeths* (Twayne Publishers, New York: 1967); Catherine Seelye, ed., *Charles Olsen and Ezra Pound: An Encounter at St. Elizabeths* (Grossmann Publishers, New York: 1975); Conrad L. Rushing, “‘Mere Words’: The Trial of Ezra Pound”, *Critical Inquiry* 14 (1987); Jerome Kavka, “Ezra Pound’s Personal History: A Transcript, 1946”, *Paideuma* 20/1–2 (1991); Donald W. Jackanicz, “Ezra Pound at St Elizabeths Hospital: The Case File of Patient 58,102”, *Manuscripts* 43/3 (1991); William McNaughton, “The Secret History of St. Elizabeths”, *Paideuma* 30/1 (2001); and most recently, Romolo Rossi, “A Psychiatrist’s Recollections of Ezra Pound”, *Ezra Pound, Language and Persona*, eds., Massimo Bacigalupo and William Pratt (Università degli studi di Genova, Genova: 2008).
  - 7 Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1970), 396; hereafter *Stock/LEP*.
  - 8 Benjamin Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Ezra Pound in Context*, ed., Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2011), 122–123; hereafter *Nadel/EPIC*.
  - 9 Guido Bonsaver, *Censorship and Literature in Fascist Italy* (University of Toronto Press, London: 2007), 192.
  - 10 Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Woman who Shot Mussolini* (Faber and Faber, London: 2010), 311.
  - 11 Pound, “A Visiting Card”, 276.
  - 12 J.J. Wilhelm, *Ezra Pound: The Tragic Years, 1925–1972* (Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park: 1994), 194.
  - 13 On the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service (FBIS Record Group 262.5) recordings of Pound’s transmissions, totaling 170 between 2 October 1941 and 25 July 1943, see Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Nadel/EPIC*, 124 n.14. I am grateful to Archie Henderson for bringing this reference to my attention.
  - 14 Pound, “No. 84, ‘Evidence’:”, 20 August 1942, “Ezra Pound Papers”, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 43, 130/5473; hereafter YBL.
  - 15 Elizabeth Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis* (Collins, London: 1966), 251; and Winston Churchill, “Wars Are Not Won by Evacuations”, 4 June 1940, *The*



- Speeches of Winston Churchill*, ed. David Cannadine (Penguin Books, London: 1990), 165.
- 16 W. Vincent Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory* (Peter Lang, New York: 1998), 11.
  - 17 Pound, “‘It is my belief that this war ...’: typescript”, [1940?], YBL 131/5539. I am grateful to Andrea Rinaldi for his assistance with this typescript.
  - 18 Paul Baxa, “Capturing the Fascist Moment: Hitler’s Visit to Italy in 1938 and the Radicalization of Fascist Italy”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 42/2 (2007), 239, 241.
  - 19 Max Ascoli, *Fascism for Whom?* (W.W. Norton, New York: 1938), 311, 316.
  - 20 Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy* (Routledge, London: 2002), 70–71.
  - 21 “Manifesto of Racial Scientists”, 14 July 1938 trans. and reprinted in Giuseppe Finaldi, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Pearson, Harlow: 2008), 151–152.
  - 22 “The Pact of Steel between Italy and Germany”, 22 May 1939, *ibid.*, 154.
  - 23 Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis*, 250; and Paul Corner, “Fascist Italy in the 1930s: Popular Opinion in the Provinces”, *Popular Opinion in Totalitarian Regimes*, Paul Corner, ed. (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2009), 135.
  - 24 MacGregor Knox, *Common Destiny: Dictatorship, Foreign Policy and War in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2000), 145, 159.
  - 25 Roland Sarti, *The Ax Within: Italian Fascism in Action* (New Viewpoints, New York: 1974), 210.
  - 26 Pound to Joseph Ibbotson, 14 July 1939, *Letters to Ibbotson, 1935–1952*, eds., Vittoria I. Mondolfo and Margaret Hurley (National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine, Orono: 1979), 101, 105; and Pound, “European Paideuma”, in *Machine Art and Other Writings: The Lost Thought of the Italian Years*, ed., Maria Luisa Ardizzone (Duke University Press, London: 1996), 134.
  - 27 Gerhart Münch to Pound, 12 April 1938, YBL 36/1503; and Pound to Münch, 15 April 1938, YBL 36/1503. On the ‘Vivaldi Revival’, see “Books and Music”, 26 October 1941, Leonard Doob, ed., “*Ezra Pound Speaking*”: *Radio Speeches of WWII* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1978), #2; hereafter *Doob/EPS*; and Catherine Paul, “Ezra Pound, Alfredo Casella and the Fascist Cultural Nationalism of the Vivaldi Revival”, *Quaderni di Palazzo Serra* 15 (2008).
  - 28 Pound to Münch, 25 October 1939, YBL 36/1504. The view that Pound’s political views betrayed a “Pollyanna attitude” (179) was recently advanced by Leon Surette, *Dreams of a Totalitarian Utopia: Literary Modernism and Politics* (McGill-Queen’s University Press: London, 2011), 244ff.
  - 29 Pound, cited in Alec Marsh, *Ezra Pound: Critical Lives* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 152.
  - 30 Pound to Hoffmann, 6 December 1939, YBL 22/990. I am grateful to Alec Marsh for his assistance with this correspondence.

- 31 Pound to Tinkham, 2 September 1939, "Dear Uncle George": *The Correspondence between Ezra Pound and Congressman Tinkham of Massachusetts*, ed. Philip J. Burns (National Poetry Foundation, Orono: 1996), 176.
- 32 John Tytell, *Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano* (Bloomsbury, London: 1987), 254.
- 33 Pound to Burton K. Wheeler, 19 July 1940, YBL 55/2502; and Pound to William Joyce, 18 July 1941, YBL 26/1117; see also Mary Kenny, *Germany Calling: A Biography of William Joyce, Lord Haw-Haw* (New Island, Dublin: 2004), 211; and Horst J.P. Bergmeier and Rainer E. Lotz, *Hitler's Airwaves: The Inside Story of Nazi Radio Broadcasting and Propaganda Swing* (Yale University Press, London: 1997), 75–79.
- 34 Pound to Hoffmann, 31 August 1940, YBL 22/990.
- 35 *Ibid.*; and Pound to Tinkham, 7 November 1940, "Dear Uncle George", 214.
- 36 Pound to Katue Kitasono, 29 October 1940, *Ezra Pound and Japan: Letters and Essays*, ed., Sanehide Kodama (Black Swan Books, Redding Ridge, CN: 1987), 101.
- 37 Pound to the Ministry of Popular Culture, 10 May 1940 and 30 April 1940, Ezra Pound's FBI file, divided into 12 sections on microfilm, Section 7; hereafter *FBI/Pound*. The only text to date specifically covering Pound's FBI file is Karen Leick, "Madness, Paranoia and Ezra Pound's FBI file", *Modernism on File: Writers, Artists and the FBI, 1920–1950*, eds., Claire A. Culleton and Karen Leick (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2008).
- 38 Pound, "Why There Is a War in Europe", *Japan Times Weekly*, 13 June 1940, Lea Baechler et al., eds., *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose*, 11 volumes (Garland, London: 1991), VIII:43–44; hereafter *EPPP*.
- 39 Pound, cited in *Stock/LEP*, 385; and *Redman/EPIF*, 198.
- 40 David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower, A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), 101–102, 112.
- 41 Pound to Pellizzi, 4 May 1940, *ibid.*, 7 May 1940, *ibid.*; 9 May 1940, *ibid.*; and Pellizzi to Pound, 27 December 1940, YBL 40/1690. Pound's World War II publications are listed in Donald Gallup, *Ezra Pound: A Bibliography* (Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia and St. Paul's, Charlottesville: 1983), 66–73 and 321–333.
- 42 Pound to Ronald Duncan, 31 March 1940, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound*, ed. D.D. Paige (Faber and Faber, London: 1971), 441; and Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988), 579.
- 43 Frank L. Amprim, "Communication #482", 1 November 1944, *FBI/Pound*, Section 4.
- 44 Mary de Rachewiltz, "Fragments of an Atmosphere", *Agenda* 17/2–3-18/1 (1980), 157.

# 5

## Pound's Radio Propaganda: Revisiting the Critical Literature, 1940–43

► *Abstract: Critiquing the traditional readings and frequent assumptions surrounding Pound's wartime propaganda, this chapter revisits the expansive historiographical discussion on the content, extent and dating of Pound's World War II activities. By returning to neglected archival holdings in Britain and the US, this chapter also makes clear that a great deal of the critical literature on Pound's work for the Axis during World War II needs to be reconsidered; not least as Pound's wartime role has been marginalized or written-off for too long, despite his relative importance to World War II on the 'fourth front': radio broadcasting.*

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This war was not caused by any caprice on Mussolini's part, nor on Hitler's. This war is part of the secular war between usurers and peasants, between the usurocracy and whomever does an honest day's work with his own brain or hands [...] Roosevelt being in all this a kind of malignant tumour, not autonomous, not self-created, but an unclean exponent of something less circumscribed than his own evil personal existence; a magistrate with legally limited jurisdiction, a perjurer, not fully aware of what he does, why he does it, or where it leads to. His political life ought to be brought *sub judice*.

Pound, "America, Roosevelt and the Causes of the Present War" (1944)<sup>1</sup>

As discussed above, a neglected driver for Pound's wartime propaganda was his devotion to the 'sacralized politics' of fascism, reflected in many of the broadcast themes transmitted by shortwave radio during these years. In turn, this view closely corresponds to a survey of recent scholarship on Italian Fascism:

Italian Fascism succeeded in attracting the Italians by suggesting the ideals of a new type of human being – the *homo fascistus* – armed with a new morality, a new human community and a new vision of a supranational civilisation. In order to make this Fascist utopia visible and concrete, Fascism heavily relied on a variety of media and mass spectacles. Such Fascist cultural politics was produced not by a unilateral but by a reciprocal process.<sup>2</sup>

Some of these tropes are indicated by the first and last two sentences of "America, Roosevelt and the Causes of the Present War", provided in the above epigraph. Still others are described in greater detail across the ensuing two chapters, via engagement with large swathes of a historical record long overdue fundamental revision. The pivotal materials surveyed in the remainder of this study mandate a substantial break with traditional wisdom on Pound's wartime propaganda. So stark is the contrast between the fragmentary accounts of Pound's radio work and the evidence introduced below, moreover, that the remainder of this lengthy section is given over to empirically substantiating it. As such, the following subsections highlight three main areas in which Pound's radio propaganda can be shown to be far more committed than previously recognized; namely, the *content*; *extent*; and finally, *dating* of his Axis propaganda. Amending the historical record in these areas reveals

a far deeper and more influential role regarding Pound's propaganda texts and strategies. A leading propagandist for Fascist Italy's overseas radio division, in short, Pound was almost certainly the most valuable and frequent contributor of Anglophone propaganda materials during World War II.

## 5.1 The content of Pound's broadcast scripts

"What do you N. Zealanders expect to get out of being sold BY London jews to New York jews, any way?", Pound demanded in a three-page typescript, entitled "You New Zealanders": "Your men have been sent to die for the Negus, a black king of a slaving country, that we had started to civilize. You won't KEEP Abyssinia. You will merely die for a temporary occupation of it, and what is it to you anyway? What profit do you get from jew-owned mines in Africa?"<sup>3</sup> Likely beamed to Allied troops in North Africa during 1941, this text points up the expansive nature of Pound's wartime propaganda. It was not only North American and British audiences at which Pound transmitted, but broadcasts to North Africa and elsewhere. During the height of Axis conquest, for example, beaming Fascist shortwave to China was also discussed at EIAR. On 22 April 1941, Pound enthusiastically responded to Adriano Ungaro, recommending his rendering of a 'Confucian' Axis as germane propaganda material:

As to Italian radio in Shanghai/// what about a bit of Confucius/ my line that Mussolini and Hitler APPLY Confucian principles//

Does Shanghai relay stuff from Rome ? //

All nonsense China staying out of the Axis system.

Also nothing against Italy telling China to divide up Australia with Japan. Not for me to say/ but it[s] plain horse sense.<sup>4</sup>

Further to the above enquiry is one of Pound's more unlikely first-person texts, a four-page typescript dated 31 January 1943. In "Message to Tuan Tzetsun's Friends", Pound highlighted his readings of Confucius over Radio Rome "which belong in a certain way to the Axis powers", before directly addressing his presumed Chinese audience:

With the sunrise: make it new. Those ideograms were cut in your great emperor's bathtub, and they are now better known in Europe. They have been used on the front pages of books.

I have seen signs as clear as any map on the back of a tortoise. When both Mussolini and Hitler have quoted Confucius, not I think, consciously but when in their orders, when in their designs for the new Europe I have found the same sentences that you find in the Great Learning, the mature study, the integral, or total study, it is I think time for China to seek for more intimate knowledge of the aims of the Axis powers.

There is a simple ideogram that [w]as often translated “middle”, it is not from an idle desire for novelty but from a desire to make clear its meaning that I translate that sign the PIVOT or axis, and that looking again at the signs, I would translate the second of the Four Classics: “The unwavering Axis”.<sup>5</sup>

Pound did, in fact, translate the second Confucian Ode as *L'Asse che non vacilla* [*The Axis Will Not Waiver*]; with that provocative title, the likely reason advancing Allied armies pulped it in February 1945. Underscoring that Confucius, too, could be pressed into wartime service, Pound declared in one of many translated letters in his FBI file during World War II, “Confucius is the material which should be taken into the trenches”.<sup>6</sup> In much the same way as the neat division critics have long held between Pound's propaganda and his other work no longer holds, it simply can no longer be maintained he was only writing (and likely personally broadcasting) broadcasts for the United States and Britain but, at the very least, to several other countries at war as well.

Nor were Pound's broadcasts solely written or transmitted in English. While Pound's non-Anglophone propaganda remains largely beyond this study's purview – including his sizeable Italian journalism from this period<sup>7</sup> – there are hundreds of items in Italian, mainly from the period of the Salò Republic, which will be touched upon in the concluding chapter. While “only a few traces of his late collaboration with Germany survive”, as Benjamin Friedlander has rightly observed, an extant one-page script in German is headed “23 November 1943 Salò”. This contains an unsigned translation commencing, “No I do not speak against my country”. Pound then continued:

Until the liberation of Mussolini, the big newspapers were in the hands of plutocrats. Many people think the war was a whim of Hitler and Mussolini. From the moment Mussolini recognized the collaboration between Moskau and New York Jewry, the international Jewry condemned him. And as soon as Hitler announced publicly Gottfried Feder's thesis that in the kapitalist system the power to buy lies mainly with those who do not work themselves, the war against him broke out.<sup>8</sup>

Pound's FBI files also reveal that he composed at least two broadcast typescripts in French. Counterpart of the Anglophone division, EIAR's Francophone division broadcasted Italian Fascist propaganda daily to French North Africa and, especially it seems, to the neighboring Vichy regime under Marshal Philippe Pétain. In response to Pétain's infamous collaborationist speech the day before – the same day it appeared, in fact, translated and reproduced, in the *New York Times* – Pound declared, interestingly, in the first person: “Marshal Petain recognized that Germany was fighting for European civilization [...] now that your reforms are so fascist in form, you can penetrate fearlessly in the fascist spirit, in the constructive spirit”. Whereas Pétain had alluded to a “usurious control” and “slowness in building a new order or, more correctly, in imposing one” on 12 August 1941, Pound was more forthright in his FBI-translated French address the next day: “The France of pretexts was a Jewish France, a usurious France. You are late. In fact you are very late in your purging of usurers, Jews [...and] especially putrid bands of Swiss usurers. You need my small treatises on monetary economy, if you are to find Jean Barral [...] as a preface to the new era.”<sup>9</sup> This high praise for the French economist and anti-Semitic author of the 1924 *La Suprématie universelle des juifs et la Société des nations* – with whom Pound also corresponded between 1933 and 1942 – is spelled out in a second French typescript entitled “Jean Barral”. The latter comprises five pages, followed by a heavily scored fair-copy of the same length. As with the year before, and perhaps on other occasions as well, this text recalls Pound's earlier periods spent in France “in the footsteps of the troubadours”. As this English rendering suggests, this typescript was similarly recorded, translated and reproduced in Pound's FBI file. Similar to his Pétain script, Pound's “Jean Barral” urges international collaboration in the “new Europe” under Axis hegemony:

Barral would have led you to avoid the war of 1939. Like Quisling would have led Norway to avoid the war [...] in knowing Fascism better Barral can very well adjust his ideas with ours, which are more improved. France needs him and his books. The new Europe will find a place for France as soon as France will find a place for Barral.<sup>10</sup>

Sometimes noted regarding the nature of these wartime propaganda broadcasts were the “variety of accents, English and American” in which Pound's recorded transmissions were delivered. For Carpenter, Pound's “folksy manner” of delivery provided for a “masterly performance. The

voice is clearly pitched – the absurdly rolled r's help to throw the words across the poor-quality short-wave transmission, so that he comes over far better than the professional announcer.”<sup>11</sup> Less charitably, Tytell discerned little more than “bile and personal complaint” suffusing Pound's broadcasts, while his “persona would shift according to accent and diction, and he would use a folky western twang, a southern drawl, an ironic cockney whine, a flat toneless rage. Sometimes he slurred, often he seemed to be ranting”.<sup>12</sup> According to C. David Heymann, the latter two qualities apparently compounded the difficulty in hearing Pound's shortwave transmissions:

The palaver poured forth in a variety of tongues – flat, pedantic, scolding tones intermingled with exaggerated Southern drawls. Western plainsman lulls, Cockney growls. He switched from one to another without warning, breaking at times into a torrid rage, slurring his words, ranting at a low pitched roar. Often the reception was poor and added to the bizarre vocal inflections, making it impossible for transcribers to distinguish between words. When they did understand what was being said they were often unfamiliar with the subject matter. Their transcriptions were full of errors.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever the case audibly, speculation over the reception of Pound's broadcasts correspondingly raises a final three points. First, scholars currently know little about the nature of Pound's pseudonymous texts; his foreign-language compositions; nor about his anonymous instructions and slogans – let alone whether, or which, typescripts held at the Beinecke archives may have been personally delivered at EIAR studios. Only 170 of Pound's broadcasts seem to have been recorded and stored by the FCC, leaving many questions unanswerable. How many of the impersonations did Pound do? How many other voices, persona, or imitations might he have also undertaken? Without additional recordings, of course, it is impossible to know. Still, there are interesting glimpses of other voices, and other broadcasts, which Pound undertook for Radio Rome. Without doubt, he participated in numerous roundtable discussions and interviews – again, just how many simply cannot be adjudged – documented by a few references and transcriptions from an EIAR program during spring 1943 called “Round the Microphone”.<sup>14</sup> While presumably contributing to these discussions in his normal voice, one of a number of revealing letters to Ungaro laments: “I don't suppose anybody but me can IMITATE Winston's voice and accent”.<sup>15</sup> With



recorded sound rather than text, it is clear, the empirical terrain is far less sure. Nevertheless, *pace* the references above, it is safe to speculate that, as with so much of Pound's radio propaganda, his activities were far more extensive than previously acknowledged.

Second, in terms of the reception of wartime speeches aimed at Britain and the US as a whole, most *ex-post facto* accounts stress that Pound's broadcasts made little sense. This supposed incomprehensibility has also been assumed to be of Pound's making, going so far as to argue, in Gibran van Ert's phrase: "The most striking aspect of Pound's 'propaganda' is his nearly complete disregard for the listener's ability to understand it."<sup>16</sup> Yet this judgment is starkly contrasted by Pound's voluminous correspondence. In one telling instance, for example, writing to the aforementioned Ungaro, his close colleague in EIAR's Anglophone department:

5 Aug. 1942

Caro Ungaro

Transmission so BAD for last three nights that I am on point of telegraphing you. It must be the transmitting microphone [...] effect is either whisper or a rattle/ a bump bump bump, the minute one turns on enough current to hear. do fer Xt'z ache have the microphones looked at.<sup>17</sup>

Even delving into the archives is unnecessary to demonstrate that – whether successfully or not – Pound was well-aware of dangers of 'incomprehensibility'. Moreover, he did what he could do to address this directly. Several such asides were reprinted by Leonard W. Doob 35 years ago:

Had I the tongue of men and angels I should be unable to make sure that even the most faithful listeners would be able to hear and grasp the whole of a series of my talks.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am taking my whole time on one point durin' this little discourse. Sometimes I try to tell you too much. I suspect I talk in a what-is-called incoherent manner: 'cause I can't (and I reckon nobody could) tell where to begin.

\*\*\*\*\*

As I can not AT ALL count on the present hearers, if there are any present hearers, [not] having read a line of [my] writing I have, for the sake of clarity, to repeat things I have said before.<sup>18</sup>

Nor was bewilderment the case with all auditors, such as George Orwell. The latter contrasted P.G. Wodehouse's 1940 broadcasts for Nazi

Germany with “a Quisling of the type of Ezra Pound and John Amery” (the latter was one of two people executed by the British after the war; the other was William Joyce).<sup>19</sup> Orwell went so far as to have his assistant dictate a memorandum detailing wavelengths, times and notable features of Pound’s talks.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, previously neglected records from British wartime monitoring reveals that Pound was clearly heard, understood and transcribed by censors – sometimes on a daily basis. When reception was poor, as it often was, British monitors opted for short summaries of broadcasts – with the length of text often tied to the quality of reception – exemplified by the first third of the BBC’s daily Summary of World Broadcasts (hereafter SWBs) report, recapping Pound’s 20 minute broadcast to North America on 15 July 1941, headed “(Reception Poor)”:

(First few sentences missed) ... Britain’s social and economic system is rotten. War solves nothing. The Axis did not choose war. But without our victory there is no chance of any justice whatsoever for the western world. London and Washington stand for the rights of a fraction of the population of any country, not for the rights of the peasants and workers. (Britain’s rulers?) are paying, and will pay for their crime against mankind. Their attack was not against Germany and Italy alone, but against all Europe, their own people included.<sup>21</sup>

Difficulties were encountered not when Pound chose a particularly arcane subject, it seems, but rather when receiving conditions hampered shortwave reception. Like every other wartime broadcaster, Pound was as much a prisoner of his own content and delivery, quite simply, as changes in the weather.

A third and final point relates to the transmission of Pound’s wartime broadcasts. While reiterating that this short study is primarily concerned with Pound’s propaganda *texts* rather than the separate question of their *transmission and reception*, it is nonetheless evident that Radio Rome’s shortwave output was consistently marred by difficulties of audibility. Further to his 5 August 1942 complaint to Ungaro above, by way of praising Ranieri di San Faustino’s delivery the year before – in a letter excerpted by Mary de Rachewiltz – Pound also noted the static background in much of the transmission: “Excellent delivery last night. Voice absolutely clear and every word ‘visible’, except for a few ORful KRRumpzzz! of static or atmospheric or whatever BLITZED out a few phrases.”<sup>22</sup> This problem was faced by auditors and transcribers alike around the globe, not least as radio technology was still undergoing

rapid development during the war years. This was particularly true of shortwave transmissions, used to broadcast across continents by bouncing transmissions off the earth's atmosphere (rather than with medium- and long-wave, beamed directly from stations over a range of miles depending upon the power of the transmitter).

At the forefront of this technology was the BBC, operating some 43 shortwave stations in Britain by November 1943 alongside, perhaps, then the most advanced and well-staffed monitoring station in the world. Covering each day of World War II in meticulous detail, the BBC's SWB reports recorded the main radio transmissions of every belligerent country – sometimes extending to more than 50 pages on a particularly 'newsworthy' day. Accompanying these daily summaries are records extending to all manner of memoranda, correspondence and guidelines for wartime transcription of shortwave radio. For example, one wartime transcriber for the BBC, the art historian and cultural critic of later fame, E.H. Gombrich, added a hearing note for auditors highly relevant to the reception of Pound's shortwave transmissions. "Listening to bad reception is a very strenuous affair", he conceded, potentially compounded by a transcriber's "pet projection" of meaning onto an unfamiliar context. Due to poor reception and invariable "mismatching" – so apparent across the FCC's 170 transcriptions of Pound's broadcasts (frequently turning Mencius into Mencken, amongst countless others) – Gombrich argued that broadcasters "talk much less nonsense than they are credited with". Adjusting to these challenges, "[o]ur main hypothesis must be that the sound makes sense". To explain, Gombrich recounted this story:

Rather than giving examples from our daily experience I'll fix on the stock story of mismatching which appears to be older than monitoring itself. It is the story of signaller who misheard the urgent message "Send reinforcements, am going to advance" as "Send three and fourpence, am going to a dance". Now it is well possible that the sound test could not have told him he was wrong. Rhythm and vowels of the stressed syllables are identical. Nor was there any context to help him. But I think he should have been sacked because three and fourpence is an unlikely sum to ask for – dance or no dance. This should have warned him to keep his projection detachable and to try again.

(More recent examples on personal application, though I prefer to forget them[.])<sup>23</sup>

With only 11 shortwave stations in 1943 – six of which were housed in Rome – it is clear that broadcasting in Fascist Italy was a smaller and

less-sophisticated affair than that of its principal wartime counterparts (Germany, Britain, France, Japan, the USSR and the US).<sup>24</sup> Yet EIAR was still able to transmit by shortwave to Italian East Africa as well as, intermittently, to “merchant crews” in Eastern Asia, the Middle East, India, Ireland and Latin America. These were supplemented by two programs (“A” and “B”) on EIAR’s home service, which apparently had to share wavelengths with Fascist Italy’s overseas service – broadcasting from February 1940 in a minimum of 25 languages (including Persian, Hindi and Afrikaans).<sup>25</sup> In consequence, EIAR was faced with several problems regarding its overseas transmissions. First, compounding the invariable problems of shortwave reception faced by all wartime broadcasters, EIAR only had a quarter of the BBC’s shortwave stations at its disposal. Radio Rome’s resulting output was thus much weaker, and consequently much less clear, than those of the principal wartime belligerents. Furthermore, EIAR wavelengths had to be shared between home and overseas services, meaning there was a considerable amount of irregularity in the schedule of broadcasts. With respect to Pound – doubtless shared amongst other Radio Rome broadcasters – one BBC transcriber noted, in response to an internal query about his Axis propaganda, that “Ezra Pound is broadcasting *fairly frequently but irregularly* from Rome principally to N. America at 4.10 or 23.00”.<sup>26</sup> In sum, quite apart from the tricky business of recording unfamiliar broadcasts in occasionally inclement conditions, transmissions from Radio Rome were clearly far less powerful, and far less standardized, than other overseas broadcasts.

Finally, adding the complexity and frequently arcane nature of Pound’s broadcasts into the mix – irrespective of how effective his delivery or emphatic his message – the persistent problems of reception and transcription by the FCC and, less so, the BBC’s wartime monitoring summaries, become far more explicable. A final, key aspect of this problem regarded the discs upon which Pound recorded at EIAR studios. Apparently also lacking a full complement of Anglophone propagandists, recordings of Pound’s broadcasts were typically retransmitted – sometimes on a whim as ‘filler’ for North American- or British-directed programs short of material. It seems recorded broadcasts could be played a maximum of three times before the sound quality made them virtually inaudible. In turn, this only serves to reinforce the importance of original manuscripts rather than recordings or, still worse, second-hand transcriptions when attempting to reconstruct Pound’s propaganda activities. As with other shortwave propagandists – especially in wartime

Italy – the circumstances and context of Pound's shortwave transmissions were unmistakably constraining, no doubt contributing to later charges of his broadcasting 'incomprehensibility'. Rather more reliably, contemporaneous letters from colleagues like San Faustino averred that Pound was "the most important person on our staff", and needed defending against "people who otherwise would have liked to push you out. Remember that not all of us understand what you are trying to do, or what you represent [...] Your dischi are still going all the time. In other words they are going on the air twice a week for N.A. and on Sundays for G.B."<sup>27</sup>

## 5.2 The extent of Pound's broadcasting

The broadcast texts composed by Pound during World War II extend, quite literally, into the thousands. A tip of this iceberg has been glimpsed over the decades in three volumes: Olga Rudge's 1948 reproduction of four cultural broadcasts in "*If This Be Treason—*"; William Levy's more polemical presentation of 18 broadcast scripts comprising his 1975 collection, *Certain Radio Speeches of Ezra Pound: From the Recordings and Transcriptions of His Wartime Broadcasts, Rome, 1941–1943*; followed in 1978 by the most scholarly and widely available edition, Doob's aforementioned "*Ezra Pound Speaking*": *Radio Speeches of World War II*, containing 110 "broadcasts recorded by the FCC", plus ten additional "speeches written before the FCC monitoring unit had been established, some read by Pound and some read by others, as well as speeches either not used or not monitored."<sup>28</sup> Here Doob provides an insight as to why only a fraction of Pound's radio scripts have received comment. As I have shown elsewhere through recourse to his intriguing, if limited, Department of Justice (hereafter DOJ) file, Pound's treason investigation went into overdrive through an intervention from the very top of the US government: on 1 October 1942, to be exact, in a memorandum to Attorney General Francis Biddle by President Roosevelt.<sup>29</sup> Thereafter, various agencies of state marked out their territories – the War Department, FCC, DOJ, and most importantly, the FBI, which soon dispatched agents to Italy in search of Pound – within months drawing together materials for his indictment in July 1943. With bare scholarly exceptions such as those provided by Doob and Redman, then, the limited archival materials consulted on Pound's radio propaganda derive from the government's

(ultimately not prosecuted) treason case. As a consequence, an enormous amount has been obscured.

Long before Doob's groundbreaking reproduction of scripts, scholars had focused upon the FCC "broadcasts of record – those monitored by the Federal Communications Commission from December 7, 1941, to July 2, 1943, when the Department of Justice moved to indict Pound".<sup>30</sup> To Charles Norman's 1948 identification of 125 (of 170) broadcast recordings were added "the texts of some 70 unpublished broadcasts delivered by Pound prior to December 7, 1941", discussed in a rarely cited article from 1972, "Ezra Pound and the Italian Ministry for Popular Culture". Decrying the fact that earlier views "are based on what has been a rather selective publication of the documents in the case", Robert Corrigan asserted that "all of the original typescripts (complete with handwritten corrections) for Pound's broadcast are to be found in the files of the Department of Justice", with the latter forming the basis of his article.<sup>31</sup> This is certainly incorrect, as the ensuing overview of previously unpublished materials will show. (Puzzlingly, only four years later, Heymann's 1976 *Ezra Pound: The Last Rower* put the number of Radio Rome broadcasts at "more than 300", although without indicating why.<sup>32</sup>) The original radio typescripts were eventually recovered by the Ezra Pound Estate and posthumously deposited, it seems overwhelmingly, in Yale's Beinecke archives. Amongst more than 300 boxes of extant manuscripts there, a minimum of eight boxes concern his wartime propaganda. These contain all manner of typescripts and drafts, rejected scripts and fragments, instructions and slogans, payments and receipts; sometimes jumbled alongside correspondence, timetables and handwritten notes in varying states of completion. Placing this in relief, the previously employed manuscripts on Pound's propaganda for wartime radio would comfortably fit into one of these Beinecke archive boxes. Accordingly, this study will only aim to usefully indicate the scope of manuscripts relating to Pound's World War II propaganda work for Fascist Italy.

Archival holdings make plain, in the first place, that Pound's radio propaganda scripts certainly started earlier, and ended later, than previously argued. The latter date is easier to ascertain: on, or shortly after, 18 April 1945. This conclusion is reached on the basis of the FBI's reproduction of Pound's correspondence with Carl Goedel, in reference to Harry F. Truman (Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945, with Vice-President Truman immediately sworn in). The previous page of Pound's FBI file contains a Photostat of an original typescript, opening:

Pound anonimo No. 199

3 Aprile XXIII

## NATURALLY

The prime minister of Asstralia says Australia wants population. Well; well/ What a nice place for the jews. For once a place they could go/ only they dont WANT a national home; they want the earth, and an abundance of slaves.<sup>33</sup>

Likely part of a larger series for the Salò Republic, these documents clearly demonstrate that Pound continued radio propaganda until the dying days of World War II. Somewhat surprisingly, at the other end of the spectrum, the date of Pound's earliest broadcast typescripts is more difficult to affix with such certainty.

Leonard Doob's preface to "*Ezra Pound Speaking*" places the start of Pound's writings for EIAR "toward the end of 1940", while in "January [1941, he] was able to record his own speeches, which were broadcast, on an average, twice a week. He wrote the texts at his home in Rapallo and on occasion in Rome where he traveled to record on discs a batch of 10 to 20 speeches." Benjamin Friedlander has recently added that, in November 1940 "– five months after Italy entered the war and a year after his initial overtures – the Ministry of Popular Culture invited him to submit scripts."<sup>34</sup> This is borne out by a 9 November 1940 letter of explanation to Minculpop's chief radio functionary, Dr Gabriele Paresce, found amongst Pound's radio typescripts: "I am sending you a draft of what might be of use. Nothing solemn or formal will hold the American auditor. If I don't sound a bit cracked and disjointed they will merely twirl the button [...] Hence the indications of American dialects etc. in the spelling." The typescript attached to this note, entitled "Now that the Elections are Over" – referring to the second reelection of President Roosevelt – was obviously intended to be read by Pound. Referring to his first broadcast in early 1935, discussed in Part I, Pound begins: "Of course this isn't the first time I have approached (approached is the right word) the microphone. Shortly after they started short wave Rome to America that is several years ago I came down here and said a few words about Major Douglas[']s Social Credit Scheme".<sup>35</sup>

Mary de Rachewiltz, who makes effective use of this typescript in what was then – as now – one of the very few non-FCC texts to have been discussed, claims that even after this meeting Pound "received a polite letter saying the Ministry of Popular Culture, Radio Department,

was not able at present to make use of his writing”.<sup>36</sup> However on 6 May 1945, in a detailed, six-page ‘statement’ to FBI agents – seemingly his earliest recorded interrogation by FBI officials – Pound seemed pretty certain about the genesis of his radio propaganda for the Ministry of Popular Culture. He had been encouraged at some point in 1939, following a discussion with Alessandro Pavolini, to “talk over the Italian Radio to the American people for the purpose of pointing out the fine work which Mussolini had done in Italy.” Then, Pound continued, he was invited to further discuss the matter with Dr Paresce and Telesio Interlandi in spring 1940. Thereafter, he “was finally allowed to give two broadcasts to the United States and one broadcast per week to England. I began broadcasting in person over the Italian Radio about the Summer of 1940.”<sup>37</sup>

Still, critical commentaries no less than the tenor of the above script seem to suggest otherwise; namely, that wartime broadcasts in Pound’s own name only started on, or soon after, 9 November 1940. Yet in contrast months earlier, according to Anne Conover, Pound wrote to his mistress and collaborator on 22 August 1940, Olga Rudge, following a trip to Minculpop: “Waaal, mebbe papa bring home the bacon / not official, but sum under consideration diece mille [lire]”.<sup>38</sup> Similarly supporting Pound’s account to the FBI are a handful of radio typescripts in the Beinecke archives dating from 1940. One, tentatively dated in the online catalogue “[1940?]”, entitled “Communications”, is composed in the first person; so too is “The Quiet Disposition”, bearing the earliest proposed date for radio propaganda as April–May 1940 – even before Italian entry into World War II – which would be in keeping with Pound’s account to the FBI. That typescript, in turn, explicitly recalls Pound’s 19 August 1939 *Action* text concluding Part I, presumably published only months before: “On Aug. 19 I wrote what wd/ happen to PO/land. It has happened. Wash it off. I am not here to look backward. What I wanna know is what NEXT!”<sup>39</sup>

Several alternatives suggest themselves. First, it is clear from internal evidence – for instance, reference to Vice-President Wallace in “Alliance” (Henry Wallace only took office on 20 January 1941) – that several of the proposed 1940 scripts are simply misdated, and should read 1941 instead.<sup>40</sup> Nor are extant manuscripts, although exhaustive, by any means ‘complete’ for this period: problematic gaps still remain. Still another possibility is that scripts composed before November 1940 were principally broadcast (and possibly retained) by other Radio Rome announcers. Or



yet again, early on, Pound may have fallen foul of Fascist censors. He suggested as much in the aforementioned FBI interrogation:

I consistently fought for more time on the air to get my ideas to the American and English peoples. At first, for a very brief time, I used to speak directly over the air, but on one occasion during 1940 I made some remarks not in the manuscript previously approved by the Ministry of Popular Culture, simply a repeat of a main point, and after that incited I was ordered by Paresce to record my talks on a disc, and this disc would be rebroadcast over the air [...]. During 1942 and the first part of 1943, at Rapallo, I would write about twenty or twenty one radio manuscripts or talks, and then I would go to Rome where I visited the registration room of the Ente Italiana Audizione [sic] Radiofoniche and make discs for rebroadcasts of my talks. I usually remained in Rome about three weeks, making three recordings per day. I made these recordings only after my manuscripts had been approved by Mr. Ungaro, sub-head of the Radio Section of the Ministry of Popular Culture.<sup>41</sup>

If the precise origins of Pound's wartime radio propaganda remain unresolved, his transition to steady broadcasting in January 1941 is far more certain. Decisively coming to his aid was the influential Camillo Pellizzi, encountered earlier as the facilitator of Pound's propaganda for the *British-Italian Bulletin* and recently appointed President of the Institute for Fascist Culture. As Redman reports, Pound complained on 11 January that "I will BUST if some use isn't made of me." Pellizzi responded later that day: "I phoned to Ungaro and Paresce of our radio (foreign) service; you are going to hear from them."<sup>42</sup> Pellizzi, to be sure, achieved results quickly. Most scholars have agreed upon the date of 23 January 1941 for the commencement of Pound's shortwave transmissions; although again, according to Anne Conover, only a dozen days following his exchange with Pellizzi, Pound wrote to Olga Rudge: "made 2 discs yesterday ... 9 discursi in a fortnight".<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, despite persisting objections from a few officials,<sup>44</sup> it seems Pound's broadcasting career properly began to take off after mid-January 1941. At times, it seems he occasionally stayed with Pellizzi when travelling to Rome. This was recorded in a letter of thanks on 15 February 1941, which continues: "I got some comfort out of looking through my British Italian Bulletin stuff, two days ago. Something ought to be done about reprinting it [...] I ought to have six or eight men working under my direction/ for KULCHUR/ hell, there are lame, halt, consumptive blokes not in the trenches."<sup>45</sup> Even if Pellizzi was unable to help with more fanciful requests, he doubtless opened doors at the start of Pound's broadcasting career.

In this light, Pound's well-known complaint to Harry Meacham and others that it "took me, I think it was, TWO years, insistence and wangling etc to GET HOLD of their microphone", then, may well have included the first half of 1941.<sup>46</sup> This is borne out by the Summary of World Broadcasts undertaken by BBC wartime monitoring stations. Only a handful of broadcasts are transcribed before five summaries attributed to Pound's broadcasts in June 1941; rising to 15 in July, with a similar number each month until the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. Scores of BBC holdings for 1941 thus further underscore the fact that FCC transcripts comprise but a fraction of Pound's propaganda output. A final example of BBC transcription methods must suffice here, from a SWB report of 1 November 1941 comprising the first fifth of a ten-minute EIAR broadcast to Britain and the US. US. It again returns to Pound's anti-Semitic 'prophecy' in the 19 August 1939 issue of *Action*:

ROME 221.1m IN ENGLISH FOR ENGLAND AND U.S.A 22.00 (10 mins)  
1.11.41

Talk by Ezra Pound "A Word to the Rabbis"

War and American Jewry

Before this bloody war started I told the Poles and the Jews what would happen to Poland if she let Britain get her into a war; I told them then that there would not be any Poland. Today I say to American Jewry, if the 6,000,000 Jews of the U.S.A. get her into this war, that won't be a bright day for American Jewry – no, nor a bright tomorrow.<sup>47</sup>

The next day, this broadcast was praised, with telling detail on the nature of his scripts, by Pound's 'line manager', Prince Ranieri di San Faustino:

Your 'word to the Rabbis' was, by far the best thing that you've turned out so far. Diction was eccelent [sic] and the text was super super. The damned fool announcer last night didn't give your name before you spoke and I'll bet that you were on to it. Transmission was not so good because the record has gone twice before for North America, the quallity [sic] of the records is so bad these days that we can't use them more'n twice, or at the outside, three times.

As recorded by BBC monitors, an earlier transmission of "A Word to the Rabbis" took place on the tenth of the preceding month.<sup>48</sup> Further, demonstrating the thematic proximity of Pound's broadcasts to those by regime functionaries during World War II, Vincent Arnold's survey of Italian propaganda provides brief details of the following

five anti-Semitic broadcasts “encouraged” by Minculpop that same month: “‘The Protocols of Zion’ by Alberto Luchini, ‘Judaism Against Western Civilization’ by Giulio [Julius] Evola, ‘Judaism Against Rome’ by Massimo Scaligero, ‘The Jewish International’ by Piero Pellicano, and ‘Judaism Wanted This War’ by Giovanni Preziosi.”<sup>49</sup> Amongst this gallery of racist ideologues, as Archie Henderson has recently noted, Alberto Luchini is particularly relevant here. Having been appointed in May 1941 to the Racial Bureau attached to the Ministry of Popular Culture, Luchini organized the above five radio broadcasts for EIAR, published the next year in Rome under the title *Gli ebrei hanno voluto la guerra* [*The Jews wanted war*]. Most relevant for this discussion, Pound was corresponding with Luchini during 1943 while, Henderson further establishes, “Pound’s copy of *Gli ebrei* is in the Ezra Pound library at the University of Texas at Austin.”<sup>50</sup>

Two final points deserve mention more broadly regarding these neglected files. The first and most revealing is Pound’s recourse to pseudonyms in his broadcast scripts. Some of these names have been alluded to in the literature to date, if not yet actively pursued. *Ezra Pound: The Last Rower* provides a good example:

Much of the time he was involved in more than simply the writing and reading of his own Radio Rome speeches. The [FBI] records indicate that Pound performed various functions. He wrote press releases for other broadcasters to read, edited manuscripts, created slogans, helped organize the network’s propaganda campaign. At points he coauthored broadcasts and frequently shared the microphone with fellow announcers, participating in a number of news discussions and symposiums. And just as he had once churned out art and music criticism for *The New Age* under the pseudonyms B.H. Dias and William Atheling, he now broadcast, frequently, under the assumed name of *Giovanni Del Bene*.<sup>51</sup>

Heymann’s paragraph surely cries out for further explanation. What was the nature of these other “various functions”? Were the propaganda themes in these additional activities in keeping with Pound’s radio broadcasts, and with wartime Axis propaganda more generally? Lastly and most relevantly is the implication that, once more needing money from any available resource, Pound returned to writing under pseudonyms. In addition to ‘Giovanni Del Bene’, Carpenter adds that “four or five” scripts under the name ‘Piero Mazda’ were read over Radio Rome in August 1943 (during the notorious ‘45 days’ when Mussolini was under house arrest). Still another pseudonymous creation, ‘Mr. Dooley’,

was seemingly used on behalf of the Nazi-controlled shortwave station Radio Milan from spring 1944.<sup>52</sup> Yet with respect to pseudonyms – and notwithstanding Pound's undertakings during the little-known period of the Salò Republic (September 1943 to May 1945), discussed in the final section – quite literally, that is not the half of it.

Beyond 'Giovanni Del Bene', 'Piero Mazda' and 'Mr. Dooley', Pound compiled typescripts under another ten names. These included the following pseudonyms: 'Bruce Bairnsfather'; 'Langdon Billings'; 'Julian Bingham'; 'Pietro' and 'Manilo Squarcio'; and 'Marco Veneziano'. More general *noms de guerre* extended to 'American Imperialist' and 'Colonel Blimp', as well as the two anonymous series, "News from Nowhere" and "Notes in the Margin". Noting that his reading of 'Giovanni Delbene' broadcasts had received "favourable comment", Pound stressed how that persona, unlike other creations, was "purposely studded with clichés". In contrast to the Stalinist Radio Revolution or Nazism's Radio Bremen, Pound additionally pointed out, "we must be different/ we can't be the liv[e]liest/ so must be the most signorile [elegant]. It is our only line." Suggestively, Pound concluded his letter to Ungaro by decrying the dearth of talent at EIAR: "A dozen voices (which we aint got) with a dozen convictions/ or one conversationalist and a dozen interruptions containing three ideas (at maximum) per dozen."<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, Pound's adoption of pseudonymous personae, by and large, appears geared toward satire. Like the scores of typescripts headed "Pound/anonymous", writing under pseudonyms would have allowed Pound – should he have wished – to make statements he could not, or would not, make officially in his own name. This consideration is borne out by one of the many internal instructions heading the first page of Pound's typescripts, like that from 11 July 1942:

Explanatory note for the office/ not for transmission.

The "Imperialist's" point of view is NOT my point of view, and it is not fascist. It is 100% MATERIALIST.

The personality of "American Imperialist" should be kept quite distinct/ someone ELSE must appear to be writing these notes. If I slip and put in picturesque expressions, or something TOO obviously my own/ CUT IT OUT

Imperialist must use a certain number of clichés/

And also keep off certain clichés.

He must be a little dull. That is intentional.<sup>54</sup>

Put another way, of the 585 folders composing the 'Pound Radio' collection in Yale's Beinecke archives, roughly an eighth are given over to scripts explicitly anonymous or pseudonymous in composition.

This raises a second and more technical point regarding the texts of Pound's broadcasts. Generally the titled folders, irrespective of the person/a heading them, include typescripts averaging about five pages, although some also include a fair copy (thus rising to ten manuscript pages in the Beinecke archive folders). Still other folders contain multiple texts, or shorter compilations of slogans. An overview of Box 126, containing most of Pound's pseudonymous scripts, is especially instructive here. It comprises 23 folders of manuscripts under the alphabetical names "American Imperialist" (14 folders), "Bruce Bairnsfather" (1 folder), "Langdon Billings" (1 folder) and "Julian Bingham" (7 folders). In turn, these are comprised of single typescripts ranging from three pages (YCAL MSS 43 Box 126, Folder 5221) to eight pages (Folder 5238), save for two folders of 16 and 26 pages, respectively. That of 16 pages, like many of these folders without a headed date of composition or transmission, contains a five-page script entitled "Gangsters Together", along with a rough draft of similar length. Appended at the end, unexpectedly, are two copies of another one and a half-page typescript, providing internal recommendations in Italian and English. These include suggestions like "SHORTEN ALL introductory phrases. E.P.'s talk can b[e] announced as "talk followed BY Mozart's 13 sonata; or whatever"; instructions including "SLOWLY the list of wave lengths"; advice on concision regarding "News (condensato, come se per ogni parola inutile ci fosse una multa [condensed, as if for each unnecessary word there is a fine])"; and the following two phrases advocated for broadcast: "SLOGAN/ Wherever etc/ the British go, there is famine. Wherever the Americans go to save the inhabitants, they shoot the inhabitants."<sup>55</sup>

In addition to the typescripts and notices described above, Box 126 contains another folder of 26 pages with various items by 'American Imperialist'. Underscoring Pound's point about sarcasm, this fictitious persona admired President Grover Cleveland (first elected in 1885, the year Pound was born) and advocated the American annexation of the remainder of North, Central, and South America, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia in "American Imperialist Answers a Question". A second typescript, also of five pages, is entitled "London Opinion", while the following text is one page, and unlike the others, carries no title, name or pagination; it is doubtful if this fragmentary manuscript page was

broadcast. Thereafter, another five-page script, entitled "American Imperialist Writes", is headed with the instruction:

"(fill in date of day before transmission)  
American Imperialist writes us, as the above date."

The ensuing three pages are comprised of four shorter notes and slogans – the last satirizing the "Old Establishment firm of John Bull, now Bull and Bullstein (to be read in a nasty chewish voice)" – before a final item in Folder 5234, the six-page typescript "Notes of an American Imperialist". Concluding his pastiche describing an unlikely American annexation of Brazil on one hand, and in keeping with Pound's sacralized understanding of fascism on the other, 'American Imperialist' suggests:

If Mr Roosevelt is to confer any solid benefits on his electorate by the ownership of Brazil, de facto, or de jure, or both, he will, I think, have to take several more lessons from the New Europe than he seems at present likely to take. His Bizantinsim is not a good imitation of fascist or nazi order. It is open to all the charges levied against fascism and seems to contain few or none of the benefits which abler leaders have conferred on the Rising Order in Europe.<sup>56</sup>

In Box 126, Folder 5234, then, there are 9 different standalone texts, and perhaps 10 shorter slogans and related items, all in a register far removed from Pound's simultaneous 'official' broadcasts. At the same time, this rhetoric corresponded closely to the Party line at the time, as Arnold contends: "Fascist propaganda portrayed Roosevelt as a 'warmonger' whose plutocratic cabinet was infested with Jews".<sup>57</sup>

By way, now, as both a segue into the next subsection and a final example of the extent of Pound's broadcasts scripts, mention is merited of a final four folders from the Beinecke archives' Pound Collection's subsequent box. Box 127 offers further credence to the argument here that estimations of the total number of radio items written or broadcast by Pound should be revised upward by a digit – coming to a precise number is beyond the scope of this study, which needs to be methodologically delimited according full and fair typescripts, drafts in various stages as well as other short texts (such as slogans and announcements). Following several folders containing the remainder of Pound's explicitly pseudonymous scripts, this box contains some of the many folders marked "Anon.: typescript". Amongst the dozen such folders in this single box, Folder 5267 contains 49 pages of typescripts covering 1 to 27 February 1942, while the preceding three folders likewise include almost

daily items between 9 to 29 December 1941 (5264), 1 to 10 January 1942 (5265), and 10 to 31 January 1942 (5266), respectively. In total, there are more than 100 radio items from these months alone, held in four of the 46 folders comprising Box 127. By far the most revealing of these, Folders 5264 to 5266, amongst other materials highlighted in the final subsection below, are taken from a period in which Pound was thought to have ‘retired’ from radio propaganda – the weeks following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. In addition to this near-ubiquitous assumption about Pound’s reconsideration of his wartime broadcasting role, it has also been claimed that he debated whether he should return to the US (as he had considered doing more than a year earlier, when his income was at its most uncertain). For instance, according to J.J. Wilhelm’s 1994 *Ezra Pound: The Tragic Years, 1925–1972*, “Pound clearly entered a month and a half of silent contemplation over the gravity of his situation, mulling over the difficulties of moving a daughter whose nationality was not clearly established, a lover, a wife, an aged mother, and a severely disabled father.”<sup>58</sup> Both for emphasizing the sheer scale of Pound’s radio manuscripts, and in highlighting some of the more severe misunderstandings around the dating of Pound’s talks more generally, Pound’s December 1941 and January 1942 broadcast typescripts therefore deserve much closer consideration.

### 5.3 Dating of Pound’s broadcasts

The weeks between 7 December 1941 and 29 January 1942 is one of several periods in which Pound was alleged to have fallen silent during Italy’s involvement in World War II. A second key period, if less consistently advanced, nonetheless also stresses that Pound stopped broadcasting between July 1942 and February 1943. Correcting these two inaccuracies is the purpose of this final subsection. It merits departing with widely circulated reports that Pound had “retired to Rapallo to continue his study of Chinese philosophy” shortly following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. In the words of Benjamin Friedlander’s otherwise insightful “Radio Broadcasts”: “initially Pound did retire from broadcasting, preparing a statement that *Time* magazine cited with relief in January – the issue was still on the newsstands when Pound returned to the air.”<sup>59</sup> Again this lacuna is reinforced by Doob’s “*Ezra Pound Speaking*”, in the space between scripts numbered five (“Those Parentheses”, 7 December

1941) and six (“On Resuming”, 29 January 1942). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Pound wrote the original disclaimer – with his handwriting in the margin stating: “repeat in several transmissions”. It concludes: “His views have at no time been suggested by us, and have, in fact, often been formed before Italian opinion was ready to accept them”.<sup>60</sup> As noted above, however, critical discussion has rested to date upon scripts and broadcasts Pound made *in his own name*. During these weeks, Pound wrote, and may have broadcasted (equally, they may have been read by another announcer), scores of shorter items from the aforementioned “Anonymous” folders, as well as a longer, 26 December 1941 typescript by ‘Giovanni Delbene’. This proclaims, in part:

All the anglo-saxon countries are years late in learning the lesson of the two great European revolutions. Many englishmen and americans have NEVER given ten minutes thought to ANY of the fundamental issues involved, indeed they had never even begun to be THOUGHTFUL until the Japanese ran up the SunRise flag over Hong Kong.<sup>61</sup>

Intimations that Pound never fully ‘retired’ during this period were long ago raised by Tim Redman’s excellent “The Repatriation of Ezra Pound, 1939–1942: A View from the Archives”. Although mainly dealing with Pound’s abortive attempts at returning to the US in later 1940 and again, half-heartedly, in December 1941 “as one of about a thousand Americans who remained in Italy” at that time, Redman located two important exchanges of letters. The first is the aforementioned Adriano Ungaro, while the second is Cornelio di Marzio, Pound’s editor at *Il Meridiano di Roma*, by which “more than 100 articles [were] published between 24 April 1938 and 12 September 1943, with the greatest number written during the triennium 1940–1942.”<sup>62</sup> Similar to Heymann’s suggestive leads from the one-sided FBI file, Pound’s explicit desire to continue broadcasting has been strikingly neglected since Redman’s groundbreaking article:

Even if America declares war on the Axis, I see no reason (from my own point of view) why I should not continue to speak in my own name, so long as I say nothing that can in any way prejudice the results of American military or naval (or navel) action, the armed forces of the U.S.A. or the welfare of my native country.

But contrary to a suggestion made to me yesterday, I see considerable reason for NOT continuing an indirect participation [...] As the U.S. is not yet legally at war with Italy I shall continue to send you notes signed and unsigned. (9 December 1941)



It seems to me that my work must continue. Twenty, or more visibly, ten years of work for a New Europe. (16 Dec.)

It seems to me that my speeches on the radio must continue IN MY OWN NAME, and with my voice, and NOT anonymously. (28 December 1941)<sup>63</sup>

Further detail on this heretofore occluded period is provided by four folders of pivotal correspondence between Pound and Prince Ranieri di San Faustino, a Fascist apparatchik for EIAR and, it appears, Pound's closest radio collaborator. Their exchanges put both at the heart of Anglophone propaganda efforts for wartime Italy. They shared authorship of the "News from Nowhere" slogans and "short jabs" that, in San Faustino's view, were "the best thing you have turned out till now" and "the kind of thing that will put Rome on the map". He then concluded: "Turned out four of them yesterday, but lack the master touch."<sup>64</sup> Also replying on 15 September, Pound addressed the nature of his different typescripts, with shorter texts sent by post anonymously or pseudonymously (like the "News from Nowhere" series), and longer scripts to "go in my own voice, exact when real reason for its being impersonal." Four days later, San Faustino declared that Pound was "the most important personage that the Italian Radio has, and I don't want to cheapen anything that you may say by putting over the air small items that might be written by anyone." Furthermore, San Faustino was also more than just a co-author and cheerleader for Pound. On 27 October 1941, for instance, he recommended that Pound "standardise the Europe calling, Ezra Pound speaking, business. In one talk you said it and in another you left out the Europe calling."<sup>65</sup> This was a discernably close and productive working relationship, indicated not only by their revealing correspondence, but also by the extent of the "News from Nowhere" typescripts. Amongst Pound's papers are four folders in the Beinecke archives dedicated to this series, dating between March 1941 and September 1942. With many additional phrases interspersed amongst various manuscript typescripts earmarked for inclusion – the first, from Folder 5597, contains 55 pages of slogans from 8 March to 31 December 1941. Conclusively demonstrating that Pound never retired in the wake of American entry into World War II, the following, representative "News from Nowhere" item is dated 18 December 1941 and headed "Pound/ anonymous":

Washington dispatches state that Mr Roosevelt has appointed a commission to exhonorate Mssr [sic] Knox, Stimson and Roosevelt (F.D.) from

engineering the defeat, not to say wash-out of the American fleet at Pearl Harbour.

It seems that this move has given universal satisfaction.<sup>66</sup>

Starkly in contrast to Pound's supposed 'retirement', on the very day the US declared war on Italy – less than 100 hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor – Pound asserted to San Faustino that it was "torture to be out of action":

The moment Roosevelt has called it war on national socialism/ (which is what I believe he said) it ceases to be a war of nations and is recognized officially by the old tub as an ideological or social war [...] That I think VERY important, not only for my personal position, but for the whole leverage of discussion/ Guerra ideological etc/ You will prob/ see the notes I am sending to the office today/ and those sent yesterday.

Were these sentiments somehow unclear, Pound reiterated his position on 16 December 1941:

The conflict is a conflict between two ORDERS. I can't see that I have any right to withdraw from it [...] At any rate my work ought to go ON. Whether direct or indirect/ whether transmitted or whether it go on building cultural foundation and mechanism (as in my translation of Confucius).<sup>67</sup>

Two days later Pound was still more succinct: "The world situation is unique. My position is unique, at least so far as I know. No one else has been fighting the enemy from just my position. The question now is: HOW am I to continue?" In response, the next day San Faustino suggested his to Alessandro Pavolini directly (then Minister for Popular Culture in Fascist Italy), "since you are for all intents and purposes an enemy alien". Unsurprisingly, he agreed entirely with Pound's position:

Your collaboration has got to go on, for many reasons which, I think and many other people in high places think, are self evident.

Maybe you don't know more than anybody else, but what you do know is so much more than most people, hence our desire for more and more collaboration. Naturally this collaboration will have to be slightly modified. You will have to be more impersonal, more work will have to be anonymous, and anything that you will give over the air, in your own name, will have to be of a cultural kind for propaganda reasons.<sup>68</sup>

It seems both men agreed that Pearl Harbor placed merely a temporary barrier to the resumption of Pound's propaganda work for Radio

Rome – even if his personal broadcasts apparently had to wait until 26 January 1942, with official permission from the wartime “Italian Supreme Command to remain in Italy for the duration of the war”.<sup>69</sup> By mid-December 1941, Pound’s continued collaboration seems to have been already settled amongst EIAR staff, and he was back to discussing propaganda strategy with San Faustino: “No use merely d[u]-placating Haw Haw; for example [...] the MAIN job, has been recently defined by Hitler/ to make sure that even in 15 or 20 years, the kike kahal or Stank of England will NOT be in a position to start another strangling movement.”<sup>70</sup> Once again, San Fausino scarcely needed to be told about anti-Semitic content. As Arnold summarizes Fascist propaganda at the end of 1941: “It was now a war being fought to defend the Italian people from the economic and territorial aspirations of the Jew-ridden Allies.”<sup>71</sup>

Further bearing upon winter 1941–42, folders 5264–5266 are equally revealing. Of the 21 items in Folder 5264 (ranging from 9 to 31 December 1941), most are concerned with American entry into the war. The earliest, scored ‘Not Sent’ in blue pencil at the top of the first page, already speaks of Roosevelt’s “moral defeat”, concluding: “ANYthing like a MORAL basis for Anglo American propaganda was annihilated the day they made common cause with soviet Russia. A fact which even American patriots will be loath to deny.” The final item, like the others, is short (a page or less) and headed “Pound/ anonymous/ 31 Dec.” It reads in full:

HOT WIRE/ Washington/ day of atonement.

While it is not expected that there will BE any more Presidential elections in the U.S., it has nevertheless been decided that if the formality of swearing in a President ever recurs the OATH will be administered on the Talmud, and not on the bible as heretofore.

Dr. Litvinof has expressed his appreciation of this attention.<sup>72</sup>

Box 127, folder 5265 continues on same theme, with two short notes proclaiming the next day: “England and the U.S.A. are now in jewish hands. They are headed for Soviet condition[s]”; and “the jew never changes. Put him in charge and you get sweat shops”. A subsequent, eight-page typescript entitled “Quisling”, dated the same day, then concludes:

QUISLING proposed a WAY TO PEACE, it was NOT a way to Italian advancement in particular, and we can therefore do it justice without being in any way partial to Quisling’s aims. ANY man who desired peace before 1939 was OUTLAW to Churchill; Mendel; Blum, jewry, and the international money sharks. Among whom we include Roosevelt and his companions.

The next day, another anonymous, seven-page typescript from this folder declared:

Italy's radio-transmissions have been directed to the THINKING minority. This may be a tactical mistake on our part, but we doubt that it is so. It takes longer to get an effect. It may NEVER have an effect. You may go on dragging out the war for a decade. It would take the Japanese some time to get to Fort Knox [...] The immediate decision depend[s] on stukas. No flights of oratory on our part will wring the faintest desire for justice from the anglo-judeo-american oligarchy. If we were a group of yellow dogs like Churchill, Roosevelt and Donovan we would be appealing to that minority to riot, to shoot from behin[d] stable doors, the[n] run amok with pocket machine guns.<sup>73</sup>

Just over a week later, the first in another score of shorter typescripts commencing Folder 5266 saw Pound praise the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* – that he had first read in April 1940 – which was “not written by them but which is without shadow of doubt or turning a compendium of the method employed to make wars.”<sup>74</sup> Another two-page typescript in this Beinecke archive folder is headed “Pound/ anonymous/ (or giovanni delbene) 16 Genn.” For its part, this concludes: “The aim of this is to leave a small group of jews in control of ALL american and to reduce the american farmers to the level of russian serfs. The AXIS stands for the homestead; for individual initiative in business up to the absolute maximum compatible with the good of the whole nation.”<sup>75</sup> On the whole, if anything, these anonymous typescripts are clearer and less compromising than Pound's personal broadcasts, even if the propaganda themes remained consistent across his wartime radio texts. If the language increasingly smacked of Nazi rhetoric, for Pound as for Fascist Italy, as Jeffrey Herf incisively shows, this is substantially indebted to the anti-Semitic offensive launched by the Third Reich in summer 1941. Exemplifying “The Alliance of Bolshevism and Plutocracy”, a Reich Press Office directive of 8 August 1941 concludes:

Today Jewry again seeks world domination. That British and American plutocrats on the one hand and Bolsheviks on the other appear with apparently distinct political goals is only Jewish camouflage. The Jew strives for world domination in order to rob and plunder the world for his exclusive benefit, without distraction or hindrance.

The “Office of Enlightenment and Speaker Information Materials”, also under Dr Otto Dietrich's control – and in the wake of initial military

success against the USSR – simultaneously produced a cognate pamphlet. This resorts to a familiar metonymizing of leading international Jews, allegedly responsible for starting the war against the Axis:

Plutocracy and Bolshevism have one master, the Jews! [...] These all-powerful forces include, to name only a few, the following names: in America, Schiff, Warburg, Guggenheim, Morgenthau, Goldman, Baruch, Bulli[t], Untermyer, and so on; in England, Hore-Belisha, Salmon, Stern, Reading, Green, Isaacs, and so on; in the Soviet state, Kaganovich, Bermann, Schwernik, Mechlis, Maisky, and so on.<sup>76</sup>

Despite misconceptions regarding the dating of his broadcasts, it seems Pound never stopped during wartime. He was too committed, and too connected, to tug at the reins. Yet many accounts of the period have given a different impression. Most notably, Fuller Torrey has intuited another ‘silent period’, lasting some six months between 20 August 1942 and 4 February 1943 (acknowledging two exceptions on 19 September and 9 December): “suddenly, in mid-August 1942, Pound became silent [...] Financial receipts for payments made to Pound also stopped abruptly on August 12 and did not resume until October 19. There is, then, a period of at least two months in the middle of the war in which Ezra Pound dropped from view.” Torrey ascribes this lull to the possibility of a trip to Nazi Germany at this time, or alternatively, to Pound’s learning of the treason charges being prepared against him.<sup>77</sup> Both of these scenarios seem unlikely and, in any case, Pound neither stopped speaking, nor ceased receiving payment by Minculpop until the end of World War II. Once more, Yale’s Beinecke archives is instrumental in dispelling myths surrounding the dating of Pound’s propaganda typescripts.

Amongst the thousands of items indexed under the heading “Radio Articles A-Z” in the Beinecke archives’ online catalogue, three are directly relevant to Pound’s supposed second ‘silent period’. The first, “Borderline Cases” in Folder 5375, is dated 11 September 1942, with a corresponding “used 11/9” handwritten at the top of the first page. A six-page typescript entitled “A Segment” then speculates on the causes of World War II in Folder 5688, dated 17 September 1942: “There is no use in regarding this war as anything save a segment of the long persisting war of the jews against the rest of humanity”.<sup>78</sup> Finally, Folder 5370 contains another typescript titled “Blinder Alleys”. Dated 20 September 1942 (and quite possibly the ‘exception’ noted by Torrey), in addition to praising

fascist ideology, an excerpt from this text reveals that these scripts were intended for broadcast in Pound's own name:

The fascist and nazi movements are prob[ably] more interesting to me than to those of you who have NOT been interested in reform movements[.] monetary reform movements for the past 20 or 35 years/ they are prob. more interesting to me than even to the itals/ and germans/ who have lived their revolutions and not observed failure of reform in other countries [...]. fascism was created to remedy the glaring defects of dem/ govt. And the maintenance of that hoax is all B.B.C. and all jew propaganda. [... *handwritten in the margin*: In Engl. Dem[ocracy] a mere word] The axis stands for the direction of the will to something better than lucre. It stands for a scale of values.<sup>79</sup>

Also bearing upon this 'silent period' is a highly revealing financial ledger. This suggests that Pound's September 1942 typescripts were indeed broadcast, alongside several other items he either wrote or delivered that month. In all, Folder 5301 details 195 payments from the Ministry of Popular Culture to Pound, billed between 22 April 1941 and 26 January 1944. Many of these entries are for longer scripts at 350 lire per broadcast, usually bundled together in multiples of two or three, while shorter notes earned 250 lire and those announced by another EIAR propagandist earning up to 300 lire per broadcast.<sup>80</sup> In addition, many greater, obviously composite sums are also included amongst Pound's payments (such as 2,052 lire on 15 September 1941; the largest amount, 3,100 lire, on 21 July 1942; 1,050 lire on 26 January 1944, and so on). Payments for the quite representative weeks in September 1942 – typically processed, alongside several other payments, at end of the month – further reflect the extent of his continued engagement with EIAR: 300 lire; 350 lire; 350 lire; 350 lire; *1,399 lire*; 350 lire; and 650 lire (*italics added*). Similarly, during his supposed 'retirement' over December 1941, Pound earned 3,100 lire in six payments of 700 lire 3 3; 350 lire 3 2; and one text for 300 lire, collectively paid on 28 December 1941. As with typescripts, so too in terms of payment: there appears to be no pause in Pound's propaganda output. Moreover, like many of the manuscripts encountered above, the bottom right-hand side of the first page contains a date from early May 1945 – often, as in this case, 7 May 1945, the day Pound provided the FBI "written permission to search" his home and "to take any and all documents of interest" – and the initials of one of two FBI agents sent to Italy to apprehend Pound (here, Special Agent in Charge Ramon Arrizabalaga;

it was typically his deputy, Special Agent Frank Amprim).<sup>81</sup> Unusually, however, Pound signed the tenth and final page of this document on 13 May 1945, below his handwritten declaration: “I have no reason to suppose there is any error in this account”. Next to his note is the cumulative figure for these 33 months: 153,060 lire.<sup>82</sup>

Putting the above figure into context, Pound’s 1941 translation of Odon Por’s *Italy’s Policy of Social Economics 1939/1940* took him around a month in total (including corrections and proofs), for which he earned 2,500 lire from the Fascist Confederation of Industrial Workers.<sup>83</sup> As has already been shown, Pound wrote and broadcast for Fascist Italy well before April 1941, and continued to do so long after January 1944. He thus likely received another year or 18 months’ wages – granted, much of which was received during a period (1944–45) when food became more valuable than money – in addition to the 195 payments recorded in Folder 5301. Likely offsetting this inflation, as his 6 May admission sets out, the Republican Ministry of Popular Culture “used to send me about eight thousand lire per month”, before a raise took this figure to as much as 11,000 lire per month. The final payment remitted to Pound arrived at the end of March 1945.<sup>84</sup> At a conservative estimate it therefore appears that, through a variety of undertakings for Italian radio propaganda between summer 1940 and spring 1945, Pound earned a minimum of 250,000 lire (about \$12,500 US dollars in wartime currency; the buying power of an estimated \$185,000 today). Whatever else Pound’s wartime broadcasts for Fascist Italy were, they were at least comparatively well paid.

On this concluding point, it is now possible to adduce an alternative summary of Pound’s wartime propaganda:

Between summer 1940 and spring 1945, Ezra Pound wrote or broadcast thousands of radio speeches, first for Italy’s state-run EIAR, and then for the Salò Republic. In doing so, he never ceased his well-paid propaganda activities, using at least a dozen pseudonymous ‘personae’ in order to continue his radio transmissions throughout the war. Extant radio scripts range from slogans and short, often anonymous items to longer typescripts and roundtable interviews. Furthermore, his broadcasts were not only composed in English, but in French, German and Italian. These extensive endeavors were accompanied by consistent and energetic propaganda strategies advanced by Pound throughout the war, which were, on the whole, taken seriously by several regime functionaries in Fascist Italy.

Having thus pruned the thorny historiographical ground, it is time to consider some of Pound’s principal broadcast themes and strategies, as

propagated between winter 1941 and the end of the first Fascist dictatorship in summer 1943.

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, "America, Roosevelt, and the Causes of the Present War" [1944], *Money Pamphlets by £ (no. VI)*, trans. John Drummond (Peter Russell, London: 1951), 5, 18.
- 2 Yong Woo Kim, "From 'Consensus Studies' to History of Subjectivity: Some Considerations on Recent Historiography on Italian Fascism", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 10/3–4 (2009), 328.
- 3 Pound, "'You New Zealanders': typescript", [1941?], "Ezra Pound Papers", Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 43, 134/5802; hereafter YBL.
- 4 Pound to Ungaro, 22 April 1941, YBL 53/2406.
- 5 Pound, "'Message to Tuan Tzetsun's Friends': typescript", 31 January [1943], YBL 132/5581.
- 6 Pound to Ubaldi, 2 November 1944, Ezra Pound's FBI file, divided into 12 sections on microfilm, Section 7; hereafter *FBI/Pound*.
- 7 See Lea Baechler et al., eds., *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose*, 11 volumes (Garland, London: 1991), VIII: 460–475; hereafter *EPPP*, and *EPPP/VIII*, 1–253.
- 8 Pound, "Articles in German 'Nein ich spreche nicht' [Germ]: typescript", 23 November 1943, YBL 128/5291.
- 9 Pound, "'Le Mereschal Petain ...' [no title]: typescripts", 13 August 1941, YBL 132/5643; English translation in *FBI/Pound*, Section 9. Philippe Pétain's 12 August 1941 proclamation was translated by the *New York Times* on 13 August 1941, online at: [www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1941/410812a.html](http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1941/410812a.html).
- 10 Pound, "'Barral': typescript", July–August 1942, YBL 129/5362; and *FBI/Pound*, Section 8.
- 11 Pound, cited in Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1970), 393; hereafter *Stock/LEP*; and Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988), 569; hereafter *Carpenter/ASC*.
- 12 John Tytell, *Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano* (Bloomsbury, London: 1987), 262. Apparently internal objections had been raised by Pound's "southern accent" at EIAR; Pound to San Faustino, 19 Sep. 1941, YBL 43/2020.
- 13 David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rowers: A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), 105–106; hereafter *Heymann/LR*.
- 14 "Round the Microphone", 5 May 1943, excerpted in Mary de Rachewiltz, "Fragments of an Atmosphere", *Agenda* 21 17/2–3–18/1 (1980), 167; untitled



- program of 12 May 1943 [“Round the Microphone”?], cited in Charles Norman, *The Case of Ezra Pound* (Funk and Wagnalls, New York: 1968 [1948]), 55ff; and “Round the Microphone”, 30 June 1943, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, FCC transcriptions of Pound speeches.
- 15 Pound to Ungaro, 11 November 1941, YBL 53/2410.
  - 16 Gibran van Ert, “Empty Air: Ezra Pound’s World War Two Radio Broadcasts”, *Past Imperfect* 3 (1994), 56.
  - 17 Pound to Ungaro, 5 August 1942, YBL 53/2409. Employing Pound’s FBI file, Tim Redman’s *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), 87, cites all but the last sentence presented here, 222; hereafter *Redman/EPIF*.
  - 18 Pound, “Continuity”, 6 July 1942; Pound, “That Illusion”, 19 February 1943; and Pound, “To Consolidate”, 1942, Leonard Doob, ed., *“Ezra Pound Speaking”: Radio Speeches of WWII* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1978), #52, #61 and #115, respectively; hereafter *Doob/EPS*.
  - 19 George Orwell, “In Defence of PG Wodehouse”, *The Windmill* 2 (July 1945), *I Belong to the Left: 1945*, ed., Peter Davison (Secker & Warburg, London: 2001), 54.
  - 20 George Orwell, *The War Broadcasts* (Penguin Books, London: 1987), 225; and George Orwell, *Keeping out Little Corner Clean: 1942–1943*, ed., Peter Davison (Secker & Warburg, London: 2001), 132.
  - 21 “Notes by Ezra Pound”, 15 July 1941, World War II Summary of World Broadcasts, Section 3B, Italy Abroad, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Caversham; hereafter *BBC/SWB*.
  - 22 Pound to San Faustino, 28 July 1941, cited in Mary de Rachewiltz, “Fragments of an Atmosphere”, 164.
  - 23 E.H. Gombrich, “Some Axioms, Musings, and Hints on Hearing”, 15 June 1945, “Monitoring Service Memos: Misc.”, Various manuscripts on World War II monitoring and propaganda, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Caversham, E8/1091; hereafter *BBC/WAC*.
  - 24 BBC Internal Circulating Memo, “Foreign Language Broadcasts From Italy”, 23 February 1940, in *ibid*. See also “Broadcasting Organisation in Italy”, 15 December 1942, “Foreign Gen/European Intelligence Papers/Surveys of Broadcasting Organisations 1942–1943”, *BBC/WAC*, E2/189.
  - 25 “BBC Audience Estimates: Italy”, “Tangye Lean’s Office: Italian Radio, 1943–1948”, *BBC/WAC*, E20/54.
  - 26 BBC Internal Circulating Memo, “English Broadcast Memo” of 25 July 1942, “Monitoring Service Memos: Misc.”, *BBC WAC*, 2 E8/1091; italics added.
  - 27 San Faustino to Pound, 19 August 1941, YBL 46/2020.
  - 28 Pound, *“If This Be Treason –”*, ed., Olga Rudge (Venice: Tipo-Litografia Armena: 1948); Pound, *Certain Radio Speeches of Ezra Pound: From the*

- Recordings and Transcriptions of His Wartime Broadcasts, Rome, 1941–1943*, ed., William P. Levy (Rotterdam, Cold Turkey Press: 1976); and *Doob/EPS*, xii.
- 29 See my “The Pound Case in Historical Perspective: An Archival Overview”, *Journal of Modern Literature* 35/2 (2011); and Roosevelt’s memorandum, online at: [www.justice.gov/criminal/foia/ezra-pound.html](http://www.justice.gov/criminal/foia/ezra-pound.html), Part 1.
- 30 Norman, *The Case of Ezra Pound*, 47.
- 31 Robert Corrigan, “Ezra Pound and the Ministry for Popular Culture”, *Journal of Popular Culture* 5/4 (1972), 771, 780, 775; italics in original.
- 32 *Heymann/LR*, 144.
- 33 Pound to Carl Goedel, 18 April 1945; and Pound, “Naturally”, 3 April 1945, *FBI/Pound*, Section 11.
- 34 *Doob/EPS*, xi; and Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Ezra Pound in Context*, ed., Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2011), 118; hereafter *Nadel/EPIC*.
- 35 Pound’s covering letter to Gabriele Paresce, 9 November 1940 (with “Now That the Elections Are Over”: typescript”), YBL 132/5608; and Pound, cited in Mary de Rachewiltz, “Fragments of an Atmosphere”, 162.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 163.
- 37 War Office, The National Archives files on Ezra Pound, 204/12602, 13c and 13d; hereafter *TNA/WO*.
- 38 Pound, cited in Anne Conover, *Olga Rudge and Ezra Pound: “What Thou Lovest Well ...”* (Yale University Press, London: 2001), 140.
- 39 Pound, “Communications: typescripts” [1940?], YBL 129/5411; and Pound, “The Quiet Disposition: typescript”, April–May 1940, YBL 126/5214.
- 40 This pertains to “Alliance” (5 August 1940, YBL 128/5316); “Brain Mistrust” (5 July 1940, YBL 127/5377); and the various items in YBL 129/5348 for 30 August 1940; all should read 1941.
- 41 *TNA/WO* 204/12602, 13d.
- 42 Pound to Pellizzi, 11 January 1941, cited in *Redman/EPiF*, 207; and Pellizzi to Pound, 11 January 1941, YBL 40/1691.
- 43 Conover, *Olga Rudge and Ezra Pound*, 143.
- 44 Some of these objections are traversed in *Heymann/LR*, 99ff.
- 45 Pound to Pellizzi, 11 January 1941; Pellizzi to Pound, 11 January 1941; and Pound to Pellizzi, 15 February 1941, YBL 43/1691.
- 46 Pound to Harry Meacham, cited in *Stock/LEP*, 390.
- 47 Pound, “A Word to the Rabbis”, 1 November 1941, *BBC/SWB*.
- 48 San Faustino to Pound, 2 November 1941, YBL 46/2020; and Pound, 10 October 1941, *BBC/SWB*.
- 49 W. Vincent Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory: Fascist Propaganda and the Second World War* (Peter Lang, New York: 1998), 143.
- 50 “Luchini, Alberto”, Archie Henderson, “*I cease not to yowl*” *Reannotated*, 851. I am grateful to Archie Henderson for drawing my attention to Pound’s

- connection with Luchini, underscored by their correspondence between 1943 and 1959, YBL 30/1285.
- 51 *Heymann/LR*, 110–11; italics added.
- 52 *Carpenter/ASC*, 626, 633; and *Heymann/LR*, 150–151.
- 53 Pound to Ungaro (n.d.) [early March 1942?], YBL 53/2010.
- 54 Pound, “An American Imperialist Writes”, 11 July [1942?], YBL 130/5450.
- 55 Pound, “Langston Billings: ‘Gangsters Together’: typescript”, [January 1943?], YBL 127/5236.
- 56 Pound, “American Imperialist”, various undated texts, YBL 127/5234. In his 6 May 1945 statement to FBI interrogators, Pound claimed: “So far as I know I wrote all the broadcasts made under the name of “American Imperialist.” Various people read over the air the articles which I wrote under the name “American Imperialist.” *TNA/WO 204/12602*, 13d.
- 57 Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory*, 152.
- 58 J.J. Wilhelm, *Ezra Pound: The Tragic Years, 1925–1972* (Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park: 1994), 184.
- 59 Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Nadel/EPIC*, 117–8.
- 60 Pound, “Announcements by RAI after Pearl Harbour [sic]: typescript”, January 1942, YBL 128/5292.
- 61 Pound, “Delbene: ‘Dichotomy’: Typescript”, 26 December [1941?], YBL 127/5246.
- 62 Redman, “The Repatriation of Ezra Pound, 1939–1942: A View from the Archive”, *Paideuma* 8/3 (1979), 443; and *Redman/EPF*, 197.
- 63 Redman, “The Repatriation of Ezra Pound”, 448, 455–456, with Pound’s latter two letters to Cornelio di Marzio translated in *ibid.*
- 64 Pound to San Faustino, 17 September 1941; and San Faustino to Pound, 15 September 1941, YBL 46/2020.
- 65 Pound to San Faustino, 15 September 1941; San Faustino to Pound, 19 September 1941; and San Faustino to Pound, 27 October 1941, *ibid.*
- 66 Pound, “News from Nowhere”, 18 December 1941, YBL 132/5597.
- 67 Pound to San Faustino, 11 and 16 December 1941, YBL 43/2020.
- 68 Pound to San Faustino, 18 December 1941; and San Faustino to Pound, 19 December 1941, in *ibid.*
- 69 *Heymann/LR*, 112.
- 70 Pound to San Faustino, 23 December 1941, YBL 43/2022.
- 71 Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory*, 140.
- 72 Pound, 9 and 31 December 1942, untitled, “Anon.: typescript”, 9–29 December 1941, amongst various items in YBL 127/5264.
- 73 Pound, 1 and 2 January 1942, untitled, “Anon.: typescript”, 1–10 January 1941, amongst various items in YBL 127/5265.
- 74 Pound, 10 January 1942, untitled, “Anon.: typescript” 10–31 January 1941, amongst various items in YBL 127/5266. On Pound’s April 1940 reading of

- the Russian Tsarist forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, see Redman/*EPIF*, 202.
- 75 Pound, untitled, 16 January “Anon.: typescript”, 10–31 January 1941, amongst various items in YBL 127/5266.
- 76 Reich Press Office, Periodical Service, 8 August 1941; and *Germany Has Entered the Fight to the Finish with the Jewish-Bolshevik System of Murder*, Reich Propaganda Directorate, 21 July 1941, both cited in Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust* (Harvard University Press, London: 2008), 155, 99–101, respectively.
- 77 E. Fuller Torrey, *The Roots of Treason: Ezra Pound and the Secrets of St Elizabeths* (Sidgwick and Jackson, London: 1984), 164–165.
- 78 Pound, “No. 33, ‘Borderline Cases’: typescript”, 11 September 1942, YBL 129/5375; and Pound, “No. 99, ‘A Segment’: typescript”, 17 September [1942?], YBL 133/5688.
- 79 Pound, “No. 98, ‘Blinder Alleys’: typescript, 6L.”, [20 September] 1942, YBL 129/5370.
- 80 “You asked whether the mandati [payment] came through. They WERE coming regularly, but since my return I have only one and that for 250, instead of 350/ I supposed it was for a note, not a dis/corso”, Pound to Ungaro, 16 June 1941, YBL 53/2407.
- 81 Letter from Frank L. Amprim to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, 31 May 1945, *FBI/Pound*, Section 7.
- 82 “Pound’s Italian investments and receipts” (n.d.), YBL 128/5301.
- 83 Redman/*EPIF*, 208, which points out that Pound’s first draft took just over two weeks to complete.
- 84 *TNA/WO* 204/12602, 13f; and “Pound’s Italian investments and receipts for broadcasts” (n.d.), YBL 128/5301. On this folder, see Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Nadel/EPIC*, 119.

# 6

## Pound's Propaganda Themes and Strategies, 1940–43

*Abstract: Following on from the historiographical reappraisal in the previous chapter, the discussion here is focused upon Pound's propaganda themes and strategies – some of which were clearly inspired and refined by his reading of Hitler's Mein Kampf in 1942. By considering key documents in Pound's FBI files and neglected manuscripts at Yale's Beinecke archives, this chapter suggests that Pound was far more influential, and far more respected, as an Axis propagandist than has been previously argued. Derivatively, his ideological views, in both EIAR broadcasts and less frequent journalism, are in close keeping with the views of key functionaries no less than the wider Axis trajectory during World War II – from declarations of a 'new order' in Europe to calls for vengeance against 'traitors' and 'Jews' by the time of Mussolini's 1943 arrest and Pound's contemporaneous indictment for treason by US authorities.*

Feldman, Matthew. *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

DOI: 10.1057/9781137345516.

A propaganda which has since continued was begun at that time in various reviews, with my book, "Jefferson and/or Mussolini" written in 1933, published against opposition in 1935. The opposition of the editors in England and in the United States of America were not against me personally but against the subject because in the interim they published five other books of mine. At the time of the sanctions almost excluded from the British press, I continued to write articles for Italy and against the League, in the *British Italian Bulletin* (organ of the Fascist Unit of London); I later continued to write in *Mosley's reviews*, that is the organ of the British Fascist Party, *Action* and the *British Union Quarterly*. In 1939 I took a trip to the United States of America remaining in Washington to protest against anti-Italian attitude, a trip which I took at my own expense. For more than a year now I have continued arguments and radio broadcast speeches to England and to the United States on behalf of your Ministry of Popular Culture [while] doing other work for your Ministry.

Pound to the Royal Finance Office, Italy (1942[?])'

Pound's self-described activism in the epigraph above, provided in order to access his frozen bank account – the subject of much correspondence with PNF functionaries in the FBI and DOJ files during 1942 – offers an apt summary of his preceding fascist propaganda. Likewise, this study has argued that Pound's propaganda may be seen as a coherent whole. As this section details, it was also in keeping with wartime changes to Fascist policy. Notwithstanding his more biologically racist anti-Semitism, in fact, Pound's ideological trajectory closely resembles that of Mussolini and other leading Fascist ideologues from 1933: from the 'continuing revolution' at home and a political faith that was non- and even anti-Nazi until the invasion of Abyssinia; to an increased openness toward the Third Reich by the late 1930s, culminating with short-lived participation in the Axis "new Europe" following German military successes in the early 1940s. There can be little doubt that, in MacGregor Knox's words, "Fascist wars and Fascist revolution were dialectically intertwined in an upward spiral of violence." This "permanent revolution" was likewise endorsed in Pound's propaganda strategies and radio typescripts between early 1941 and the fall of Mussolini on 26 July 1943 – the day after Pound's treason indictment (in absentia, of course) via the

American Attorney General, Francis Biddle.<sup>2</sup> In assessing these two and a half years, the present section considers several key themes evident in Pound's typescripts, alongside some of the "other work" undertaken for Minculpop, referred to by Pound's epigraph above – in this case, strategies for Anglophone propaganda on behalf of Fascist Italy.

With respect to Pound's wartime propaganda work, several scholars have alluded to the range of his attendant initiatives and strategies – once more helpfully summarized by Redman's view that "his function extended also to giving general advice about Italian propaganda". In support, Redman cites Pound's particularly revealing letter to Pellizzi on 15 February 1941, at the outset of his systematic broadcasts for Radio Rome. There, Pound confessed to three problems: getting Americans to "unhook radio receiver AT ALL"; appealing to perceived "prejudices sufficiently to keep 'em listening"; and "[h]ow to slip over something that wd/ be equivalent to killing Morgenthau and the god damn kike agents and leading Jewsfeldt to gawd or an honest life." Yet it seems even Redman is chained to the fallacy that Pound's radio propaganda was somehow uniquely disconnected from the "battles of the real war", for "the day-to-day bullets and bombs hardly seems to concern him" until spring 1943, when Fascist Italy itself became a site of Allied bombing and, later, invasion.<sup>3</sup> To this view, Friedlander adds that this alleged "paucity of topical reference served his purpose well, as Pound's principal theme was not the war itself, but war's underlying cause". Now, it is certainly the case that many of Pound's typescripts and broadcast strategies are broadly thematic; cut off from outside news beyond wartime propaganda by both sides and, doubtless (again, like other Axis broadcasters), via transmissions sometimes either rambling or garbled. Nonetheless, a useful appendix provided by Doob's *Ezra Pound Speaking* indicates that some two-thirds of Pound's recorded FCC broadcasts contained anti-Semitic content, while other important themes included the evils of communism (one-third), and the overwhelming remainder reviewing the causes, aims and effects of World War II.<sup>4</sup> Even this bare list has long suggested that it is mistaken to treat Pound as somehow aloof or disengaged from key wartime developments – from the invasion of the USSR and Pearl Harbor in 1941, battles in North Africa and the Near and East Asia over 1942, to turning points in 1943 at Stalingrad and Sicily, and more.

Drawing upon this decisive wartime context, analyzed below are several of Pound's key propaganda tropes for Radio Rome. Here too,

discussion is heavily slanted toward previously unremarked typescripts, in addition to relevant correspondence and strategic papers reproduced in Pound's FBI file – many of the latter at least partly in response to reading Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in spring 1942. Rather than merely a jumble of disembodied “phantom transmissions” little better than “historical disarray and garbled memories”, then, these manuscripts reveal an engaged radio propagandist for Fascist Italy.<sup>5</sup> Exemplifying this commitment is a translated letter in Pound's FBI file, presenting his ideas on propaganda in (most likely) May 1942, after reading *Mein Kampf's* chapter on “Propaganda and Organization”:

- 1 Purpose “to win”
- 2 Participation of propaganda: to break the effect of enemy propaganda within and outside the United States and England.
- 3 The first step for all. See that Radio Rome is listened to.
- 4 My personal function: Interest the greatest number of listeners.
- 5 Methods of doing this: Variety and the unexpected. Do not let your listeners sleep or do not delude them.

Continuing to San Faustino on this theme, Pound urged greater awareness of the differences

between radio propaganda and propaganda addressed directly to the masses with the orator present. A large part of this advice and these rules for propaganda are in relation with my latest formula. We must move the crowd. Radio propaganda on the other hand resembles written propaganda in certain aspects since it is addressed to chosen listeners on the intent of coloring and informing that which they will write later and for the greater part unknowingly.<sup>6</sup>

In short, Pound enthusiastically contributed suggestions to Fascist officials, and dutifully followed the contours of Axis propaganda in his typescripts. Yet then again, EIAR would not have persisted in featuring him otherwise. It bears reiterating here that, as with the reception of his radio speeches, whether he was taken seriously – and there is much evidence to suggest EIAR officials did so, at least on occasion – is of much less import for the present argument than the historical nature and context of Pound's propaganda endeavors.

With major cracks in the Italian military already emerging after debacles in Greece and North Africa, Pound began to come over the airwaves periodically in January 1941. “Matters American in this War”, an early



talk for North America transmitted on 22 January, was summarized by BBC monitors over eight lines, which conclude:

I know of no-one in Italy or Germany, who now thinks that the Axis can be beaten.

(Note: the greater part of this talk was inaudible)<sup>7</sup>

Sensing the problems of reception – both in terms of generating auditors as well as the unpredictable sound quality – Pound wrote to Ungaro a fortnight later: “[p]roblem of GETTING their attention is what worries ME.” That night, transmission atmospheric were apparently poor, for Pound suggested the following on-air note for the next day:

Yesterday we said that Ezra Pound was going to speak from Rome on the “Limitations of Human Understanding”. We also said that, democratically speaking, Mr. Pound was a stinker. Reception from Rome last night, however, was so bad that very few of Mr. Pound’s words were audible. One sentence was that Woodrow Wilson, last U.S. President faced with a warring world, had made a dirty mess in his own backyard. We still think, democratically speaking, that Mr. Pound is a stinker.<sup>8</sup>

In the event, “Limits of Human Understanding” was quite audible for the BBC monitor, who provided a synopsis of the 19.45 Pacific Standard Time broadcast for North America over 25 lines – despite noting at the top of the page, “(Overlaid throughout by Morse [code])”.<sup>9</sup>

In the months to come, some internal resistance at EIAR to Pound’s collaboration seems to have surfaced – alongside his translation of Por’s book in February and March, a likely reason for his limited broadcasts before spring 1941. Yet by May of that year, a “second series” of 13 pages was sent to EIAR’s director of overseas broadcasting, Dr Gabriele Paresce, in addition to various judgments on leading US officials (“These people are dangerous. They are, however, just as dangerous to their compatriots as to us.”). This series also contains perhaps Pound’s earliest attempt at anonymous radio ‘snippets’, headed 12 May:

mild item/ contributed to the war of nerves”  
transmission for England ???

One American student has sent the following irreverent open letter to Hitler:

Dear Fuhrer:

For god’s sake finish off the English. We’ll deal with our son of a bitch (or whatever the polite word is) president later.<sup>10</sup>

This “mild item”, and others like it, shortly evolved into what Pound called “short jabs”, sent by post to Radio Rome for later use as anonymized ‘filler’. San Faustino, Pound’s immediate supervisor at EIAR, agreed, responding “you are better on the air as our commentator and reader of CHUNKS.” In time, these “short jabs” were to become slogans, such as “How strange that neither Eng/ or U.S. seem aware of there being ANY such thing as a jewish problem”, the latter followed by the suggestion: “that ought to go every day and all day”.<sup>11</sup> Besides, Pound added in an internal transmission note: “There is no reason why the slogans should be used ONLY in English transmissions. oriental and Spanish depts./ shd also use ‘em.”

More insightfully still, a mid-1941 letter to San Faustino’s EIAR supervisor, Adriano Ungaro, referred to ‘Lord Haw-Haw’ in stressing greater euphemism for certain Anglophone audiences:

The mot juste does NOT become a cliché. The cliché is a presso a poco  
hence it wears out.

Haw haw has about worn out “international jewish finance”. I think my “NOMAD CAPITAL” is better. and that several speakers might adopt it.

///

Certain phrases are good for certain countries/ they must NOT mean a surrender of our meaning, but they can be used when they contain our meaning.

e.g; INDEPENDENCE instead of autarchy, for the U.S.A.  
as we mentioned before.

Pound’s stress upon “our meaning” had indeed been “mentioned before”, specifically at what he termed a “pow-wow or symposium” designed to coordinate ideas amongst Radio Rome propagandists. “Everything DONE at that pow-wow was USEFUL”, he continued, “we should know what we mean when we spea[k] together.”<sup>12</sup> This is probably the committee seized upon by the FBI as evidence that Pound offered ‘aid and comfort to the enemy’: “Pound belonged to an organization dedicated to anti-Allied propaganda [... and] was a member of a committee in the Ministry of Popular Culture which met every morning to formulate anti-Allied propaganda and that Pound was the head of the United States Division of that committee.”<sup>13</sup>

That the FBI may have overstated the case is understandable, considering their enforcement role; but then again, critics have consistently marginalized Pound’s engagement with wartime developments. Rather than working concertedly in the development of Axis propaganda, the

general assumption persists that Pound's work was out of tune with a totalitarian dictatorship facing total war. Accepting that what "he wrote had to be approved by the Fascist hierarchy", for example, Tytell nevertheless posits: "The radio talks showed his increasing disorientation as they lurched randomly through a panoply of Pound's favourite hatreds."<sup>14</sup> But the point is that these "hatreds" were shared by the Axis, and were far from random – whether vis-à-vis wartime battles or propaganda strategies more generally. A key example in this respect is 'Operation Barbarossa', launched by Nazi Germany on 22 June 1941. Despite swiftly contributing some 60,000 troops to what became the 'eastern front', Hitler's informing *Il Duce* only on the very eve of the invasion offers a good barometer of Fascist Italy's relative influence in the Tripartite Axis at this time. Mussolini's 'parallel war' in the Mediterranean had already been lost in the year since the onset of hostilities against France and Britain on 10 June 1940: ejected from the short-lived 'empire' in *Africa Orientale Italiana* by British forces, and wholly dependent upon the Third Reich in the Balkan occupations of Greece and, from April 1941, western parts of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, Fascist Italy had dutifully refrained from criticizing the Soviet Union during the nearly two years of mutual opportunism arising from the Nazi-Soviet Pact on 28 August 1939. Following the commencement of Operation Barbarossa, Pound, like other Axis broadcasters in Italy as in Germany, quickly adapted to the Third Reich's 'turn eastward'.

"Am feeling rather need of CONSultation/ re several points", Pound wrote to Ungaro amidst incoming reports of the Wehrmacht's invasion of the USSR. He was seeking advice on how to frame radio broadcasts to the US:

What about a "Friend of Poland" / what is the line/ Not the official but the "unofficial" line? Do we play for Polish vote in America/ honour to Pilsudsky ? a new Poland cut out of the part Russia swiped? [...] NOT my habitat . try to get "direttive" if you can. I have allus been a Drang-nach-easten-er. Less god damn barbarians and the FURTHER they bloody well are OFF, the better it suits yr/ venbl/ friend.

Soviet atrocities in areas occupied under the Nazi-Soviet pact were widely circulated by the advancing Axis, with Pound recommending several weeks later: "I shd/ PLAY up all the sob stuff / not elaborate it, but all possible FACTS, such as 80 thousand Lithuanians bumped off by Russians."<sup>15</sup> While largely silent on the issue beforehand, the invasion

of the USSR provided a number of key themes for Pound and other propagandists. This extended to an alliance of 'materialist' capitalism and Bolshevism against 'spiritual' fascism; Germany as 'civilizer' of the East in exchange for essential 'living space'; and of course, an underlying Jewish conspiracy preventing a peaceful establishment of the Axis "new Europe". Assuming a variety of forms in Pound's typescripts, these core principles on the European 'New Order' were reformulated, for example, in a recommended slogan from early 1942: "Do you realize what Germany and Italy are doing FOR YOU in driving the bloody Russians out of Europe?"<sup>16</sup> It thus comes as no surprise that Pound's propaganda texts swiftly adapted to wartime circumstances more generally from 1941.

For one thing, Pound could no longer claim, as he had on 21 June 1941, "where the Axis goes, there is peace". In the wake of the largest invasion in history, a day later, the opposite clearly obtained. Pound's propaganda registered this decisive change in targets almost immediately; as with a six-page typescript from 30 June 1941, opening:

Europe has now risen as one man. Both from Spain where the blood red propaganda has taken hold and left its horrors, and from the countries near enough to Russia to know what the Trotsky- or Stalinite terror mean, there has gone up a gasp of relief such as the world has not known in eight centuries [...] ANY sense whatsoever of civic responsibility DIED. Neither England nor the U.S. has ANY sense of responsibility TO CIVILIZATION. And the sputterings over Hitler's present camps are proving this UP to the hilt.

From the time of an extinct race that inhabited greece and turned back the barbarians at thermopylae; downward, the FUNCTION OF EUROPE has been to turn back the invader, to turn back the hordes of tartar and mongol.

A day later, another typescript was headed: "NB: I think this is IMPORTANT. and that it shd/ go to both England and U.S. and probably be translated or at any rate the topic mentioned in other language transmissions. Glad of suggestions/ am trying here a sort of vacuum method eloquence mostly being the OMIssions." In terms of the Nazis' 'turn eastward', Pound's introduction to the four-page typescript entitled "Drang nach Osten" could scarcely be more up to date:

Two points appear to have been more or less settled during the last week of June. First: the pressure of the red terror, the pressure of the mongrel and tartar hordes on the east of Europe appears to have been notably

diminished. Secondly: the Drang nach Osten, the GERMAN expansion EASTWARD appears to be going into effect.<sup>17</sup>

By June 1941, Pound was broadcasting several times a week: at least twice weekly to the US and once to Britain in his own name. This was in addition to unsigned slogans and shorter texts used more irregularly. From mid-1941, he also turned to pseudonymous writing – as noted, almost always satirically – the earliest of which was the shared creation, “Colonel Blimp” (“let ANYONE WHO CAN THINK UP A ‘Blimp’ do one”), first used to gloat over the Third Reich’s successful invasion of Crete on 3 June 1941.<sup>18</sup> Unsurprisingly, the BBC regularly noted his known transmissions, which serves to highlight the running wartime commentary in Pound’s propaganda broadcasts. For example, on 1 July 1941 the BBC provided a 20-line summary of a North American broadcast, credited to Pound but “(Read by an Announcer)”. It was entitled “Sold up the River”, referring to Britain’s mistaken belief “that the French are the last victims – they think the French are being sold, but before this shindy comes to an end, England will find that they are in the same hole as their late ally.” Given initial Wehrmacht victories in the Soviet Union, Pound maintained to San Faustino: “our Teutonic allies are doing us pretty well”. Over the ensuing weeks, as the newly minted Anglo-Soviet alliance was in the process of occupying then-Persia, another BBC summary recorded a talk by Pound entitled “The Treacherous Attack on Iran”. Three days later, the first and last sentences in the BBC’s dozen-line summary of “A Time to See” returned to the anti-Semitic conspiracy theory familiar to both readers of *“Ezra Pound Speaking”* no less than students of Nazism and anti-Semitism: “The Jews are prolonging this war. / The Jews are the world’s burden, the world’s cross.”<sup>19</sup> There can be little doubt that Pound was knowledgeable and insistently parroting Axis propaganda long before the 1 October 1941 commencement of FCC Broadcasts. While obviously not “talking to himself”, Heymann’s preceding clause in *The Last Rower* is closer than most in finding that Pound’s “propaganda line was more Nazi than Fascist” by this time.<sup>20</sup>

Relatedly, Vincent Arnold has noted that Fascist Italy’s wartime propaganda apparatus was “piecemeal” and lacking a unified strategy, even if “three dominant motifs” may be discerned: anti-Semitism, “anti-plutocracy” and, following Operation Barbarossa, anti-Bolshevism – for Pavolini banned coverage of Russia during the short-lived Nazi-Soviet

Non-Aggression Pact. The former, Judeophobic propaganda, was “clearly utilized as the common denominator”.<sup>21</sup> Correspondingly, these were staple features in Pound’s broadcasting, especially with respect to anti-Semitism. In terms of wartime radio propaganda more narrowly, moreover, scholars have long agreed with Bruno Foà’s contemporaneous judgment that there was an “open and complete identification of Italian and German interests on the part of Radio Rome.” His analysis of Radio Rome’s propaganda output between May 1940 and May 1941, despite a biological anti-Semitism “faithfully borrowed from the Nazi model”, still discerned a key difference with Nazi Germany; once more, namely, the lack of a “Fascist ‘master plan’ of radio propaganda in theory or practice.”<sup>22</sup> However, this was not for lack of trying with respect to broadcasting strategies, as a translated and reproduced briefing document from Pound’s FBI file reveals (see Figures 3 and 4). It is unlikely Pound drafted this text, as alleged by the FBI’s Frank Amprim in a covering note to J. Edgar Hoover – despite the fact that these two pages are sandwiched between a translation of Pound’s French typescript from August 1941 and a one-page response that is clearly his. The latter, in the FBI translation from Pound’s file, is largely dismissive of EIAR’s proposed terminology “to convert North Americans”, with only “liberty” cautiously endorsed – withstanding the caveat: “Liberty in the United States and England means, the right to damage all that are not of the cabal or under the cabal.”<sup>23</sup>

In light of Radio Rome’s clearly unsatisfactory proposal for Anglophone propaganda, Pound began to develop his own. “Argument is NO use!”, begins one of these, entitled “Verso Impostaziobe” [sic; “For Themes”], “The jew is NOT one atom alarmed by argument. If a radio speaker relies on logic, he is dished.” After laying down several derivative principles, Pound concluded summarily:

Radio requires news sense. Propaganda requires more than news sense.

-

I. What CAN propaganda DO?

2. What points of enemy moral[e] can it affect.

Debt/ and enemy propaganda: ie; english

3. NOT to make him want to fight better

or to tell him HOW to fight better.

/internal instruction/

books/

4 concrete facts/

not abstraction and argument.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE "NEW ORDER" ON WHICH WE PROPOSE TO FIX IDEAS.

Premise

1. The arguments which, are proposed herewith, are only "themes" or "titles" which will be developed in open discussions.
2. In fixing these arguments there is no intention of establishing a method of propaganda which will be selected according to the needs, nor is there any intention of establishing what arguments must be treated in propaganda work. There is intended, on the other hand, the fixing of only several points of orientation by which to coordinate method and content of the propaganda.

Fundamental scheme

We propose to establish the fascist thought on the following points:

1. Civilization.
2. Political order.
3. Social order.
4. Economic order.
5. Imperial order.
6. International order.

Number 1 constitutes the necessary premise; number 2 constitutes in part a general premise and in part with numbers 3 and 4 delineates the profile of national life in its internal relations; numbers 5 and 6 delineate relations of the nation with other political communities in the world, regarding both its own direct sphere of influence (colonies, possessions, protectorates, etc.) and its coordination with other nations.

Development of the scheme

1. Civilization - to define exactly what fascism means by "civilization" it would be necessary to establish:

- a) the significance of "order" (this concept will serve later, to fix the ideas of "political order", "social order", etc.)
- b) the meaning of "hierarchy"
- c) the meaning of "discipline"
- d) the meaning of "liberty".

2. Political Order

This is a case of reflecting the ideas fixed in point 1, in the political sphere, deducing from them the notions of: State, Political Party, Political Representation, etc.

3. Social Order

This point too is a question of reflecting in the social sphere the ideas of order, hierarchy, discipline, liberty fixed in point 1. Thus the fascist

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conception of relations between individual and society, the fascist conception of "family", of "professional association" can be deduced, and our entire set-up can be outlined in its harmonious significance. The principles of "social progress" in the fascist sense will easily be deduced and the errors of democratic ideas will appear clearly.

#### 4. Economic order

This is a question of following the same procedure, ascertaining the significance of "regulated economy", of "autarchy", etc. Defining the fascist concept of "economic liberty" there can be brought to light the necessity of extracting the people from the domination of gold, high finance and the maneuvers of plutocracy, since "liberty" is the result of the hierarchy and discipline which does not consent the permanency of this form of economic domination.

#### 5. Imperial order

From the fascist concept of "civilization" and that of "political order", there can be deduced the relative ideas of the so-called "vital space" bringing to light the intrinsic need, for the orderly national, not only of assuring itself the means of life and labor, but also of producing about itself its own order and civil system to the advantage of those people that cohabit with it.

The various degrees of this cohabitation create various relations: colonies, possessions, dominions, unions, etc.

#### 6. International order

When the outlines of harmony, national and international equilibrium have been ascertained, it becomes necessary to trace the outlines of the resulting order in international relations.

In the development of this point, the fixed ideas of numbers 2, 3, and 4 (political order, social order, economic order) can be used once more, projecting them in the international field, to clarify the fact that the Nation that lives in the spirit of fascist civilization, is not closed, but always open to receive and promulgate all that is of the best in the life of various peoples.

FIGURES 3 AND 4 *Two-page briefing document drafted by the Anglophone division of Radio Rome for the purposes of propaganda strategy, c. mid-1941*



Pound was thus not only informed of Fascist Italy's propaganda strategies – fragmentary as they were – he clearly helped formulate parts of them. With respect to Anglophone propaganda for Radio Rome, moreover, another wartime memorandum, simply entitled “AIM”, makes specific recommendations for reaching American auditors:

U.S.A. I. to INTEREST the auditor/ then induce him to listen to transmissions from Rome.

2. To slide in a certain amount of historic information
3. conducing to an understanding of fascismo.
4. Direct education in dottrina fascista (but preferably not make this too direct.)

These suggestions went far beyond merely “hints for a more ‘snappy’ style of presentation” mentioned by Humphrey Carpenter.<sup>24</sup> Instead, they represent further indications of an ardent propagandist whose suggestions, whether acted upon by EIAR or otherwise, reveal a genuine commitment to fascism.

Pound's strategies for wartime propaganda were not only manifested politically, but culturally too. Considering his artistic background and lifelong interests, this would naturally prove to be one of his most durable concerns. Many of the transcribed FCC broadcasts underline this cultural inflection, from “E.E. Cummings Examined” and “Aristotle and Adams” in *“Ezra Pound Speaking”*, to reproductions of “James Joyce: To His Memory” and “Blast” in Olga Rudge's *“If This Be Treason ...”*. Again, however, strictly demarcating cultural from political texts in Pound's *oeuvre*, during these uncertain years at least, is both arbitrary and misguided. “Blast”, Pound's 26 April 1942 broadcast, fittingly testifies to this point. Ostensibly reflecting upon his two groundbreaking publications with Wyndham Lewis over 1914 and 1915, Pound claimed that *Blast* had addressed Europe's “crisis OF the system. Crisis OF, not IN the system; not a crisis inside the system.” Whatever the accuracy of this remark, the explicit diagnosis of this “constitutional disease” is, yet again, Mussolini's rather than Pound's. In this case, the sentiment derives from the former's “On the Corporate State” speech: “in the presence of thousands of Party officials who came to Rome for the decennial celebrations and were assembled in the piazza Venezia, I asked a question: is this crisis [...] a crisis within the system, or of the system?”<sup>25</sup> Thanks to Pound's efforts for EIAR more broadly, he hoped that Fascist Italy could provide a cultural counterweight to the Third Reich's military predominance. Writing to

Pellizzi at the Institute for Fascist Culture, Pound maintained: “bro Adolf etc/ is now being quite explicit and I suppose comprehensible to his followers. Someday the axis will tip toward the north end/ if you blokes dont try a little CULTURE at this end. and if you don’t get it from me Christ alone knows where you will get it”. Notwithstanding small successes, the problem appeared little better by the end of the next year, with Pellizzi receiving another missive declaring: “We ought to be at least clear in our OWN minds as to what is the cultural program. IF there is one, I ought to be correlatin MY stuff TO IT.”<sup>26</sup> Between these two letters from early 1941 and later 1942, pivotally, Pound did far more than correlate his broadcast typescripts with Axis propaganda priorities.

Amongst the various contributions to Fascist Italy’s “cultural program” for overseas transmissions, three instances particularly stand out. The earliest pertains to Pound’s standalone text for the British Union of Fascists, the 1939 pamphlet *What is Money for?* Pound’s recorded reading of this text was initially broadcast in three parts on 11, 12 and 14 July 1941. Although these transmissions prompted Pound to write to William Joyce, claiming “I think I have got my voice right at last”, this seems overly hasty for two reasons. First, in late summer 1941, Pound then rerecorded a new reading of the same pamphlet, this time in four parts. These were subsequently broadcast on 18, 20, 22 and 25 October 1941 – the last, according to Pound, the “best delivery I have managed”. Only two days after the final installment, San Faustino sounded quite a different note, explicitly referring to the *What is Money for?* series:

all through the talks you were declaiming, and sounded very much like our one and only Winston. The diction was also rather slow and ponderous [...] Your voice is more convincing when you talk in a natural tone and in a natural way. I know that you spoke to the stupid Brits in that way, because you thought that otherwise they would not understand you, but it still does not sound good to me.

While continuing to refine his delivery – his daughter remembers that he used to practice on her during his visits – the same four parts were retransmitted in mid-December 1941. In the Beinecke archives folder containing his announcement following Pearl Harbor, another page offers a “suggested form” for introducing Pound’s rebroadcast of *What is Money for?*: “dividing it into four parts instead of three, in order to speak more slowly, and to give the auditor time to get the full meaning. This

pamphlet is not part of OUR propaganda. It was published in England in 1939".<sup>27</sup>

As shown earlier, far from 'retiring' after what he termed the "the pyrotechnic display at Pearl Harbour", Pound immediately sought ways to continue working for Radio Rome.<sup>28</sup> In appreciation, San Faustino wrote to Pound on 18 December 1941: "Paresce, Ungaro, myself and many other people in the whole of this country, know quite well what you have done for our Propaganda in the United States". Yet his commitment meant that Pound was far from ready to use the past tense, and several days later he responded with the suggestion: "A guerra ideologica needs strategy as well as tactics/ it needs periods of relative calm; and pushes".<sup>29</sup> One such push is exemplified at this time in a letter to Ungaro, urging a shift of propaganda focus away from Churchill, who was "about finished". Rather:

Urge even riot and pillage/ / they must ACT/ it is not time for England to think/ (if even were it possible) but they must be shoved over the brink of Hamlet soliloquies into ACTION/ is don't matter much what action.

You can use me in a dialog with this phrase.

"THERE is no one in England with nerve enough to carry out the mace."

Similar to typescripts in his own name, Pound's unsigned texts also advanced key points of Axis propaganda. As is widely acknowledged, Fascism's increasing recourse to conspiratorial anti-Semitism was, for all intents and purposes, by now virtually inextricable from National Socialist tenets. So too with Pound's radio typescripts. One example amongst many is the anonymous text "Cheek", opening: "Italy was the first of the nations to start definitively toward the New Order. This was due in part to Mussolini's clear understanding that the Bolsheviks were hired by, or dependent on JEWS in New York."<sup>30</sup> While this point in his life admittedly remains "poorly documented", insight into Pound's corresponding views over winter 1941–42 is provided by Romano Bilenchi's oft-cited memoir. Upon learning that – like most Italians by this time – Bilenchi was no longer pro-Fascist, the "devoted, fascinating" Pound exclaimed: "The national corporations are the most important invention of the century; a fusion of nationalism and socialism [...] Leaving Fascism today puts us on the side of the reactionaries". In addition to belief in the "military skill" and politico-economic superiority of the Axis, notes Bilenchi, was also the ideological inverse; Pound's response to learning of an escaped German Jew, whose family had been murdered

by the SS: “Jews taken individually, especially if they were poor, were human beings like ourselves. However, collectively, and controlled by capitalists as they were, they had organized a relentless conspiracy against mankind.”<sup>31</sup>

In early February 1942, Pound then contributed two further attempts to “keep up the cultural end of the axis. Not let Berlin do it all”: broadcasts “Canto XLVI” and “Canto XLVII”. The former, discussed in Chapter 3, is the “With Usura” Canto unsuccessfully offered to Mosley’s BUF press on the eve of World War II. Pound seems to have initially suggested both, alongside a serialization of his *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, as broadcast material in late November 1941: “After all it is a war against the enemy’s SYSTEM/ and all these books have been bombarding the system for ten or six or 3 years.”<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, his introduction of these broadcasts attended to charges of “obscurity” – in Pound’s radio transmissions as well as *The Cantos* – with his explanatory foreword to the poems “feedin’ you the footnotes first in case there is any possible word that might not be easily comprehended. The Decennio, and decennio exposition was the exhibition in Rome at the end of the first ten years of the Fascist regime. Mussolini’s fascist regime” – that is, the ‘footnote’ for his line in Canto XLVII, “Didja see the Decennio?”<sup>33</sup> That these and similar undertakings were intended as cultural propaganda was also announced to Ungaro a month later: “we NEED items for U.S. that are not strictly propaganda”. This declaration followed Pound’s attendance at a ‘Vivaldi Revival’ performance of *Juditha Triumphans*, with the added recommendation that “he phoned from Siena immediately after first performance” to praise the composition.<sup>34</sup> By the next month, recordings of Vivaldi performances in Fascist Italy often followed Pound’s broadcasts, prefaced with an introduction drafted by Pound: “The regular announcement is [‘]You will now hear one of the songs of our people followed by Ezra Pound, and Vivaldi’s “Gloria” as conducted by Maestro Alfredo Casella in Turin.” From this point on, in much the same way that Confucius was (however fancifully) intended to be “taken into the trenches”, Vivaldi was also conscripted into wartime service. In this respect, Benjamin Friedlander is surely right to argue that his “talks were not simply discrete works within Pound’s oeuvre, but part of a broader propaganda project on the part of the Italian government.”<sup>35</sup> To which it must be added: one to which he was intimately connected regarding wartime Italian broadcasting.

Alongside the anonymized work necessitated by American entry into World War II, quite possibly the most decisive change in Pound’s

propaganda approach took place in spring 1942. A trace of this influence is registered in the 18 May 1942 broadcast “With Phantoms”, reproduced in “*Ezra Pound Speaking*”: “I was behindhand in readin’ *Mein Kampf*, but do you YET know what is IN it?”<sup>36</sup> As stressed earlier, Pound had warmed to Hitler in the later 1930s, even if the latter’s role has been downplayed in Pound criticism. “Pound’s endorsement of *Mein Kampf* indicates how far his attraction to fascism had moved in the 1940s”, Friedlander summarily avers; however, that is far from the whole story.<sup>37</sup> While readily admitting he had recently read the Italian translation of *Mein Kampf*, Pound neglected to tell Anglophone audiences just how important he found “Hitler’s remarks on propaganda”.<sup>38</sup> Most striking about Pound’s reference to the “Propaganda and Organization” section of *Mia Battaglia* – the Italian translation by the Bompiani publishing house that Pound consulted – is the change engendered in his perception of the propagandist’s role. This chapter maintained “that an agitator who shows himself capable of expounding ideas to the great masses must always be a psychologist”, for it “is the task of the propagandist to recruit the followers”. Hitler then continued: “the propagandist must seek untiringly to acquire new followers for the movement [... like] every great revolutionary movement that is of world importance the idea of this movement must always be spread abroad through the operation of propaganda”. Beyond hierarchical control and attracting devoted members, “Propaganda and Organization” may have offered few applicable insights to radio propaganda (still in its technological adolescence during the 1924 writing of *Mein Kampf*). All the same, it seems that Pound responded enthusiastically to Hitler’s “radical and exciting”, “lively and combative” approach to propaganda. Like the bulk of Hitler’s speeches and directives, “Propaganda and Organization” is light on detail and logistics but heavy on authority and belief:

The final triumph of a doctrine will be made all the more easy if the propagandist has effectively *converted large bodies of men to the belief* in that doctrine [...] A revolutionary conception of the world and human existence will always achieve decisive success when the new *Weltanschauung* has been taught to a whole people, or subsequently forced upon them if necessary.<sup>39</sup>

The significance of Hitler’s autobiography for Pound is underscored by looking at the several months on either side of the latter’s encounter with *Mia Battaglia*. Before this point, Pound was wary of using ‘unreconstructed’ fascist terminology on Anglophone audiences, preferring

instead “concrete facts” for, as he added in summer 1941, an “unsewn or discursive method sows ideas”.<sup>40</sup> Also prior to reading *Mein Kampf*, Pound was noticeably troubled by the lack of an overarching strategy for Fascist propaganda – let alone a specific plan for overseas broadcasts in the face of catastrophic Italian losses. Rather than playing the black sheep in Radio Rome’s pasture, Pound’s uncertainty was usually presented alongside requests for greater clarity and direction, so as to more effectively assist Fascist Italy’s propaganda efforts. A letter by Pound to Adriano Ungaro in February 1942 exemplifies this tendency, posing several questions aimed at “clarity in our own minds” for EIAR’s Anglophone radio propaganda:

1. The main line of axis propaganda?
  2. Which target the most important [...]
  3. What OTHER reparti [departments] are doing, so as not to contradict, duplicate or cross their lines.
- //
4. Not authoritative, but a general idea of what the peace aims are.  
my idea of the minimum ( correct me if I err )  
I/England OUT of the Mediterranean, out of Abyssinia  
out of Egypt. Out of German colonies [...]
  5. AS the yids and the war makers WANT or at least WANTED a LONG war; and exhaustion of all white nations, we play for quickest possible finish? [...] Will you discuss these points with Dott Paresce, or shd/ I send him a still briefer note in proposito?

The point here is less that Pound was consistently attempting synchronicity with Axis propaganda but, tellingly, that his tone with Radio Rome colleagues changed markedly over the next several months: “Has anyone studied propaganda? I mean in the immediate vicinage. Have you pushed any further along that line?”<sup>41</sup>

By spring 1942, Pound was pressing forward in the advocacy of new broadcasting strategies for Radio Rome. Gone were requests for instructions; his encounter with *Mein Kampf*, it seems, emboldened Pound’s self-confidence and outspoken consideration of radio as a “lively and combative” propaganda medium. This redoubled activism is discernable in a letter to Ungaro from late June, especially with respect to “formulatin a program”. Pound recommended four points for immediate review:

1. Radio propaganda is part of a process/ which has an AIM [...]
2. What are we educating, or REeducatin the listener FOR ? Answer/ First job is to win the war. me dopo?

3. WE have sotto meno, un certo numero di prigionieri[. under us, a certain number of prisoners.] Anything to be done re-educating THEM.

for dopo guerra. by radio or by any other means?

4. The availability of TEXTS, both for educatin the hearers, AND educating the propagandists [...] If there is not EVEN a set of British Union Quarterly available I dunno how I am to demonstrate what I had already done in attempts to edderkate the goddam brits.<sup>42</sup>

Three days earlier, Pound's thinking on propaganda was boiled down still further to his prime collaborator, Prince San Faustino: "Contempt is LESS effective than moral fervour." By late summer, this approach had been repackaged as "[n]ews is passive", but propaganda "is NOT passive but active."<sup>43</sup> Far from any 'silent period' in his propaganda efforts, later 1942 finds Pound, instead, reloading ideologically.

Offering particular insight into these intensifying efforts for Axis propaganda are nine pages in Pound's FBI file entitled "Pelikan", likely dating from July–August 1942.<sup>44</sup> The first third of this folder is given over to a translated typescript in Italian, ostensibly for broadcast to Italian-Americans: "Distinguish yourselves from the Jewish race. Do not believe every Jewish refugee from a European country, who is not really from the native race of that country [...] it is therefore necessary to commit acts of treason against the United States of America." Thereafter, the remaining six pages address propaganda strategies, by now far more uncompromising in their emphasis. The fourth and final page to be translated from Italian by the FBI starts by delineating several war aims: "Victory"; "Impose Italian prestige"; "Create revolutions in England"; and seek collaborators to "reintegrate a small England in the New Order?" These generic goals were then followed by subsidiary recommendations under the heading "Tempestivity", defined as "Headaches for the enemy". Pound's suggestions turned upon three points: "Destruction of our 'opposite numbers'"; "Win the ideological war"; and third, "Destroy the enemy's morale? To what extent? In what manner?"<sup>45</sup> This typed page concludes with the suggestion: "Lead enemy propaganda into making errors. The more they make mistakes the less influence they will have on their public. Political victory, military victory does not wait for propaganda." While these may be considered general propaganda tenets equally applicable to, say, the Fascist press or film industries, the remaining half of Pound's "Pelikan" file offers much greater insight into his specific thinking on, and approach to, Axis radio propaganda.

The remaining five pages in Pound's "Pelikan" folder are particularly illuminating vis-à-vis radio propaganda strategies. The first begins with

the imperative to “hold the attention of the listener” and “do not lose it”, alongside concise methods for establishing auditor interest, such as “Variety” and “[T]he unexpected.” These were best achieved by avoiding “monotony”, employing “[D]iversity in the methods and tones of various broadcasts”, and explaining the “[V]alue of the Fascist system”. Through repetition of “[B]asic points” and emphasizing “[C]limactic points”, two impressions were “to be given (not necessarily in the same speech): “Force. Make them feel that Italy is winning”, immediately followed by “Calm. Prove that we are not losing our heads, in fact that life goes on as usual.” After another typed page on the applicability of Confucius to propaganda (e.g. “Sincerity embodies intellect”) and another containing a dressing down of another EIAR broadcaster also working “behind scenes”, the final two pages in Pound’s “Pelikan” folder then provide a ‘case study’ of this new approach in action. With respect to the “subservient stupidity” of the BBC, “it is necessary or even advisable to answer the absurdities of an imbecile”. Yet it was still more important to “be the ones to impose the argument”, by attempting to “destroy and disrupt their entire system of propaganda or an entire division by demonstrating their game.” By recourse to martial terminology, this “basic idea of 420 calibers” could be “destructive to the English stand”, thus sapping British morale domestically. The “Pelikan” file’s last page then concludes with an assertion seeming to implicitly call for increased use of pseudonymous ‘personae’ able to make EIAR’s propaganda more “radical and exciting”: “For radio broadcasts a dynamic idea is presented under various forms so as not to arouse suspicions, for the purpose of irony, fantasy, metaphor, etc.” Given these ruminations on propaganda strategy in the six months after reading *Mein Kampf*, one can only concur, with Redman’s summation that the period between Pearl Harbor and his indictment for treason witnessed Pound “almost exclusively engaged in the preparation of his radio speeches and in giving aid to Italian propaganda.”<sup>46</sup> But that may still be an understatement.

Since the January 1940 publication of “Cantos LII–LXXI” Pound had all but ceased writing poetry, shifting his prodigious output almost entirely to Fascist propaganda. Editorializing on major wartime events. Pound continued to march in step with Axis propaganda during this period, broadly shifting from “[a]nti-boshevism, anti-Semitism and anti-plutocracy” in 1942 to “the example of Hannibal at the gates of Rome” and “‘Atrocity Propaganda’ directed at the Anglo-Americans” in 1943.<sup>47</sup> The 18 months before the establishment of the Salò Republic, if



anything, engendered an escalation in Pound's engagement and "moral fervour". On 25 June 1942, for example, Pound contrasted "axis and anti axis aims" – namely, "money based on labour, distribution of raw materials, living space" versus a "jew controlled police to ENFORCE the aims of the axis when the war is over" – through praise of Hitler as "one of the clearest brains yet produced in europe", given "his amazing faculty to get the BASE idea, of a subject the root idea of a problem". Even the phrasing was similar to his hagiographical comments on "the Boss" in *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*. In 1943, also beamed toward Britain, Pound turned to atrocity propaganda, while reminding his auditors that "the essence of fascism" was "NOT to look for help anywhere outside yourself, and your immediate surroundings": "Aviators coked to the eyes; machine gunning children, are a perfect testimony to the Churchill ambitions. But nothing will hinder the same system being applied to YOU in case of industrial unwillingness to toe the line at the yanko-stakhalovite [sic] level." Later that month, intriguingly headed in the top margin "June Berlin" – possibly referring to recordings later retransmitted over Nazi short-wave – Pound declared in "The Future as Heroin":

Roosevelt's machine-gunning of children, and Mr Churchill's bombing of children [...] the non military acts against human beings, non combatant women and babies, can only produce hate? Whom doth it profit? Only those who want the war to end in a poisoned and fragile peace? And the bombing of open towns?<sup>48</sup>

While this recalibration of strategy in mid-1942 is also discernable in "*Ezra Pound Speaking*", it is Pound's pseudonymous texts which best illustrate the way in which the "Pelikan" file's propaganda strategies were applied to his wartime typescripts. While many of the fictitious characters deployed in 1941 were intended to be shared – like 'Colonel Blimp', or 'secondary' features like 'Giovanni Delbene' created following the American entry into World War II – most of Pound's later radio creations ('American Imperialist', 'Langdon Billings', 'Julian Bingham', 'Piero Mazda', 'Marco Veneziano' and the Squarcios, father and son) appear to derive from after this time. While directly bearing out some of the injunctions in the "Pelikan" file, continued financial need and the increase in Radio Rome's output over 1942 may well have also been contributing factors for Pound's embrace of "irony, fantasy, metaphor" in his pseudonymous typescripts. That said persisting, even stubborn, faith in the Axis cause is unmistakable in Pound's later scripts. On 8 February

1943, referring to the Third Reich's impending dénouement in the Battle of Stalingrad, for example, 'American Imperialist' claimed: "While the germans have been dying like heroes in Stalingrad, dying in the cause of world civilization; the name of british and american air force[s] now stinks from Palermo to Lubek, without honour, without results that have any weight militarily, for acts of destruction and gratuitous ruin". A fortnight later, mirroring the 'plutocratic-bolshevist' enemies now frequently targeted by Axis propaganda, Pound's 'Julian Bingham', apparently created in late 1942 specifically for transmission to India, declared in the spirit of "self-determination":

India may have been very slow in becoming aware of the nature of the fascist revolution, but she must become increasingly aware of it. The Tripartite powers affirm beliefs wherewith India can sympathise profoundly [...] above all questions of detail in the fascist and national socialist reforms, and this spirit should recommend itself to a spiritual people, and to any people eager for the establishment of justice in social relations.

Several months later, 'Julian Bingham' reminded his Indian listeners that, in contrast to the Allies, the "axis stands for justice, established and maintained by honest force, openly and professedly working in defence of that justice". By contrast, 'the conspiring Jew' has "bled and ruined nation after nation. And is still at it. He has murdered France. He has most certainly murdered millions of russians; he has made life unfit for millions of human beings in Eng."<sup>49</sup>

The Squarcios, 'Manlio' and 'Pietro', offer another insight into these pseudonymous *noms de guerre*. During 1943, Pound composed a handful of typescripts for the presumably expatriate Italian persona 'Pietro Squarcio'. Intriguingly, one of these, a four-page typescript entitled "Shipping for the British Stage", was headed on the first page "read by Al Sanders" – another propagandist at EIAR actually named Alessandro Tasca, with whom Pound sometimes participated in interviews and roundtable discussions.<sup>50</sup> A three-page typescript dated 19 April 1943 found 'Pietro Squarcio' speaking in his 'own' voice, declaring in "The Weaning":

the MEANING of Churchill and Roosevelt has just been quite ably illustrated by the wood of Catin [Katyn]. That is what awaits trusting victims who accept the word of such a government as Mr. Churchill's or in fact any promise made by Churchill or Roosevelt or their entourage. That is what international jewry is ready to do at the first opportunity to any quaint and recalcitrant nation which finds itself immediately in the path of hebraic progress.<sup>51</sup>

Several months later Pound changed tack, perhaps sensing that 'Pietro Squarcio' was too spirited for his British and American audiences. On 20 July 1943, in an intended transmission "FOR England/ not for the U.S.," Pound added the internal heading: "(Note that this isn't Pietro Squarcio/ Manlio is Pietro's father, he exists because I want an observer of about the age of American Imperialist, BUT an Italian)." 'Manlio Squarcio' then proceeded to lament that the "England of Lord Palmerston is no longer", mainly because of their "Jewish Allies". This was apparently demonstrated by the fact that "British diplomats have occasionally been present at meeting[s] of international hebrews". This meant, for the nostalgic 'Manlio', "even the English ended up ignoring the jewish infiltration of their island". On the subject of Jews, 'Manlio Squarcio' thus held the same views as 'Pietro Squarcio' – albeit from a different anti-Semitic perspective: "with nearly three thousand years of history, the jews, vaunting their wretched pretence of antiquity have absolutely NOTHING creditable in all their record". Despite this, an "easy going world has been so bored by any and every tale of jewish rascality that the jews have been able to get away with it." Then, a final four-page typescript bearing the name 'Piero Mazda' – initialed by Frank Amprim, Ramon Arrazabalaga and Pound, with the latter's signature under the words "My ms. [manuscript]" – responded directly to President Roosevelt's 28 July 1943 broadcast, "On Progress of War and Plans for Peace": "Common humanity, whether on the march or coated by what is left of its fireside, most certainly does NOT demand the handing over of Finnland, Esthonia [sic], Bessarabia, Latvia and Lettonia [sic; presumably Lithuania] to the rather common humanity or inhumanity of Mr Stalin's remarkable commissars."<sup>52</sup>

That summer, Mussolini was deposed by the previously docile Fascist Grand Council following Allied landings in Sicily earlier that month. The next day, 26 July 1943, Pound was indicted for treason in the United States. Although "*Ezra Pound Speaking*" chronologically concludes at this point, Pound persevered with broadcasts throughout the '45 days' leading to the establishment of the Italian Social Republic (hereafter RSI). The aforementioned 'Piero Mazda' was expressly created for this purpose when, according to Humphrey Carpenter, these typescripts "were read on the American Hour" program.<sup>53</sup> Correspondingly, Yale's Beinecke archives record five typescripts under the name 'Piero Mazda' during August 1943, with the first two-page text declaring: "As Italians looking back on a hitherto uninterrupted record of Italo-American friendship, we can but ask ourselves what grudge, or WHOSE grudge the American

aviators are avenging when they machine-gun our women and children.” The ensuing three-page typescript, once more invoking the “substance” of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as evidence, saw ‘Piero Mazda’ turning to the Anglo-Soviet alliance: “Never before has an allegedly civilised nation hurled a barbarian horde at Europe when it has been a question of the total survival or total disaster of western civilization”.<sup>54</sup> Appealing to Britain, ‘Piero Mazda’ then tried a softer approach at the end of August: “England has LOST about as much as we have. She is immeasurably more in debt. The United States is growing in power in most of what were England’s spheres of influence”. This text concludes, as per the Fascist propaganda line: “We are in ALMOST all sorts of trouble; and we know it. We feel it quite painfully. But England is by no means care-free. Think it over.” Similarly directed toward Britain, the fifth and final ‘Piero Mazda’ typescript returned to the familiar terrain of anti-Semitism in “Something Worse”. The fourth and last page of this typescript contains one of Pound’s periodic, internal instructions in the top margin; in this case, providing an “optional” addition not “necessary to the unity of the discourse, but might go with it.” This “postscript or news item” offers a revealing insight into the Fascist persecution of the same group Pound most frequently demonized in World War II:

With the change in regime in Italy the Italian Jews are no longer objects of pity, their friends no longer need to sympathize with them as members of a persecuted race. Until the change of regime they had a fairly easy time dodging the loose regulations, which rather favoured some of their affairs. They had been pitied, because there were a few real cases of hardship, but not each of these stands on his own merits BUT (for there is a “but” in it).

The New York enthusiasts keep on advertising General Eisenhower [sic] as “the flaming sword of Judah”, and Europe as a whole is become curious as to the Jewish role in war, and this all tends to spoiling that sense of ease and security which the Italian Hebrew might otherwise feel was his due and his natural portion.<sup>55</sup>

During the long, tumultuous summer of 1943, Pound also composed typescripts for broadcast in his name to Britain (“only stark fear and demoralization would lead any nation into alliance with Soviet Russia”) and to the US, with the text directed at the latter opening: “This war is indubitably due to about 60 men, and had you by a miracle eliminated them from posts of secret control, mostly of secret, but a few of ‘em in openly responsible positions, the war wd/ NOT have broken out. But these devils make war; one war after another”. Anticipating the putatively

leftist move toward ‘socialization’ under Mussolini’s Salò Republic, still another personalized typescript, intended for transmission to the US, declared: “Workers of the world unite and throw out the usurocrats” and “jew millionaires”. This 10 August 1943 typescript then concluded: “In the meantime you are playing the usurer’s game, you are fighting for capital, and trying desperately hard to destroy the homes of yr/ ancestors and to kill off men of yr own race and creed (most of you HAD european ancestors and have european [blood]).”<sup>56</sup> While impossible to reconstruct in every instance, furthermore, the internal numbering system heading these three, three-page typescripts (numbered, respectively, 78, 82, 83; usually added in Pound’s hand in the top margin of the first page) strongly suggests that they were part of a ‘personal’ series. This appears to be distinct from his pseudonymous texts, as well as another 100 pages of anonymous, unnumbered, shorter typescripts running consistently between 2 January and 4 September 1943.<sup>57</sup> All of these endeavors were uninterrupted by wartime and personal events.

Alongside Pound’s commitment to the Axis war effort, it merits noting that, both at the time and since, broadcast propaganda (and more widely, mass-media) has been often viewed as a ‘fourth front’ in the context of modern, total wars of industrialized nation-states. This was especially the case in Fascist Italy which, after all, was the first totalitarian dictatorship, whereby “Italian radio developed almost entirely during the Fascist period” into a “well-organized, effective web of radio networks and stations” by World War II.<sup>58</sup> With added wartime urgency and pro-Axis solidarity, this sentiment was firmly expressed in a letter by wartime Minister for Popular Culture, Alessandro Pavolini, to the Nazi Press Chief, Otto Dietrich: “the combined German and Italian press would be the ‘front line’ that would lead their countries to victory. The journalists, he argued, were and would continue to be in the ranks of the combatants.” A year later, with Pavolini at the front, Minculpop’s equally fanatical acting Minister, Gaetano Polverelli, declared that Fascist journalists formed both “‘a defensive and offensive weapon of the nation,’ and all journalists had to consider themselves soldiers. Similar to the military soldiers who had prepared for battle, the journalistic soldiers likewise had to prepare for battle – battle on the political front.”<sup>59</sup> Despite these bombastic statements, one suspects most journalists in Fascist Italy to have treated such declarations metaphorically. This naturally included the regime-sanctioned journalist, Pound – even in the grief-stricken days of early March 1942 following the death of his father, as per one

of his dozen FBI-translated wartime letters to “Excellency” Pavolini at Minculpop on 5 March 1942: “I am trying to fight to the best of my ability against the enemies of civilization.” The very next day, perhaps uniquely amongst his extant correspondence, Pound indicated a seemingly literal willingness to fight in another FBI-translated letter to his friend, Admiral Umberto degli Ubaldi:

Do you believe it possible to make the Ministry of War understand that certain foreigners are ready to fight against a wicked and hidden power of which Bolshevism is but a part? [...] A force which has not yet been used should be found, perhaps it is only a few people but that too is something. Foreigners live in a country either because of political adherence or for other reasons (Jewish-Tartar infiltration), and it should not be difficult to distinguish goats from sheep. At least there are some clear cases of people who are working directly or indirectly for the Axis. I do not believe that even these small energies should be wasted.<sup>60</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, translated letter to “Royal Finance Office, Genova” (n.d.) [spring 1942?], Ezra Pound’s FBI file, divided into 12 sections on microfilm, Section 7; hereafter *FBI/Pound*.
- 2 MacGregor Knox, *Common Destiny: Dictatorship, Foreign Policy and War in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2000), 146, 145.
- 3 Tim Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), 210–211, 209, 224; hereafter *Redman/EPF*.
- 4 Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, Ira B. Nadel, ed., *Ezra Pound in Context* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2011), 118–119; “*Ezra Pound Speaking*”: *Radio Speeches of WWII*, ed., Leonard W. Doob (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1978), 420–425.
- 5 Daniel Tiffany, “Phantom Transmissions: The Radio Broadcasts of Ezra Pound”, *SubStance* 19/1 (1990), 67.
- 6 Pound to San Faustino, 1 May [1942], *FBI/Pound*, Section 9. I am grateful to Archie Henderson and Alec Marsh for their views on dating this document.
- 7 Pound, “Matters American in this War”, 22 January 1941, World War II Summary of World Broadcasts, Section 3B, Italy Abroad, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Caversham; hereafter *BBC/SWB*.
- 8 Pound to Ungaro, 6 and 7 February 1941, “Ezra Pound Papers”, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 43, 53/2406; hereafter YBL.
- 9 Pound, “The Limits of Human Understanding”, 7 February 1941, *BBC/SWB*.

- 10 Pound, typescripts and letters to Gabriele Paresce, 10–14 May 1941, YBL 39/1568.
- 11 Pound to San Faustino, 17 September 1941 and 24 June 1942, YBL 46/2021 and YBL 26/2023, respectively.
- 12 Pound, “Plans & Instructions – Slogans – , ‘Verso Impostazioni’” (n.d.) [mid-1941?], YBL 128/5299; and Pound to Ungaro, 21 July 1941, YBL 53/2407.
- 13 *FBI/Pound*, Section 3.
- 14 John Tytell, *Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano* (Bloomsbury, London: 1987), 261, 266.
- 15 Pound to Ungaro, 22 June and 19 July 1941, YBL 53/2407.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 10 February 1942, YBL 53/2409.
- 17 Pound, “‘Drang nach Osten’: typescript”, 1 July 1941, YBL 130/5458.
- 18 Pound, “Blimp”, 3–4 June 1941, “‘Blimp’: typescript[s] (carbon)”, [May–June 1941], YBL 127/5244.
- 19 Pound to San Faustino, 23 September 1941, YBL 46/2020; and Pound, “The Treacherous Attack on Iran”, and “A Time To See”, 2 September and 5 September 1941, respectively, *BBC/SWB*.
- 20 David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), 115.
- 21 W. Vincent Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory: Fascist Propaganda and the Second World War* (Peter Lang, New York: 1998), 92, 83, 139–140.
- 22 Bruno Foa, “The Structure of Rome Short Wave Broadcasts to North America”, Harwood Childs and John Whitton, *Propaganda by Short Wave* (Princeton University Press, London: 1942), 157, 172, 153.
- 23 Amprim to Hoover, 10 June 1945, *FBI/Pound*, Section 10.
- 24 Pound, “Plans & Instructions – Slogans – , ‘Verso Impostazioni’” (n.d.) [mid-1941?], YBL 128/5299; and Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character : The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988), 592; hereafter *Carpenter/ASC*.
- 25 Rudge, ed., “*If This Be Treason –*” (Venice: Tipo-Litografia Armena: 1948), 29; and Mussolini, “On the Corporate State”, *Four Speeches on the Corporate State* (Laboremus, Rome: 1935), 10–11. See also Pound, “The Liberal: Request for an Effective Burial of Him”, reprinted in Lea Baechler et al., eds., *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose*, 11 volumes (Garland, London: 1991), VII: 368.
- 26 Pound to Pellizzi, 19 January 1941 and (n.d.) [July–November 1942], YBL 40/1691.
- 27 Mary de Rachewiltz, *Discretions* (Faber and Faber, London: 1971), 150; and Pound, “Announcements by RAI after Pearl Harbour: typescript”, YBL 128/5292.
- 28 Pound, “The Press”, 1 August 1943, YBL 133/5659.
- 29 San Faustino to Pound, 18 December 1941; and Pound to San Faustino, 23 December 1941, YBL 43/2022.
- 30 Pound to Ungaro (n.d) [January 1942?], YBL 53/2408; and Pound, “Cheek”, 14 February 1942, “Anon.: typescript[s]”, YBL 127/5267.

- 31 Pound, cited in Romano Bilenchi, “Rapallo 1941”, trans. David Anderson, *Paideuma* 8/3 (1979), 432, 434–435, 437, 440.
- 32 Pound to Ungaro, 14 April 1942, YBL 53/2410; and *ibid.*, 27 November 1941, YBL 53/2409.
- 33 “Canto XLV”, Rudge, ed., “*If This Be Treason ...*”, 26–28; and Pound, “Canto XLVI”, 12 February 1942, *Doob/EPS*, #9.
- 34 Pound to Ungaro (n.d.) [early March 1942?], YBL 53/2410.
- 35 Pound, “Music Instructions and Notes: Autograph ms. and Typescript”, April 1942, YBL 128/5297; and Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Nadel/EPIC*, 121. For a discussion of Pound’s earlier relationship with Casella, via Olga Rudge, see Conover, *Olga Rudge and Ezra Pound, “What thou lovest well ...”* (Yale University Press, London: 2001), 113–118 and 137ff.
- 36 Pound, cited in J.J. Wilhelm, *The Tragic Years, 1925–1972* (Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park: 1994), 187; and Pound, “With Phantoms”, 12 May 1942, *Doob/EPS*, #39.
- 37 Friedlander, “Radio Broadcasts”, *Nadel/EPIC*, 121.
- 38 Pound to Ungaro, 13 April 1942, YBL 53/2410. The second half of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* was translated into Italian by Valentino Bompiani as *La Mia Battaglia* in 1934, and ran to 19 editions over the next nine years. Pound is here referring to ch. 11, “Propaganda e Organizzazione”, corresponding to the earliest complete Anglophone version, *Mein Kampf*, trans. James Murphy (Hurst & Blackett, London: 1939), 492–506.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 493–494, 497–498, 494–496; italics added; see also, for example, Max Domarus, ed., *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations, 1932–1945*, 3 vols. (I.B. Tauris, London: 1990).
- 40 Pound, “Verso Impostazioni”, YBL 128/5299.
- 41 Pound to Ungaro, 23 February and 2 May 1942, YBL 53/2410.
- 42 Pound to Ungaro, 27 June 1942, *ibid.*
- 43 Pound to San Faustino, 24 June 1942, YBL 43/2023; and Pound to Ungaro, 25 August 1942, YBL 53/2410.
- 44 Pound, “Pelikan” folder, sent by Amprim to Hoover on 29 May 1945, *FBI/Pound*, Section 8. Only one page is dated in this series, “25 July XX [1942]”.
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 Pound, *ibid.*; and *Redman/EPIF*, 219.
- 47 Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory*, 139, 208, 172.
- 48 Pound, “No. 61, ‘Auguries’: Typescript”, [25 June 1942], YBL 129/5351; Pound, “No. 61, ‘Tone of Society’: Typescripts”, [June 1943], YBL 135/5748; and Pound, “‘The Future as Heroin’: Typescript”, YBL 131/5497.
- 49 Pound, “American Imperialist: ‘Gammon’: Typescript”, 8 February 1943, YBL 126/5227, Pound, “Julian Bingham: ‘Intervention’: Typescript”, 23 February [1943], YBL 126/5240; and Pound, “Julian Bingham: Principles’: Typescript”, [May–July 1943?], YBL 126/5243.



- 50 Also broadcasting as ‘Prince Sandro Tasca di Cuto’, Alessandro Tasca was described by the Washington, D.C. *Times-Herald* on 15 February 1943: “Another new traitor to appear on the horizon is a man with the name of Al Sanders, who broadcasts from Rome.” See also *Chicago Tribune’s* story on 16 July 1944: “Allies Seize Former Yank, Rome Radio Aid”; I am grateful to Archie Henderson for his assistance with this information.
- 51 Pound, “Squarcio: ‘Shipping for the British Stage’: Typescript”, 22 March 1943; and Pound, “Squarcio: ‘The Weaning’: Typescript”, 19 April 1943, YBL 127/5261. Pound’s daughter reports that, in April 1943, he was refused permission to travel to the 1940 Katyn site of Soviet-massacred Polish army officers with the “International Investigation Commission”; Mary de Rachewiltz, *Discretions*, 162.
- 52 Pound, “Squarcio: ‘On Shortage of Memory’: Typescript”, 20 July 1943, YBL 127/5259; and Pound, “Squarcio: typescript”, 29 July 1943, YBL 127/5257. Roosevelt’s well-known speech of 28 July 1943 is widely available, for example, see <http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/o72843.html>.
- 53 *Carpenter/ASC*, 626.
- 54 Pound, “Piero Mazda: Typescript”, August 1943, YBL 127/5250; and Pound, “Piero Mazda: ‘Depth’: Typescript”, August 1943, YBL 127/5251.
- 55 Pound, “Piero Mazda: ‘Helpfulness’: Typescript”, 26 August 1943, YBL 127/5253; and Pound, “Piero Mazda: ‘Something Worse’: Typescript”, 21 August 1943, YBL 127/5254.
- 56 Pound, “No 78, ‘A Credo’: Typescript”, 8 August 1943, YBL 130/5430; “No. 82, ‘Pedagogy’: Typescript”, 7 August 1943, YBL 132/5639; and “No. 83, ‘Workers’: typescript”, [10 August 1943], YBL 134/5799. I am grateful for Andrea Rinaldi’s assistance with this information.
- 57 There are 100 pages of various typescripts contained under the heading Pound, “Anon.: typescript [sic]”, January–September 1943, YBL 127/5273 and YBL 127/5274.
- 58 Philip Cannistraro, “The Radio in Fascist Italy”, *Journal of European Studies*, 2/2 (1972), 127.
- 59 Alessandro Pavolini to Otto Dietrich, 27 May 1940; and Gaetano Polverelli, “Rapporto Ai Giornalisti”, 15 February 1941, both translated in Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory*, 31, 119.
- 60 Pound to Pavolini, 5 March 1942, *FBI/Pound*, Section 10; and Pound to Umberto degli Ubaldi, 6 March 1942, *ibid.*, Section 7.

# 7

## Conclusion: The Salò Republic, 1943–45

**Abstract:** *This concluding chapter covers the least known period of Pound's life; namely, his propaganda for Mussolini's RSI between autumn 1943 and the final defeat of the Axis in spring 1945. In further revealing Pound's importance to the Nazi-puppet regime, this chapter highlights his knowledge of anti-Jewish actions in northern Italy during this time, as well as his work for Radio Milan (broadcasting base of the Salò Republic), return to 'epic' poetry with "Canto LXXII" and Canto "LXXIII", and commitment to the fascist cause until the very end of World War II.*

Feldman, Matthew. *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935–45*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

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On the 10th of September last, I walked down the Via Salaria and into the Republic of Utopia, a quiet country lying eighty years east of Fara Sabina [...] Liberalism and Bolshevism are in intimate agreement in their fundamental contempt for the human personality. Stalin “disposes” of forty truckloads of human “material” for work on a canal. We find the liberals talking about the export of “labour”.

Pound, “Gold and Work” (1944)<sup>1</sup>

Summer 1943 found war-torn Italy in disarray: Mussolini was arrested on the King's orders on 25 July; he would be confined to an alpine ski resort until liberated by Nazi paratroopers on 12 September. Just under a week later, on 18 September 1943, Mussolini was installed as the head of a nominally independent Italian regime called the Italian Social Republic (often called the ‘Salò Republic’ because its capital was based in that small town, on the shores of Lake Garda.) Meanwhile, the newly appointed government of Marshal Badoglio proclaimed an armistice on 8 September 1943, eventuating a Kingdom of the South (and from 13 October joining the Allies against the Axis). That summer, after 24 years, the PNF was superseded by a ‘return to the origins’ of Fascism via the Fascist Republican Party. By this time, ends Vincent Arnold's *The War of Illusions*, “war propaganda ceased to be an Italian product. Propaganda, like everything else in the new Italian Social Republic was now under control of Nazi Germany. Indeed for Italy the war was over and nothing remained except to follow the lead of its Axis partner.” Personifying this subservient relationship came in the form of the Duce's thanking the Führer for his liberation: “it was no joke”, notes Philip Morgan, “that Mussolini had remarked to Hitler in their first meeting after his release, ‘I have come to receive my orders.’”<sup>2</sup> Likewise for Pound, in the chaotic days after Badoglio's proclamation was announced by EIAR at 7:45am on 8 September 1943, he seems to have been nearly persuaded to travel to Nazi Germany to continue his wartime propaganda from Berlin. According to the recently discovered diary of fellow Anglophone propagandist, James ‘Giacomo’ Barnes, forged Italian passports – ironically enough, with pseudonymous names – were created for both broadcasters, with Pound's passport allegedly left at the German Embassy in Rome on 14 September for his later collection.<sup>3</sup>

Four days earlier, on 10 September 1943, traditional accounts find Pound travelling out of “Rome by the Via Salaria”, passing “by the

township of Fara Sabina to Rieti, sleeping under the stars” in order to visit his daughter Mary in the Tyrolean village of Gais. On his uncertain journey north, it seems Pound was aided by an EIAR-affiliated German official named Carl Goedel. Then, upon returning to Rapallo, he contacted the new regime and, in the words of Anne Conover, stopped to “be interviewed by the new minister of popular culture, Fernando Mezzasoma, hoping to broadcast again from Milan, the new center of radio propaganda. Many years later Pound wrote of this incident that it had been ‘great folly to have destroyed the batch of letters re/ that’”.<sup>4</sup> The latter assertion, if accurate, greatly helps to explain gaps in the archival record punctuating Pound’s final 20 months serving Mussolini – like his pseudonymous passport, for one – leading Tim Redman, amongst others, to note that this period “is the least documented of his adult years”. Moreover, this “remains a crucial problem for Pound scholarship, crucial because of the importance of this period to a final judgment about Pound’s support of Italian [F]ascism.”<sup>5</sup> In addition to the superb 40 pages on Pound’s activities found in *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism*’s final chapter, there is enough documentation in the FBI files and Beinecke archives to show that both of Pound’s above-described meetings would prove significant for, and even symbolic of, his Anglophone propaganda on behalf of the RSI. Yet then again, so too was Pound’s oft-attributed statement, after making contact with so-called the Salò Republic: “Give me a bed, a bowl of soup and a microphone.”<sup>6</sup>

Pound’s willingness to continue fighting rhetorically and, it seems, potentially more – combined with his utopian description of the Salò Republic in this chapter’s epigraph – bear out his daughter’s later judgment that, during these final war years, he “was infected by a desperate fighting spirit and faith”. Citing Mary de Rachewiltz’s incisive phrase, Alec Marsh notes that Pound “was much moved by the ‘Verona programme’ announced in November 1943 at the first assembly” of the RSI, with the phrase “right to property” becoming “a recurrent gist in future cantos.” (The phrase, in turn, was excerpted from point 15 of the “magnificent” Veronese “programmatical manifesto”, in Pound’s FBI-translated words in late 1943 to Pavolini, Secretary of the re-founded Fascist Republican Party.)<sup>7</sup> With Pound’s propaganda now “passing through the hands of “German functionaries and became, at least in one instance, markedly Nazistic”, Marsh concludes somewhat overzealously: “Pound was off his head by then.”<sup>8</sup> For if this is the case, so were still millions of others in

Italy at this time – indeed, including thousands of volunteers too young to remember anything before Mussolini's March on Rome. There was resistance and civil war in Italy at this time, but there was simultaneously persistence amongst an intransigent core of 'believers' still committed to the Axis cause. If Pound was "off his head", then so too were the 400 (of 1,500) remaining propagandists moving with Minculpop to work from the shores of Lake Garda. Consequently there was no longer any "dead weight" amongst staff and the new, hardline Minister for Popular Culture, Fernando Mezzasoma, could also declare in November 1943, and "repeatedly came back to the subject: 'The very position of journalists makes it desirable and even necessary to be intransigent fascists.'" Doubtless many radio propagandists, as Louisa Quartermaine's excellent study of the Salò Republic details, were lured by the "attractive package" of financial incentives offered by the regime (such as six months' advance pay and generous expenses); not least because, as Mussolini, Pavolini, Mezzasoma and others well knew, "propaganda, if useful before 1943 primarily as a means to gain public support, now became an essential tool for survival for the RSI."<sup>9</sup>

At this late stage, even diaries by captured Italian soldiers could still maintain expressions of political faith in Fascism:

In a short time the whole world will see a natural rebirth of this idea, its foundations made firm with blood and magnified and purified by men tempered in their faith and feelings by the hardships, anguish and dangers arising from the deliberate attempt of Masonic and Jewish capitalism and moribund democracy to save itself.

Ever fanning the flames, as usual, was Minculpop propaganda, increasingly falling back upon national heroes and, despite its intransigence, the Catholic Church. The Republican hymn "A Credo", just one example from amongst many, must suffice here in showing the continuing reference provided, in this case, by satirized words from the Catholic Creed to advance Fascism's political religion:

I believe in England, arrogant hyena, creator of Sanctions, in Eden his only son our executioner conceived by the work of the Masonic and anti-fascist spirit. Born of the societies of nations, he will fall under the Empire of Mussolini. And from there he will come to witness the annihilation of his kingdom. I believe in the holy cause of Fascism, in the resurrection of the new Imperial Italy, in Benito Mussolini our DUCE and in the eternal glory of our mother ROME.<sup>10</sup>

For Pound, as for many convinced Fascists, causing the “dishonor” of 25 July 1943 were not only swift Allied advances, but also betrayals and compromises by key regime functionaries around Mussolini, responsible for the enemy occupation of southern Italy. Two alternating themes thus characterized RSI propaganda over the final 20 months of war and Holocaust in Italy: affirmations of belief in the Axis cause on one hand, and avowals of a vengeful return on the other. “A dichotomous view of the world, divided into ‘us’ and ‘them’”; in Quartermaine’s judgment, “polarised the battle between the incorruptible nature of the RSI and its decadent, treacherous, and irresponsible ‘enemy’ – “*badogliani*” (the followers of Badoglio), Monarchy, Church, Jews, and capitalist Allies.” (As this list of ‘enemies’ suggests, it is highly unlikely that Pound, in Carpenter’s phrase, “coined the term *badogliare*”; instead, he simply employed a term frequently in circulation amongst Italian Fascists.)<sup>11</sup> Due to “overwhelming German control”, several familiar “key images” emerge from an RSI propaganda now inseparable from its Axis puppeteer: “a violent attack against those perceived as responsible for the fall of the regime”; “continuity with the intransigent line of early [F]ascism”; “rhetorical reference to heroic and popular figures of the past” (notably Giuseppe Mazzini as “step father” of the regime, “suggested by Mussolini in his opening broadcast” for the RSI); “a moralistic and often apocalyptic vision of life”, whereby “anti-Semitism and anti-Bolshevism especially became the ideal justification of war”; and finally, of course, “subjects of worship were predictably Mussolini and the ‘holy Fascist cause’”.<sup>12</sup> In continuing his propaganda for the RSI, Pound was neither immune from these sentiments nor, just like the murderous Salò Republic, closely collaborating with the Third Reich to achieve them. As the remainder of this study will indicate, closest to the mark on this period remains David Heymann’s 1976 contention that Pound’s “attachment to the Salò Republic and the Veronese Charter were complete. It was more than a luminary pipe dream; he believed, with an almost religious fervor, that given the proper support, Italy and Germany could still rule the world.”<sup>13</sup>

Closer to reality than the prospect of Axis victory, of course, was an increasingly ferocious rule in northern Italy by the steadily contracting “new Europe”. A return to broadcasting serves to underscore Heymann’s view of Pound’s “religious fervor” for the RSI. Yet in this sphere no less than in that of the military, government or press, “Germany was effectively dominating the situation, providing eighty per cent of all information in Italy”. Thus, logistical priorities for the new occupiers meant severe “limits

and difficulties that the Germans imposed on the Italian transmissions (quite aside from the problems of Allied jamming).” Foremost amongst these problems was the movement of EIAR’s central office from Rome to Turin in “cooperation with the German authorities’ [...] while the programming centre was placed in Milan”.<sup>14</sup> It was in this context that Pound’s FBI file translates a relevant letter to Giacomo Barnes – recently transferred to the Salò Republic after successfully fleeing Rome – declaring “[n]aturally I am ready to travel when I will receive an invitation”. Citing this exchange in a letter to Pavolini the next day, Pound indicated his willingness to “come to the lake” at Garda now that “reconstruction is beginning”.<sup>15</sup> As shown in Chapter 5, Pound’s first RSI typescript was composed in German only a fortnight later, 23 November 1943, with his views again in keeping with Axis propaganda: “Bolshevism? Bolshevism is in my mind only a pseudo-revolution.” In urgent need of propagandists, Pavolini sent a letter three days later expressing “my deepest sympathy for your unchanging and fervent fascist faith [vi esprimo tutta la mia simpatia per la vostra immutata a fervida fede fascista].”<sup>16</sup> Given the degree of dominance by the Third Reich in what was still nominally EIAR, a symbolic value may be seen to attach to Pound’s first, and only extant, Republican Fascist typescript in German.

If less directly, the influence of German Nazism is also evident in what is likely Pound’s earliest Anglophone propaganda typescript under the RSI, entitled “Good Evening” – cited by Mary de Rachewiltz as proof that “he unquestionably tried to reach his old audience” for the RSI. In composing this typescript, Pound was clearly using a German typewriter, with each ‘m’ replaced by an ‘ö’, amongst other indications. Pound commenced: “I have been mousin round for some months trying for to find an unoccupied wave length”, before continuing: “What I think your govt! proved on the \_th of Sept? was that Roosevelt and Churchill are abSOlootly unfit to participate in any serious peace conference’ absolutely unfit to design or putt into practice ANY sch4me of any sort of world order fit for anything about the etstatus [sic – above the status] of swine!”<sup>17</sup> According to Heymann, Radio Milan had just been established “on orders from the Reichstag”, at which time, in early December, “while still under strict German military control, Pound went to see station officials.” He was apparently then allowed to broadcast on 10 December to Allied troops on the “half-hour ‘Tunis’ series” with a transmission entitled “Being Able to Detect Crime”, which concluded: “Every human being who is not a hopeless idiotic worm should realize that fascism is

superior in every way to Russian Jewocracy and that capitalism stinks.”<sup>18</sup> That the presence of Nazi Germany remained close throughout this final period, for Pound as for the Salò Republic, is further suggested by a 2 January 1944 letter from Georg von Lilienfeld (see Figure 5), a Third Reich censor stationed in northern Italy.<sup>19</sup>

Fasano, January 2 nd, 44.

Rundfunkreferent.

Dear Mr. Pound,

since communication has been very poor with Berlin lately and most people seem to have been absent over Christmas, I have not been able to obtain any decision regarding your personal plans before this morning. I have been told that the foreign office radio division would only be too glad to have you coming up as its guest and make arrangements for you to work along the lines we talked about in Milan. Your secretary also would be most welcome.

In extending this invitation to you I must add unfortunately it will not be possible for me to follow up my idea of running down to Rapallo myself in order to bring you to Fasano - at least not in any near future, since travelling has become more and more difficult also for us owing to the gasoline shortage and since I could not leave the office long enough, either. If you could manage to make your way to Milan and there get in touch with either Signor v. Borries or Lieutenant Müller-Franken at the offices known to they could arrange for your transportation to Fasano, from where I could have you brought as far as Bozen for the train to Munich.

Concerning your plans of going on to Paris, I could arrange anything definite from here. You will have to settle that in Berlin yourself as I am not absolutely sure whether it will be possible to carry out that part of your intentions. I would suggest that you go to Berlin in any case and then see for yourself whether you can manage to continue or stay there for a while and then return to Italy. We will have American-English broadcasts intensified within a short time and I should be delighted if you would like to participate in them again.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain with best personal regards and all good wishes for the new year

sincerely yours v. Lilienfeld

FIGURE 5 Letter from Georg von Lillienfeld of Der Bevollmächtigte Des Grossdeutschen Reiches Bei Italienischen Regierung on 2 January 1944, inviting Pound to collaborate on radio propaganda in Nazi Germany



Following the RSI's belated "reconstruction" of radio propaganda at the end of 1943, Pound was offering his "experience as a foreign collaborator", although at the same time cautioning: "My 'Laurel and Hardy' accent probably is not adaptable to be used in the interior". Pound's two-page letter to Salò's Head of Cabinet, Gilberto Bernabei, again translated by the FBI, then turned to broadcasting advice:

In a certain sense propaganda cannot exist in "general". Propaganda consists in exact phrases [...] We have lost various months, months during which the opportunities for propaganda have been magnificent; and the position of the enemies, especially the refuse of the British and American governments have offered themselves to us as a target. Roosevelt is a putrid Badoglio, and Churchill a sub-Reynaud.  
But we need equipment.<sup>20</sup>

Alongside Barnes and others, in early 1944, Pound's energies were then channeled into a little-known program, he later told FBI investigators, called "Jerry's Front Calling". It seems these broadcasts commenced in February 1944 and lasted until April 1945, transmitting to Britain, the US, Allied troops south of Milan and even further afield. The earliest recorded transmissions for this program, as summarized by BBC monitors, were two on 22 February 1944.<sup>21</sup> The next day, EIAR's new Director General wrote to advise the Ministry of Popular Culture that "Radio Division IV in Milan has recently invited the collaborators Ezra Pound and Giacomo Barnes to join them."<sup>22</sup> "Jerry's Front Calling", then, is almost certainly the vehicle in which Pound continued his Anglophone radio propaganda for the Salò Republic.

Very few English typescripts survive in Yale's Beinecke archives from the RSI period, almost all of which are clustered in late January and February 1944. The earliest dated text, "Church Peril", is presumably intended for an American audience considering Pound's opening line: "I am speaking as promised to the students of Fordham and other catholic universities". Pound then moved onto his central subject, the alleged incompatibility of Catholicism with Protestantism and especially Judaism: beliefs of the former were "quite patently NON jewish, and ANTI jewish/ and they are specifcly the features of catholicism which Protestantism has wiped out [...] the Catholic Church notices the semitic peril once a year in the prayer for the perfidos he ebreos [perfidious jews handwritten by Pound beside this underlined phrase] on the anniversary of the crucifixion." Chronologically following this

appeal to religious anti-Semitism is “Howling for Vengeance”, a five-page typescript from 4 February 1944. This is headed by hand “144. / U.S.”; thus pointing toward a consecutive sequence. Referring especially to British politicians, Pound averred, “the vengeance motive is NOT the sane motive for a new order”: “When the final record is written it will be seen that the Axis has more than once made sane propositions/ but the anti-axis has NEVER/ has NEVER made an honest proposition for a world settlement.”<sup>23</sup> Rather less fancifully, ten days later, Pound confessed in another five-page script entitled “Unions”: “mebbe I get too high brow now and then/ I hope not/ ought to be at least one radio in the world where a man can use his best work. I dont mean that a radio talk can be as close to the written page/ but I hope to make my thought clear/ at least to the patient listener.”<sup>24</sup>

Pound’s remaining two typescripts in this ostensible “Jerry’s Front Calling” series date from the end of February 1944, reinforced by handwritten entries in the top margin, “U.S. 154” (“Ends and Beginnings”) and “U.S. 156” (“Republican Retrospect”). This numbering again implies that Pound, or possibly one of his RSI colleagues, undertook 16 radio scripts directed at the US (in his numbering 142–157, plus “Lancelot Andrew[e]s” for Britain; the latter, presumably, a different sequence) over the preceding month. This would be largely in keeping with his FBI statement, which asserted that Anglophone broadcast items were sent to Milan two or three times weekly. Further underscoring the potentially scores of missing radio typescripts Pound may have composed for the RSI, moreover, these final two texts are also significant in their own right, as both are aimed at the American home front. Stressing that the “new Europe” was “more closely knit than at any-time since Charlemagne”, Pound added: “You can either aim at some general sanity, or you can kid yourself that you might blackmail or bamboozle the world into some sort of fake peace, some sort of jerry built armistice, that wd/ let the Baruch boys make a clean up.” In any case, concludes “Ends and Beginnings”, “what is it to the boys in Iowa?” Turning to the Pacific War in a second five-page typescript, purporting to be written from within the US, Pound anonymously asserted: “There never has been in this country (the U.S.) so far as my observin and reading go, any more dangerous and persistent misrepresentation regarding the relations, the purposes, the character of another country than in the case of the rel/ bet/ [relationship between] the U.S. and Japan.”<sup>25</sup>

The above typescripts thus represent paeans to peace on Axis terms, interspersed with the usual invective against Allied governments, usury, and Jews. The importance of the little-known “Jerry’s Front Calling” series is redoubled by a catalogue of Axis leaflets dropped in RSI-occupied territory. Despite many gaps, at least six have been identified as “Jerry’s Front Radio”, with the first two appearing in February 1944.<sup>26</sup> Pound’s Anglophone radio slogans may well have appeared on these German-produced propaganda leaflets from then on; more evidence is sorely needed on this point. At a minimum, the use of radio typescripts for Axis leaflets only serves to reinforce Louisa Quartermaine’s contention that, by this time, “whether by the RSI alone or under the watchful eye of the Germans, radio broadcasts became an essential form of propaganda.”<sup>27</sup>

Throughout the months of RSI rule in northern Italy, moreover, Pound often corresponded with key regime functionaries. This included Mussolini (“Report to Il Duce [...] presented as an instrument of propaganda”); Fernando Mezzasoma (“Station EIAR is full of treachery”), and his later replacement at Minulpop, Gaetano Polverelli (“The instruments of this trade are the microphone and the printing press”) – alongside the anti-Semitic fanatic, Roberto Farinacci, and the aforementioned Pavolini, by then heading the notoriously vicious Black Brigades.<sup>28</sup> To these and other elites, usefully enumerated in Heymann’s appendices, Pound offered advice on subjects ranging from economics and propaganda to the publication of suggested books – like recommended reading for Allied POWs (Volpe’s *History of the Fascist Revolution* in his proposed translation). Just as significantly, Pound’s correspondence is with precisely those Quartermaine identifies as radicals, maintaining the upper hand in the “fundamental division between moderates and extremists in the RSI.”<sup>29</sup> Naturally, only a fraction of Pound’s extant letters from this period were with rabid anti-Semites like Farinacci or “fiery” ideologues like Pavolini – aptly characterized at the time as a “little fascist Robespierre” – but there can be no doubt that Pound aligned himself with a pro-Nazi faction in the Salò Republic. As he rightly discerned, heretofore-extreme views were now policy: “It is obvious after the 13th that I am not an extremist, that is, I am no more leftist than the government itself. The opposition is now at the right” – epitomized by the “spineless bourgeoisie”. Amongst many examples from Pound’s FBI file, previously cited by Heymann, Redman and others from this final period, yet another letter to Pavolini on 20 December 1944 opens: “I protest against all those who attempt to make of the Fascist Republican Party an

instrument of reaction”. Pound then concluded by insisting: “It is idiotic to preach anti-Semitism and at the same time try to maintain the Jewish monetary system which is the strongest instrument of usury”.<sup>30</sup>

Surely Pound was aware that the RSI had moved far beyond ‘only’ preaching anti-Semitism by this point, and long past any “ease and security” allegedly provided for Jews by Italian Fascism before Mussolini’s first fall from power. For centuries well-assimilated and statistically over-represented in membership ranks of the PNF itself, the 1938 Race Laws devastated Italian Jewry and resulted in persecution, dismissal from government posts, and sometimes worse. Unfathomably harsher were autumn 1943 arrests and deportations. Out of nearly 43,000 Jews in northern Italy that September, 8,529 perished in the Holocaust. On 16 October in Rome, where Pound had been working only the month before – following SS “house to house searches, the lorries waiting along the streets, the mass of people detained for dozens of hours in some enclosed area” – more than 1,000 Roman Jews were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. In Milan, where Pound would start radio propaganda for the RSI that November, another 846 Jews were deported on the same day as those in Rome.<sup>31</sup>

Of course, the RSI had earlier codified these actions in point seven of the Veronese Charter: “Persons belonging to the Jewish race are aliens, and during this war belong to an enemy nationality.”<sup>32</sup> In terms of local context, the third largest deportation of Jews from mainland Italy took place roughly 15 miles from Pound’s home at Rapallo. On 3 November 1943 in Genoa, up to 300 Jews were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Although sensing some late hesitations, Redman nevertheless characterizes Pound’s anti-Semitism as reaching “a new level of virulence in this period”, in keeping with his “full support for the regime’s anti-Semitic propaganda.”<sup>33</sup> Even if he could not know the extent of suffering inflicted upon Italian Jewry during the Holocaust, Pound certainly knew of Jewish persecution and mass arrests and, as noted above, had strongly endorsed the “magnificent” Verona Charter. With Nazism and Fascist Republicanism now inseparable, it merits stressing that Pound’s RSI propaganda commenced, and continued, at a time when Italian Jews were already marked for death in northern Italy. Put another way, he would not have seen yellow-starred Jews in the Salò Republic because they were in hiding, or already dead.

Before returning to Pound’s poetry and Anglophone propaganda in conclusion, two final points regarding anti-Semitism bear restating.

First, amongst his extensive propaganda activities for the RSI, one representative instance has not received attention: Pound's attempt in late 1943 to establish a biweekly regime journal entitled *Volontà Repubblicana* [*Republican Will*], discussing the politics and philosophy of Fascist Republicanism.<sup>34</sup> Repeating sentiments sent to the Ministry of Popular Culture, Pound wrote to Pavolini pitching his proposal, while simultaneously recommending “a law” requiring RSI booksellers to showcase the following books for a minimum of three months, “since the bookstores largely in the hands of the Jews *were* rather a hindrance than a help in spreading useful books”:

- The Protocols of Zion;
- The Duties of Man, of Mazzini;
- The Politics of Aristotle;
- The Testament of Confucius.

The arrest of Jews will create a wave of useless mercy; thus the need to disseminate the Protocols. The intellectuals are capable of a passion more durable than the emotional, but they need to understand the reasons for a conflict.<sup>35</sup>

One issue of *Volontà Repubblicana*, in fact, did appear at the end of 1943 under Gioacchino Nicoletti's name – the Fascist Prefect for Lake Garda, with whom Pound was in correspondence at this time – aimed at northern Italian readers.<sup>36</sup> Now, one can legitimately debate whether Pound knew anything about the Holocaust during this time. But it should be very clear that he was simultaneously stoking the flames of conspiratorial anti-Semitism in his texts, both by supporting extremists in RSI and in his propaganda output for them. In addition to suggesting that Pound was more informed of events on the ground in the Salò Republic than has been posited to date, the above excerpt also makes clear that the RSI's proclamation of 13 January 1944 – most notably, announcing the executions of Count Ciano and others for treason – was not needed to “renew Pound's faith”, as Redman has charitably concluded.<sup>37</sup> Pound's fascist faith, on the contrary, never flagged.

Most of Pound's propaganda for the RSI, unlike before 1943, was tailored and expressed for an Italian audience. As noted earlier, even Confucius could be conscripted into the RSI's ‘crusade’. In his view, the just-completed translation of *L'Asse Che Non Vacilla* offered “26 chapters adapted to the moment” and “a work for the honor of the REPUBLIC, showing that conditions and contingencies permit a philosophical work”. There was also the ongoing publication of favored texts – especially

Pound's, like *Oro e Lavoro* or a revised and translated *Jefferson e Mussolini* in 1944 – as well as work on Italian propaganda posters, and even two “Tigullian Manifestos” signed by local writers around Rapallo. The first of these manifestos concluded with “a declaration of the group's ‘faith’, namely that ‘Liberty is a Duty’”, Pound's still-cherished phrase appropriated from Mussolini.<sup>38</sup> Added to these are some 260 pages of Italian “Service Notes” dating between 3 October 1943 and 13 June 1944 (covering about half the RSI period). These further indicate that, perhaps on account of staffing shortages, much of Pound's work for the Salò Republic entailed domestic propaganda in Italian. Demanding further research by Italophone scholars, these manuscript pages range over internal memoranda; including several to the Office of Race, with one opening “La potenza degli ebrei deriva dal' monopolio. Il monopolio piu pericoloso e il monopolio della moneta ... tutto che ci svincola dall' usura attacca la potenza ebraica [The power of Jews comes from monopoly. The most dangerous monopoly is monetary], thus “everything that frees us from usury attacks Jewish power”. Still another page featured recommended slogans like “Berlino ha notato nostro iniziativa ed approvata [Berlin has noticed and approved our initiative]”; and another for the “DISBURSEMENT OF WISDOM”, which concludes by warning against “sforzi degli ebrei per distruggere (with ‘tutti’ – added in Pound's hand) gli altri nazioni [sic; efforts by Jews to destroy (‘all’) other nations]”. Characteristically, there is also propaganda advice, exemplified by the first sentence from the last page of this “POUND/ nota di servizio” series: “creare fatti che possano servire alla propaganda [create facts which are useful for propaganda]”.

Several Italian typescripts are also amongst the texts contained in Pound's radio “Service Notes”. That dating from December 1943, presumably the earliest of these heavily scored typescripts, is headed “No I. Italiano”, and is directed at “students in the army outside combat zones”. Rashly announcing the imminent launch of *Volontà Repubblicana* as well as “future talks, which I hope to broadcast once a week”, Pound commenced this page-long typescript with a short speech for RSI troops entitled “Facts” – “For twenty years, Italy has suffered from constipation. Well, Italy has started to shit, and now we feel better” – before conceding that the talk was far “more condensed than my usual radio broadcasts to foreign countries”.<sup>39</sup> In light of these neglected texts, there can be little doubt that Pound remained as energetic as ever, especially in terms of the RSI's domestic propaganda. Nor should the foregoing call for

further research exclude Pound's extensive Italian journalism for his only remaining outlet, the Salò Republic's Nazi-censored press. As broached by Redman, this included further anti-Semitic invectives appearing in the 135,000-circulation, biweekly *Il Popolo di Alessandria*, where he declared on 12 March 1944, for example: "Hebrewism isn't race, it's illness. When a nation dies, Jews multiply like bacilli in carrion." Hitting his stride over the first half of 1944, Pound's Italian journalism continued until the point where, in Redman's summation, he "may have been one of the last people to continue work for the Republic of Salò."<sup>40</sup>

Across these months, RSI propaganda alternated between sophisticated and savage; it was rather subtler than simply urging Axis supporters to kill Jews. Jeffrey Herf's magisterial study, *The Jewish Enemy*, argues that Axis propaganda, through "a characteristic blend of belief and calculation", meant that, even "suburban" forms of Judeophobia contributed to a climate of "radical anti-Semitism" fostered in Nazi Germany (and correspondingly, Fascist Italy) during World War II. Herf persuasively argues that "radical anti-Semitism shaped the news in Nazi Germany", hierarchically deriving from the Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda and the Reich Press Office, where "both Goebbels and Dietrich had doctorates from prestigious German universities. The staffs of the Reich Press Office and Propaganda Ministry were filled with highly educated people. They constituted a community of anti-Semitic intellectuals bound together by the books, journals, and newspapers they all read." By bringing "the conspiracy theory in *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* into the middle of Europe's twentieth century and peopling that conspiracy with names and faces from the contemporary political scene in Moscow, London, and Washington", these anti-Semitic propagandists greatly helped to set the conditions for genocide, concludes Herf, through a "mixture of blunt speech and suppression of the facts as adequate to consolidate a 'covenant of gangsters,' while offering to the silent, indifferent, and uncurious majority a fig leaf of plausible deniability."<sup>41</sup>

Returning to Pound, two final undertakings from the closing months of the Salò Republic returned full circle to the vexing issue of mixing poetry and propaganda during this decade-long service to the fascist faith. Indeed, if Confucius and conspiratorial anti-Semitism could be placed together in the service of the Axis cause, so too could *The Cantos* and Fascist Republicanism's war effort. After nearly five years paused at "Canto LXXI", in later 1944 Pound composed Cantos; uniquely for him, entirely in Italian. While omitted from copies of *The Cantos* until 1986,

Massimo Bacigalupo's excellent contextualization and translation led him to conclude that "Canto LXXII" and "Canto LXXIII" "are central to Ezra Pound's poem." Shortly following their completion, according to Barbara Eastman, both "Presence" and "Republican-Cavalcanti Correspondence" were "sent to Mussolini at Lake Garda by Pound himself". Excerpts of the former and the entirety of the latter were published in one of the remaining newspapers still functioning in the RSI, *Marina Repubblicana*, "Canto 72 appearing in its January 15th issue and Canto 73 following on February 1st, both in 1945."<sup>42</sup> In fact, both poetic sequences may be profitably read in light of a Ministry of Popular Culture internal circular, appearing around the time of both Cantos' composition. This enjoined a propagandistic "RETURN TO EPIC POETRY" since, "like all heroic remedies, poetry must be 'administered' with promptitude and discretion":

To our battle the fervour and incitement of poetry are missing: a sad but no doubt objective statement [...] We must, then, reintroduce poetry – wherever possible – within the core of written and oral propaganda: it must be epic poetry, the evoker of heroic myths.

Irrespective of this context, however, there can be no doubt that both sequences are heavily propagandistic, undertaking what Pound had generally termed, in writing to Nicoletti, the "Sisyphean task [lavoro di Sisifo]" of "propaganda emotiva/ mosse popolare [emotive propaganda/ moves the masses]".<sup>43</sup>

Pound's "RETURN TO EPIC POETRY", furthermore, embraced precisely this "emotive propaganda" in his Italian Cantos. The first, celebrating the death of F.T. Marinetti on 2 December 1944, commenced with a dialogue between Pound and the Futurist poet, and concluded with the well-known evocation for Fascist martyrs: "PRESENTE!"<sup>44</sup> A dozen years earlier, right at the start of his conversion to fascism – as noted earlier, in part thanks to Marinetti's donation of "fascist licherachoor" – Pound had certainly encountered this word. One doubtless memorable example was via repeating audio loop, alongside fully 1,000 inscriptions of *Presente!* in the climactic, final room of the Fascist Decennio; namely, Adalberto Libera's 'sacrarium' of Fascist martyrs.<sup>45</sup> Starkly contrasting with the heady days of 1932 – when Fascism enjoyed a strong measure of public support, and the "constructive" achievements of Mussolini's totalitarianism like land reclamation (*bonfica*) could be trumpeted – all that remained by 1945 were defiant claims that "soldiers will return, the flags will return". The latter phrase is delivered to Pound's first-person



narrator by another posthumous Italian ‘martyr’ in “Presenza”, a medieval ruler in northern Italy named Ezzelino da Romano (1194–1259), who lists Roberto Farinacci alongside 11 military generals as modern-day Fascist ‘disciples’ “amongst the heroes” of the war. As this Canto aptly registers, Fascism’s death cult had now come home to roost for war-ravaged Italy.

The second of these “most Fascist of Cantos”, in Patricia Cockram’s words, offered another “conflation of the medieval hero cult and Fascist mythology”. This was undertaken through a dialogue with Guido Cavalcanti, and “written in imitation of his style.”<sup>46</sup> At roughly half the lines of the preceding Canto, “Cavalcanti-Republican Correspondence” returned to Italy’s mythicized past, crumbling under Allied bombs at the hands of “Roosevelt, Churchill and Eden / bastards and small Jews”.<sup>47</sup> In the second half of the poem, Cavalcanti recounted the rape of an Italian “peasant girl” by enemy soldiers, upon 20 of whom she later avenges herself as a grenade-wielding martyr. In Lawrence Rainey’s summation, this portion of “Canto LXXIII” simply reworked “a tawdry fabrication issued by propaganda authorities [...] in occupied Milan.” Similarly, Cockram sees in this plot merely “a common bit of propaganda circulated to the press by the Fascists”.<sup>48</sup> From these perspectives, “Cavalcanti-Republican Correspondence”, in particular, reveals little more than Pound’s willingness to “create facts which are useful for propaganda”; or again, in his words, to compose epic poetry as “emotive propaganda [which] moves the masses”. By directly linking the medieval Florentine Poet with the Salò Republic, Pound’s epic was by now being written and published directly in the service of Fascist Republicanism. His final lines of verse, in fact, before the award-winning *Pisan Cantos* sequence commencing with “Canto XIV” (again, in translation) concluded with the following lines:

Dead they are not dead,  
I have returned  
                                from the third heaven  
  to see Romagna,  
To see the mountains  
                                in the recovery,  
What a beautiful winter!  
  In the North the fatherland is reborn,  
But what girls!  
                                what girls,  
  what boys,  
  wear black!<sup>49</sup>

Pound's second, and apparently latest, propaganda undertaking for the Salò Republic marked a stark contrast with his initial propagations of the fascist faith from a decade earlier. Composed between the appearance of his two Italian Cantos, the 26 January 1945 "Corpses of Course", cited in the second of this book's introductory epigraphs, contained some of Pound's coarsest anti-Semitism yet seen to date. Warning of a third world war about to be (allegedly once more) started by Jews in order "to keep the goys fighting, and [to] let the jews hold coats and pick pockets while the row is in progress", this late broadcast script then asks: "Why shouldn't there be one grand beano; wiping out Sieff and Kuhn and Loeb and Guggenheim and Stinkenfinger and the rest of the nazal bleaters"?<sup>50</sup> Like all of Pound's surviving radio typescripts in the final year of World War II, "Corpses of Course" was sent to a radio apparatchik operating out of the German embassy, Carl Giorgio Goedel, who collaborated with the RSI's Ministry of Popular Culture from Fino Mornasco in northern Italy. Two copies of texts were sent to Goedel "via the German consulate in Milan" – apparently for use on the "Jerry's Front Calling" program, in which the latter helped in producing.

As noted earlier, Pound had first met Goedel when making his way north in September 1943, as memorialized in *The Cantos*, and it was Goedel's "sleek head in the midst of it" assisting Pound at this time, which "saved me out of one chaos".<sup>51</sup> This was the situation the remaining Fascist Republican diehards were faced with more broadly, not least in terms of the total dominance of its one-time fraternal partner in the Axis. Reiterating the RSI's subservience to Nazi Germany is a four-page letter a year later, sent by Pound to Dr Adolf Mahr, a foreign language radio broadcaster during World War II:

The german general staff is a comfort to me [...] The FIRST problem of radio is to grab the hearer[']s attention. The SECOND is to HOLD it. Can't run uninterrupted propaganda, that is not run uninterruptedly stuff that LOOKS like propaganda [...] I think most emphatic[al]ly that there ought to be more INTERCOURSE between the two parts of the axis. I wish you could give us some of your air. I want radio hook-ups. As was proposed months ago. Not merely an exchange of a conversation once a month for short wave to america, but a real hook up; for specially important items. This means practically a german GIFT to Italy.<sup>52</sup>

With Axis defeat in Europe only a matter of time, Pound continued sending typescripts to German censors for inclusion in the RSI's "Jerry's

Front Calling” program until at least 18 April 1945; that is, less than a fortnight before his arrest. In fact, as late as the end of March he was still attempting to refine his delivery: “More than likely I haven’t been sufficiently emotional and have been too cerebral”. Another letter to Goedel, held in the Beinecke archives, then turns to familiar propaganda themes:

Time for Americans to ask WHO is urging the apparently unlimited slaughter of Americans in interests of soviet Russia? What proportion of RACIAL stocks are being used as cannon fodd[er?...] Roosie will lay down the lives of all the non-jew americans in the interest of Lehman, Cohen and company. Expense is no object. What is war to kikes, if not a grand sales campaign. Roozie will go on/ unless somebody has the sense to stop him.<sup>53</sup>

Two final typescripts and the fragment of a third also survive in Pound’s correspondence with Goedel. The first, numbered 198 in the top margin, commenced: “Oh God have mercy on Europe: O God have mercy on Europe, and reveal the causes of this war!” Numbered 199 and similarly headed “Pound anonimo”, the subsequent typescript, dated “3 Aprile XXIII” and directed toward Britain is, appropriately enough, reproduced in Pound’s FBI files: “a Bolshie victory would NOT mean merely an enslaved europe acting under Kremlin orders/ it would mean a TOTAL Russia plus a total Europe convinced of the infamy Usura.”<sup>54</sup> After the war, Pound insisted that his economic activism against usury was undertaken with little reference, or even at a tangent, to Axis rule. In light of the evidence marshaled in *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935-45*, that is a doubtful proposition indeed. For it is clear that fascist mass-media organs provided key outlets for the propagation of his politico-economic views, from at least 1935 right until the end of World War II. As Pound consistently maintained during the war, and as this study has attempted to contextually reconstruct, these views were in harmony with the trajectory of Italian Fascism across these revolutionary years. His conversion to the political faith of fascism, finally, underwrote this decade-long perseverance as a devoted, formidable Anglophone propagandist for fascism in Britain, Italy and, ultimately, wartime Germany.

Finally, this is where fascism and the Axis found itself in 1945: the Bolshevik arch-nemesis at the door; coercion all but extinguishing consent amongst the dwindling believers in fascism’s ‘third way’ between communism and capitalism; with scurrilous invective against Jews and omnipresent ‘enemies’ by Axis propaganda. Long gone was the apologia

for the “constructive” aspects of radical-right totalitarianism. Continuing to believe even during the Axis’ violent death-throes, Pound, once a leading modernist propagator of aesthetic beauty and cultural elitism, had remained a propagandist until the Axis dénouement in the final days of Europe’s most destructive war. Only fear of worse kept the rump of faithful fascists fighting until the end; and so too with Ezra Pound. His final page of Anglophone propaganda from mid-April 1945, partially destroyed in an enclosure to Goedel and duly initialed by FBI agents, accurately reflects this endpoint. Suggestions from Pound’s concluding paragraph included truculent phrases like “the sons of hell and damnation want to suppress ALL nations ...” and “elect the jews’ candidate four times running --- the stinking which [sic – White] [H]ouse, or shit house.” His last, parenthetical line of Anglophone propaganda text, concluding this document – itself, fittingly, nearly-shredded and almost unreadable – is ultimately reduced to fascist sloganeering:<sup>55</sup>

(Dear Goedel. I shd repeat and repeat these --- slogans)

## Notes

- 1 Ezra Pound, “Gold and Work”, William Cookson, ed., *Ezra Pound: Selected Prose, 1909–1965* (Faber, London: 1973), 306, 312. It bears noting that Pound’s 1944 Italian title, “Oro e Lavoro”, strongly recalls Camillo Pellizzi’s 1941 pamphlet, *Oro e lavoro nella economia*; as well as the section header for another pamphlet by Pellizzi in 1942, *Plutocrazia e Bolscevismo*, 5 (both published by Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista in Rome).
- 2 W. Vincent Arnold, *The Illusion of Victory: Fascist Propaganda and the Second World War* (Peter Lang, New York: 1998), 227; and Benito Mussolini, cited in Philip Morgan, *Italian Fascism, 1915–1945* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke: 2004), 226.
- 3 James ‘Giacomo’ Barnes, cited in David Bradshaw and James Smith “Ezra Pound, James Strachey Barnes (The ‘Italian Lord Haw-Haw’) and Italian Fascism”, *Review of English Studies* 64/264 (2013); I am grateful to David Bradshaw for a copy of this text before publication.
- 4 Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London: 1970), 400–401; hereafter *Stock/LEP*; and Pound to Rudge, 13 January 1974, cited in Conover, *Olga Rudge and Ezra Pound: “What thou lovest well ...”* (Yale University Press, London: 2001), 150.
- 5 Redman, *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), 233; hereafter *Redman/EPIF*.

- 6 Pound, cited in Mary de Rachewiltz, “Fragments of an Atmosphere”, *Agenda* 17/2-3-18/1 (1980), 169.
- 7 Pound to Pavolini (n.d.) [late 1943?], Ezra Pound’s FBI file, divided into 12 sections on microfilm, Section 10; hereafter *FBI/Pound*. On the right not ‘of’ but ‘to’ property in *The Cantos* see, for example, “Canto LXXVIII” on Pound’s “la fede” toward “il Programma di Verona”, 478; the “Verona Charter” is reprinted in Jeffrey T. Schnapp, ed., *A Primer of Italian Fascism* (University of Nebraska Press, London: 2000), 198ff.
- 8 Alec Marsh, *Ezra Pound: Critical Lives* (Reaktion Books, London: 2011), 155–156. See also *Stock/LEP*, 400–407.
- 9 Louisa Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic: Propaganda and Politics in the Italian Social Republic (R.S.I.)* (Elm Bank Publications, Exeter: 2000), 89, 57, 55.
- 10 Aldo Bacci, cited in Christopher Duggan, *Fascist Voices: An Intimate History of Mussolini’s Italy* (Bodley Head, London: 2012), 385; and “A Credo”, cited in Louisa Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic*, 154.
- 11 Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988), 633, and de Rachewiltz, “Fragments of an Atmosphere”, 169.
- 12 Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic*, 91, 95, 93, 104 and 99.
- 13 David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), 142; hereafter *Heymann/LR*.
- 14 Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic*, 60, 61, 63.
- 15 Pound to GB [Giacomo Barnes], 8 November 1943; and Pound to Pavolini, 9 November 1943, both *FBI/Pound*, Section 10.
- 16 Pound, “Articles in German”, 23 November 1943, “Ezra Pound Papers”, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 43, 128/5291: hereafter YBL; and Pavolini to Pound, 26 November 1943, YBL 39/1668.
- 17 de Rachewiltz, “Fragments of an Atmosphere”, 169; and Pound, “‘Good Evening’: typescript”, 1943–1944, [December 1943?], YBL 131/5505.
- 18 Pound, cited in *Heymann/LR*, 149.
- 19 Georg von Lilienfeld to Pound, 2 January 1944, “Bevollmächtigte der Grossdeutschen Reiches bei Italienschen Regierung”, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, YCAL MSS 53, “Ezra Pound Papers Addition”, YBL 2/43. I am grateful to Andrea Rinaldi for providing me with this information.
- 20 Pound to Bernabei, 8 January 1944, *FBI/Pound*, Section 10.
- 21 Amprim to Hoover, 7 September 1945, *ibid.*; and “(German Controlled), ‘Jerry’s Front’ Transmission for Allied Forces”, 22 February 1944, World War II Summary of World Broadcasts, Section 3B, Italy Abroad, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Caversham.
- 22 Tamburini to Minculpop, 23 February 1944, cited in *Heymann/LR*, 150.
- 23 Pound, “No. 142, ‘Church Peril’: Typescript”, 28 January 1944, YBL 129/5401; and Pound, “No. 46 [sic], ‘Howling for Vengeance’: Typescript”, 4 February 1944, YBL 131/5518.

- 24 Pound, “No. 150, ‘Unions (sindacati)’: Typescript”, 14 February 1944, YBL 134/5761. See also Pound, “No. 142, ‘For Lancelot Andrew[e]s’, Typescript”, 10 February 1944, YBL 130/5489, which discusses ‘usury’ and is intended for broadcast to Britain (perhaps explaining the duplicated numbering).
- 25 Pound, “No. 156 [sic], ‘Ends and Beginnings’: Typescript”, [25 February 1944?], YBL 130/5465; and Pound, “No. 157 [sic], ‘Republican Retrospect’: Typescript” [February 1944], 133/5674. I am grateful to Andrea Rinaldi for his assistance with Pound’s February 1944 radio typescripts.
- 26 *Catalogue of German leaflets to Allied troops in Italy, also Italian Civilians and Soldiers, 1944–1945*, ed., R.G. Auckland (Psywar Society, St. Albans: 1975), with “Jerry’s Front Radio” catalogued on pages 5 (038–2–44 and 038a–2–44), 6 (052–3–44), 21 (1307–1–45), 22 (1336–3–45 [“Jerry’s Front – Beware!”] and 1342–3–45); the final three digits ostensibly corresponding to month and year.
- 27 Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic*, 61.
- 28 Pound to Mussolini and to Fernando Mezzasoma, provided in the appendices of *Heymann/LR*, 325, 333–334; and Pound to Polverelli, 12 January 1944, *FBI/Pound*, Section 7.
- 29 *Heymann/LR*, 145; and Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic* 28.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 23; Pound to Mezzasoma, 15 January 1944, cited in *Redman/EPIF*, 240; and Pound to Pavolini, 20 December 1944, *FBI/Pound*, Section 10.
- 31 Liliana Picciotto, “The Shoah in Italy: Its History and Characteristics”, Joshua Zimmerman, ed., *Jews in Italy under Fascist and Nazi Rule* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2005), 213, 215.
- 32 Michele Sarfatti, *Jews in Mussolini’s Italy: From Equality to Persecution*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison: 2006), 155. Sarfatti reports that 91% of those deported from Italy were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau, of whom 94% perished, 201.
- 33 *Redman/EPIF*, 243, 268.
- 34 Pound, *Volontà Repubblicana* proposal, YBL 139/6149, [late November?] 1943. I am grateful to Andrea Rinaldi for his assistance with this two-page typescript.
- 35 Pound to Pavolini, 2 December 1943, YBL 39/1668, cited in Marcello Simonetta, “Letteratura e propaganda: Pound poeta del regime”, *Nuovi Argomenti* 11 (April–June 1997), 53–54. I am grateful to Archie Henderson for his knowledge and translation of this text; italics added.
- 36 *Volontà Repubblicana: Quindicinale di Pensiero e D’Azione* c. December 1944, Brescia, 8 pages. A copy of this pamphlet is held in Rome’s Fondazione Ugo Spirito and Renzo De Felice archive ([www.fondazione Spirito.it](http://www.fondazione Spirito.it)). I am grateful to Anna Castriota for her assistance with this document. See also the Pound-Gioacchino Nicoletti correspondence, YBL 37/1563.
- 37 *Redman/EPIF*, 241.

- 38 Pound to Bruno Sammartano, Inspector of RSI Radio, 27 September 1944, *ibid.*, 261. On the “Tigullian Manifesto”, see *Stock/LEP*, 404; and Donald Gallup, *Ezra Pound: A Bibliography* (Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia and St. Paul’s, Charlottesville: 1983), 433–434.
- 39 Pound, “Nota di Servizio”, various dates over 1943 and 1944, YBL 127/5282; I am grateful to Archie Henderson, Anna Castriota and Andrea Rinaldi for their translations and assistance. For further domestic broadcasts in the RSI, see Pound, “‘300 Radiodiscorsi’ [Ital.]: typescript[s]”, YBL 127/5286–5288.
- 40 *Redman/EPIF*, 240, 243, 273. For Pound’s Italian journalism between 12 September 1943 and 23 April 1945, see Lea Baechler et al., eds., *Ezra Pound’s Poetry and Prose*, 11 volumes (Garland, London: 1991), VIII, 215–253.
- 41 Jeffery Herf, *The Jewish Enemy; Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust* (Harvard University Press, London: 2008), 88, 273, 271 266 269.
- 42 Massimo Bacigalupo, “Ezra Pound’s Cantos 72 and 73: An Annotated Translation”, *Paideuma* 20/1–2 (1991), 28; and Barbara C. Eastman, “The Gap in the Cantos: 72 and 73, *ibid.*, 8/3 (1979), 426.
- 43 *RSI Note circolare*, 5 September 1944, cited in Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic* 162–163; and Pound to Gioacchino Nicoletti, 20 December 1944, YBL 37/1563.
- 44 Ezra Pound, “Canto LXXII: *Presenza*”, *The Cantos* (Faber, London: 1998), 426.
- 45 Claudio Fogu, *The Historic Imaginary: Politics of History in Fascist Italy* (University of Toronto Press, London: 2003), 169; see also Mabel Berezin, “The Festival State: Celebration and Commemoration in Fascist Italy”, *Journal of European History* 3/1 (2006).
- 46 Patricia Cockram, “Collapse and Recall: Ezra Pound’s Italian Cantos”, *Journal of Modern Literature* 23/3–4 (2000), 544, 542.
- 47 Pound, “Canto LXXIII: Cavalcanti-Republican Correspondence”, reproduced in Bacigalupo, “Ezra Pound’s Cantos 72 and 73”, 16.
- 48 Lawrence Rainey, “Editor’s Introduction”, *A Poem Containing History: Textual Studies in the Cantos* ed., Lawrence Rainey (University of Michigan Press, Lansing: 2000) 6; and Cockram, “Collapse and Recall”, 543.
- 49 Pound, “Canto LXXIII”, cited in Bacigalupo, “Ezra Pound’s Cantos 72 and 73”, 18.
- 50 Pound, “Corpses of Course”, 26 January 1945, YBL 130/5425.
- 51 Omar S. Pound, Robert E. Spoo, and Dorothy Pound, eds., *Letters in Captivity, 1945–1946* (Oxford University Press, New York: 1999), 64–65. On Goedel, see Pound, “Canto LXXVIII” and “Canto LXXIX”, *The Cantos*, 492 and 498, respectively.
- 52 Pound to Adolf Mahr, [January?] 1945, YBL 13/1345. See also Gerry Mullins, *Dublin Nazi No. 1: The Life of Adolf Mahr* (Liberties Press, Dublin: 2007); I am grateful to Archie Henderson for his assistance with this reference.

- 53 Pound to Goedel, 31 March 1945; and Pound to Goedel (n.d.) [early April 1945], YBL 43/846.
- 54 *Ibid.*; and Pound, “No. 199”, *FBI/Pound*, Section 10.
- 55 Pound to Goedel (n.d.) [mid-April 1945?], YBL 43/846.



## Bibliographical Note

The majority of Pound's shorter texts are reprinted, albeit necessarily decontextualized, in the indispensable 11-volumes edited by Lea Baecheler, A. Litz and James Longenbach, *Ezra Pound's Poetry & Prose: Contributions to Periodicals* (Garland, London: 1991), abbreviated here (as set out below for frequently used sources) by text, date, volume, and page number; also useful was William Cookson's edited *Ezra Pound's Selected Prose, 1909–1965* (Faber, London: 1973). Amongst the many editions of letters from Pound's life, the collection employed most frequently has been Roxana Preda's outstanding *Ezra Pound's Economic Correspondence, 1933–1940* (University of Florida Press, Gainesville: 2001), while biographies detailing the years between 1935 and 1945 include the durable Noel Stock, *The Life of Ezra Pound* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1970) and more recently, Alec Marsh's incisive *Ezra Pound: Critical Lives* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011). Used more sparingly are Humphrey Carpenter's *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Faber, London: 1988) and C. David Heymann's *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile* (Seaver Books, New York: 1976), in addition to several of the helpful essays in the panoramic *Ezra Pound in Context*, ed., Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 2011). Regarding Pound's engagement with fascism, the gold-standard work remains Tim Redman's book on Mussolini's regime/s (with a capital 'F' reserved for the regime, not the generic ideology), *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1992), closely followed by Leonard Doob's essential, widely

available reproduction of 120 radio typescripts, *“Ezra Pound Speaking”*: *Radio Speeches of WWII* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CN: 1978), here referenced by broadcast title, date and speech number. It also bears noting that, like the latter two texts, some of Pound’s obvious typographical errors and misspellings are silently corrected, or in rare cases altered (like his use of “=” throughout for “-”), while at the same time remaining faithful to Pound’s unique compositional style.

Many manuscripts were consulted in various formats in the US and Britain. This ranges from Ezra Pound’s online files from the Department of Justice (hereafter ‘DOJ’; available at: [www.justice.gov/criminal/foia/ezra-pound.html](http://www.justice.gov/criminal/foia/ezra-pound.html); all websites last accessed 30 January 2013) to commercially purchased microfilm copies of the 1,500+ page FBI, 12-part file on Pound – the latter still an underused treasure trove of information. Microfilm of Pound’s 170 FCC-recorded broadcasts, as well as various pro-Fascist Anglophone pamphlets from the mid-1930s, both in the archives of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (respectively “Transcripts of talks broadcast from Rome, 7 Dec. 1941–25 July 1943”, Films 279; and the Taylorian Library’s Foligno Collection), were also used at various points. The National Archives in Kew, London, contains two files under the Special Branch (MI-5) series “Right Wing Extremists” (catalogued as KV 2/875 and KV 2/876), as well as an equally revealing War Office file from 1945 (catalogued as WO 204/12602). Also in Britain, finally, are housed the definitive ‘Summary of World Broadcasts’ (hereafter ‘SWB’; sometimes also referred to as ‘Daily Broadcast Reports’) for radio compiled by monitors at the BBC Monitoring Station in Eversham (and, from 1942, Caversham), England. Now housed at the BBC Written Archives Centre (hereafter ‘WAC’) in Caversham, Reading, the recording section’s daily designation for Italy abroad (‘3B’; Pound’s outlet) was summarized daily over several pages of varying length. Given the BBC’s global monitoring of wartime radio output, relevant papers on monitoring and propaganda analysis were also sampled from the BBC WAC’s enormous collection of all manner relating to the development of (mostly British) radio from the 1920s to the 1970s. Bearing upon Pound’s propaganda, however, nothing beats the expansive “Ezra Pound Papers” (YCAL MSS 43) housed in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, New Haven, CN. Amongst the several hundred boxes of manuscripts comprising this collection of papers, the large majority consulted here fall into relevant correspondence, cited by box and folder; or far more neglected, the 585 files of radio typescripts

between YCAL MSS 43 Box 126, Folder 5220 to (hereafter) YBL 134/5804, all corresponding to the Bibliographical Notes most recent “Guide to the Ezra Pound Papers” (last revised December 2002; available at: [drs.library.yale.edu:8083/fedora/get/beinecke:pound/PDF](https://drs.library.yale.edu:8083/fedora/get/beinecke:pound/PDF)). Dating provided for Pound’s YBL manuscripts corresponds to this essential online guide unless otherwise indicated below, such as brackets following an indication of ‘no date’ [hereafter (‘n.d.’)].

## Abbreviations

<i>BBC/SWB</i>	World War II Summary of World Broadcasts, Section 3B, Italy Abroad, BBC
<i>BBC/WAC</i>	Written Archives Centre, Caversham
<i>Bod/FCC</i>	Various manuscripts on World War II monitoring and propaganda, BBC
<i>Bod/FCC</i>	Written Archives Centre, Caversham
<i>Bod/FCC</i>	Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, FCC transcriptions of Pound speeches
<i>Carpenter/SC</i>	Humphrey Carpenter, <i>A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound</i>
<i>Doob/EPS</i>	Leonard Doob, ed., “Ezra Pound Speaking”: <i>Radio Speeches of WWII</i>
<i>EPPP/[volume]</i>	Lea Baechler et al., eds., <i>Ezra Pound’s Poetry and Prose</i> , 11 volumes
<i>FBI/Pound</i>	Ezra Pound’s FBI File, divided into 12 sections on microfilm
<i>Foligno/TL</i>	Foligno Collection, Taylorian Library, University of Oxford
<i>Heymann/LR</i>	David Heymann, <i>Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile</i>
<i>Stock/LEP</i>	Noel Stock, <i>The Life of Ezra Pound</i>
<i>Marsh/EPCL</i>	Alec Marsh, <i>Ezra Pound: Critical Lives</i>
<i>Nadel/EPIC</i>	Ira B. Nadel, ed., <i>Ezra Pound in Context</i>
<i>Preda/EPEC</i>	Roxana Preda, ed., <i>Ezra Pound’s Economic Correspondence, 1933–1940</i>
<i>Redman/EPIF</i>	Tim Redman, <i>Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism</i>
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