

Ezra Pound's Poetic Mirror and the "China Cantos": The Healing of the West

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Of all non-Asian figures in twentieth-century American literature, Ezra Pound (1885–1972) had the most overt relation to China. Pound made Confucianism an integral part of his project of rethinking the future of the West and committed himself to updating Confucian values to correspond to social changes in the modern world. In this article, the author analyzes Pound's Canto XIII and Cantos LIII, LV, and LVI from the "China Cantos," arguing that Pound used poetry as his medium to mirror those Confucian values that he felt were indispensable for the healing of Western civilization and culture. Pound's use of Chinese characters and concepts in his "China Cantos" therefore acts as an intaglio, mirroring onto the reader the truth that Pound believed: Whenever Confucian ideas were put into action, the human experience was the better for it; and if the West could appropriate these ideals and values, its decay could be healed.

Pound's Interest in China

No non-Asian figure in twentieth-century American literature had a more overt relation to China than did Ezra Pound (1885–1972). Pound's engagement with China has been the focus of a rich critical literature, with the most recent addition being *Ezra Pound and China*, edited by Zhaoming Qian (2003). Qian's volume is the first collection to be devoted entirely to an exploration of Pound's career-long relationship with China, unveiling and illuminating how Pound's engagement with China broadened the textual, cultural, and political boundaries of the modernist period in American literature.

Pound made Chinese Confucianism an integral part of his project of rethinking the West and its future (Hayot 1999, 511). Feng Lan (2005, 3–11) divided Pound's interests in Confucianism into three phases: imitative, creative, and comprehensive. The first phase is represented by Pound's famous *Cathay* (1915) and his 1928 translation of the *Great Learning* (*Daxue* 大學)¹ into English from Guillaume Pauthier's French version. In his introduction to Pound's *Selected Poems*, T. S. Eliot (1888–1965), referring to *Cathay*, wrote that Pound was "the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time"

(1987, 14–15). Eliot meant that Pound’s translations of Chinese poets had been put into the language, context, and thought patterns that made it possible for twentieth-century Western readers to understand and appropriate their meanings. The second phase of Pound’s relationship with Confucianism spanned from the early 1930s to the end of World War II. What characterized his commitment to Confucianism during this period was his effort to revivify and update Confucian values in order to meet the need for social change in the turbulent Western world of the time. The poetry he composed during this period was saturated with allusions to the merits of Confucian ideals and values. During this second phase, Pound’s belief in the value of Confucianism for the West is most evident in the “China Cantos,” published in 1940 (Cantos LII–LXI of *The Cantos*). The third phase of Pound’s relation to Confucianism began with the end of World War II. During this period, he moved to an intensified quest after the Confucian vision that he could follow only by means of a serious engagement and translation of Confucian texts. With such a mindset, Pound translated into English three of the four Confucian classics: *The Great Learning*, *Unwobbling Pivot* (*Zhongyong* 中庸), and *Analects* (*Lunyu* 論語); and he began a translation of the *Mencius* (*Mengzi* 孟子). During this period he also edited and translated the *Book of Odes* (*Shijing* 詩經).

In this article, I am most interested in the second phase of Pound’s involvement with Confucianism. During this period, Pound came to appreciate the way in which Confucian ideas were put into action through a survey of Chinese history. He intended for the Western world to find from Confucianism the remedy for healing its own wounds. He held up a mirror to China, and the result is evident for us to see in Cantos LII–LXI of his extraordinary epic poem, *The Cantos*.²

Pound’s Poetic Mirror

In his early cantos, Pound’s descriptions of historical eras and events were usually based on primary sources and detailed studies. He used *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* in Canto XXXI and Charles Adams’ *The Works of John Adams* for Canto XXXII. However, when he turned to Chinese history in Cantos LII–LXI, he chose as his source Joseph-Anna-Marie de Moyria de Mailla’s (1669–1748) massive thirteen-volume work, *Histoire generale de la Chine* (1777–85). De Mailla was a French Jesuit, and his history of China was a translation of the Qing 清 dynasty (1644–1912) version of the most respected work concerning diversified aspects of Chinese history, the *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 資治通鑿綱目 (Outline and digest of the comprehensive mirror for aid in government), compiled by the great Neo-Confucian thinker Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200).

Zhu Xi's work is a detailed account of Chinese history interpreted from the point of view of Confucian morality. It is not an academic history meant to report only facts. On the contrary, it is a cautionary tale, designed to instruct emperors and ministers by holding up heaven's mirror of judgment to the past and the lives of those who lived it (Nolde 1983, 26). According to a long-standing Chinese view, each generation's appropriation of history comes as it holds up a mirror to the past and learns from the mistakes and virtues of those who have come before. In the West, mirrors are regarded as reflecting devices; they have nothing to contribute in themselves. They report only what they see and make no judgments or criticisms. However, in China, mirrors have a voice; they tell stories laden with judgment. For example, in chapter 1 of the ancient Daoist work *The Journey to the North* (*Beiyou ji* 北游記), the Three Pure Ones tell the unperfected Xuantian Shangdi 玄天上帝 that he may find out about his true identity only by using "Heaven's Reflecting Mirror" (*zhao tian jing* 照天鏡) that reveals truths and falsehoods, good and evil in the past. Only when the past is viewed in this mirror will Xuantian Shangdi know the meaning of his life and be able to follow the Way of Heaven (*dao* 道) (Seaman 1987, 52–53). Those who compiled and edited the *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* believed it represented notes and commentaries from centuries of scholars who had read Heaven's Reflecting Mirror.

Hugh Kenner (1972) argues that Pound held a similar view of history. He writes that "the Key to Pound's method throughout the *Cantos* is his conviction that the things the poet sees in the sea of events are really there. They are not 'creations' of his. Similarly, the values registered in the poem are not imported and affirmed by the poet, but discerned by him in the record of human experience" (62). Pound felt that he found, in the long history of China, Confucian solutions to the problems of dehumanization, oppression, and violence for which the Western intellectual tradition had failed to account. Through his cantos having to do with China, Pound uses poetry as his medium to mirror those Confucian values that he feels are indispensable for the healing of Western civilization and culture.

Cantos LII–LXI emphasize that Chinese history, because it was firmly rooted in Confucian morality yet in spite of periodic set-backs, always kept alive a tradition of what it meant to have responsible government and healthy human relationships (Dekker 1963, 180). For Pound, these ordering norms were to be found in Confucianism, as expressed in the *Daxue* and the *Lunyu*. In fact, when Eliot asked Pound what he believed, Pound said, "I believe the *Ta Hsio* [*Daxue*]" (Nolde 1983, 19). Like the *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* before him, Pound's *The Cantos* is also a morality tale. In canto after canto, Pound holds up the mirror in which Western readers can see both the frailty and potential of their civilization. In the "China Cantos," Pound shows how China's past proves the adage that history is ideas put into

action. In this case, it is the nobility of Confucian ideals that Pound admires and recommends. In 1938, during the months he was preparing the “China Cantos,” Pound wrote in *Guide to Kulchur* (1938, 276): “Before thinking that old-age pensions, medical relief, educational endowments etc. etc. etc. are news, one shd. at least glance at a summary of the chinese [sic] story.” From Pound’s point of view, politicians and statesmen had not made a difference in the stability of Western culture through reason and government machinations. Pound thought that perhaps a poet could hold up a mirror that would reveal the answers that lay in Confucianism and reflect to the readers of his era the moral truths he found in Chinese history. These truths, Pound believed, were indeed translatable to the West (Furia 1984, 82).

Pound’s Introduction of Confucius in *The Cantos*

Pound formulated his rather unquestioning belief in the greatness of classical Chinese Confucianism twenty years before he wrote the “China Cantos.” In the early twentieth century, he felt that the Western world was on the verge of a renaissance, and he thought that the source of that new awakening lay in the East. Pound wrote: “The first step of a renaissance, or awakening, is the importance of models for painting, sculpture or writing. We have had many ‘movements,’ movements stimulated by ‘comparison’ The last century rediscovered the middle ages. It is possible that this century may find a new Greece in China” (1987, 228). For Pound, China, by means of its Confucian-based ideology, should shed light and enlightenment on the rest of the world.

Undoubtedly, Pound was drawing part of his inspiration from a 1936 work by Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) entitled *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*. This work not only influenced Pound to develop his ideogrammic method but also led him to the firm conviction that the West could not ignore Chinese history and culture because there was much to learn from it.³ In this work, Fenollosa said of the West: “The duty that faces us [the West] is not to batter down their [the Chinese] forts or exploit their markets, but to study and come to sympathize with their humanity. . . . We need their best ideals to supplement our own—ideals enshrined in their art, in their literature and in the tragedies of their lives” (1936, 4). Clearly, Fenollosa conveyed his idea that many values embedded in the history of Chinese civilization would benefit and help cure the problems of the West.

Recognizing Fenollosa’s work as the background of Pound’s writing leads us to conclude that we should not treat Canto XIII, which introduces the reader to Confucius, separately from the “China Cantos.” Even though it belongs to Pound’s first group of sixteen cantos written in 1925—whereas the “China Cantos” were not even in rough typescript until February 1939

and not published until January 1940—understanding Canto XIII is important. As George Dekker (1963, 4) notes, “the implications of this canto must be grasped if we are to understand the rest of the poem.”

As one of the preeminent imagistic poets, Pound always carefully set the scene for his images in *The Cantos*. Therefore, his choice of setting in Canto XIII is an important one. Instead of setting the scene in the Roman Coliseum (XII) or the Inferno (XIV), Pound embedded Confucius' action in Asian culture: in the numerous temples that have edified people's minds, generation after generation; in the forest that connects people to nature, just as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–82) and Henry David Thoreau (1817–62) advocated; and in the river that washes away the dirt from people's minds and then nurtures and nourishes the healthy growth of the good seed in their hearts. Canto XIII begins in this way: “Kung walked / by the dynastic temple / and into the cedar grove, / and then out by the lower river, . . .” (1948, 58). In contrast to his expression of the disorder and twisted desires that have led to war in the West and caused its disillusionment and deterioration, Pound's view of Confucius was filled with compliments and admiration. He wrote: “And Kung gave the words ‘order’ / and ‘brotherly deference’ / And said nothing of the ‘life after death’” (59).

In this canto, Pound revealed many of his strategies for making textual choices and priorities for conceptual emphasis. We must pay careful attention to the incidents from the *Analects* that Pound chose. From among the twenty-two books of the *Analects*, Pound used the episode of Confucius asking his disciples what they will do, since no officials seemed to be asking them for advice. He rewrote the passage from the *Analects* to have Confucius encourage each of his disciples to follow his own nature. Pound selected the case of Yuan Jang, who pretended to be wise but was foolish and worthless because he was not doing anything of practical benefit for the people. He also reported the master's warning that rulers often seek to buy an educated person's loyalty and turn it to the service of a corrupt and immoral master. Finally, he offered Confucius's reminder that only the ruler who knows how to control himself and practice internal stillness of desires can bring order to his country. In his selections, Pound implied that these are central questions for any society, and he left no doubt that he thought Confucius has the answers to them. The beautiful penultimate lines of Canto XIII underscore that a person's character is the most important accomplishment of a human being: “And Kung said, ‘Without character you will / be unable to play on that instrument / Or to execute the music fit for the Odes’” (60). Pound understood the quintessential element of Confucian morality to be its emphasis on character. The individual with great character will give order to a state, create a family of worth, and make history honorable (Dekker 1963, 7).

In his comments on the *Daxue*, Pound made an observation that illumines Canto XIII and reveals his intention in giving such a prominent place in *The Cantos* to Chinese material. He summarized Chinese history and mirrored its virtues to the West by writing (1954, 29–30): “The men of old wanting to clarify and diffuse throughout the empire that light which comes from looking straight into the heart and then acting, first set up good government in their own states; wanting good government in their states, they first established order in their own families; wanting order in the home, they first disciplined themselves; desiring self-discipline, they rectified their own hearts.” The final three lines of Canto XIII reveal Pound’s intention to transmit the teachings of Confucius and with them the much-needed wisdom of China. Pound remarked: “The blossoms of the apricot / blow from the east to the west, / And I have tried to keep them from falling” (1948, 60). In this way, Pound explicitly communicates that he wanted to preserve the insights of Confucianism for the West.

The final lines of the Canto XIII are Pound’s mirrored poetic reflections on a little-known tradition about Confucius. According to one legend, Confucius often taught his students in a small pavilion outside his native city of Qufu 曲阜. This pavilion was called the “Apricot Pavilion” because a giant apricot tree grew nearby. In these lines, Pound speaks in the first person, portraying Confucius’s teachings as apricot blossoms. He makes a promise to keep Confucius’s teachings from falling away. The blossoms are blowing from the East to the West, and Pound is taking up the responsibility of preventing them from falling by the wayside to dry up and be forgotten. He keeps this promise fifteen years later with the publication of the “China Cantos,” catching the teachings of Confucius like apricot blossoms floating in the wind and allowing them to take shape in the poetry he holds up as the mirror of history. In *The Exile*, Pound wrote: “The drear horror of American life can be traced to two damnable causes: 1. The loss of all distinction between public and private affairs. 2. The tendency to mess into other people’s affairs before establishing order in one’s own affairs, and in one’s thought. . . . The principle of good is enunciated by Confucius; it consists in establishing order within oneself” (Cookson 1973, 216). From the 1920s to 1940s, Pound looked upon himself as the first real interpreter of Confucius to the English-speaking world (and to America, specifically); and he reflected the same concerns as did Fenollosa over the neglect of a study of China’s humanistic texts (Nolde 1996, 25).

The “China Cantos”

Cantos LII–LXI deal almost exclusively with the need for each new generation to revisit the merits of the Confucian tradition (Cookson 1985, 21). In Canto LIII, Pound writes his appraisal of the venerable sage ruler, Cheng

[Shang] Tang 商湯 of the Shang 商 period (1600–1100 B.C.E.). He reports that Cheng reminded himself of the importance of this task each day by having the motto “day by day make it new” inscribed on his bronze wash basin. Pound (1948, 11) writes that Cheng Tang

wrote MAKE IT NEW	新
on his bath tub	日
	日
Day by day make it new	新

The Chinese characters to the right of the poem, 新日日新 (*xin ri ri xin*), are included by Pound to complement the last English line, “Day by day make it new.” This four-character expression corroborates a well-known viewpoint associated with Pound—that he was one of the most prominent spokespersons for experimentation and reform in modern American literature. At the same time, it is also an example of Pound’s use of palindrome, a word or a sequence of words that reads—letter for letter—the same backwards as forwards. As such, in Pound’s choice of these four characters, the first two are mirrored by the second, and vice versa. Pound’s utilization of palindrome in this expression demonstrates his conviction that both the past and the present, the East and the West, literally regardless of direction, can find illumination and “sentence” (in the meaning of Geoffrey Chaucer) from the idea underlying this idiom.⁴ Embedded in this skillful literary mechanism is Pound’s point that he found in China’s history the ways in which rulers continually made Confucianism “new.” In order to find the harmony and virtue he found in China, the West would have to mirror these values and practices. Pound realized that his readers stood in a different place and time from those in Chinese dynastic history, but this is nonetheless the promise and challenge he set before them. He wanted the greatness of the sage rulers who grasped Confucianism for their own age to be seen in the mirror—and for those standing in their own age to reflect an appropriation of Confucianism that would not alter its essence but would embody a new expression of it.

The four characters of *xin ri ri xin* reflect the motto of *The Cantos* as a whole, stressing the need for each reader to hold up his or her life, family, state, and world to the mirror of the past and make something new every day. These characters function as an image to teach that each new generation had to find its own way to apply Confucian sensibilities. Pound’s use of this text for a Western readership represents his effort to stress that the West can be redeemed by Confucian values taken from China.

Pound’s use of Chinese characters in *The Cantos* is an illustration of his skill as an imagist who used visual poetry to mirror history. The characters

are not merely the replication of Chinese characters; instead, they are pictures shown in the poetic mirror, jolting the reader, layering the meanings in the linguistic text itself, and becoming a part of the poems' references and allusions in much the same way that Eliot used allusions in *The Waste Land*. As visual images, the Chinese characters in *The Cantos* both clarify and extend Pound's viewpoint and meaning. The text as a mirror reflects living signs and not words alone. This lesson Pound learned from Fenollosa, who taught Pound to think of characters as evolving through history and taking into themselves the meanings of events. In fact, when Pound presented the "China Cantos" as a unit to New Directions Publishing, he wanted a title page for them bearing the single ideograph *cheng* 正, meaning *true, real, or authentic*. Such was his strategy for communicating his belief that the "China Cantos" contained the authentic values and true ways for human community. Moreover, the "China Cantos" was the only section of *The Cantos* Pound wanted to adorn with ideograms in such a manner (Nadel 1997, 163).

Pound employed the same ideogrammic technique in other cantos of the "China Cantos." He turned Chinese characters into pictures and used them to represent concrete ideas that other poets might try to portray in words. Most characters he chose are not pictograms—they do not actually portray concrete objects, but they are ideograms communicating more than a word, often an entire sentiment or philosophical truth or imperative, such as "Make it new." In Canto LVI, Pound (1948, 48) digressed from de Mailla's history and held up his poetic mirror full of Chinese ideograms to offer the reader a summary of the full panorama of China's past up to the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century.

YAO, CHUN, YU controller of waters
 Bridge builders, contrivers of roads
 gave grain to the people
 kept down the taxes
 Hochang, eunuchs, taoists and ballets
 night-clubs, gimcracks, debauchery
 Down, down! Han is down
 Sung is down
 Hochang, eunuchs, and taozers
 empresses' relatives, came then a founder
 saying nothing superfluous
 cleared out the taozers and grafters, gave grain
 opened the mountains
 Came taozers, hochang and debauchery
 And literati fought fiercer than other men to keep out the

堯
 舜
 禹

mogul

Pound used a visual image as his imprimatur of Confucian authenticity to indicate what constitutes good leadership and a society in which individuals could flourish. The characters for the names of the great sage kings heralded by Confucius as the models for moral life, Yao 堯, Chun [Shun] 舜, and Yu 禹, are to the right of the poetic narrative and offer a sweep of history as a talisman of truthfulness. Of these kings, Pound wrote in Canto LIV, "Virtue is the daughter of heaven, YU followed CHUN / and CHUN, YAO having one root of conduct" (1948, 24). In the narrative lines of the canto, Pound summarized why these rulers are worthy of emulation. They built bridges and roads, and such efforts indicate their understanding of the common man's situation and the importance of commerce and economy. They did not tax the people more than they could pay. They emptied the granaries to feed the common people rather than use the storehouse to line their pockets with riches and extravagance. They taught people to rely on the good within them and the bonds of responsibility between them rather than to trust in the religious fantasy of the "taozers" (Daoists) and "Ho-chang" (Buddhists). But Pound meant for Yao, Shun, and Yu to stand for the good ruler in all his aspects, just as Confucius also thought. The names are images used to remind the readers of these kings and their authenticity as true rulers. The task of a ruler, as it is of an ordinary person, is to make new the teachings of Confucius in his own era. Each of the three great rulers practiced the virtues of care for the poor and the common peasant (LIV), exempted them from taxes (LV), and followed the Confucian *dao* by making it new in his own age. Hence, his reign was stabilized and prosperous.

In addition to cantos LIII and LVI, Pound's mirror in Canto LV (1948, 36) offers another visual display by means of thirteen characters taken from the *Daxue* and designed to express the Confucian ideal of a good ruler:

仁 者, 以 財 發 身	仁 者, 以 身 發 財, 不
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Pound did not translate these characters in *The Cantos* because he used them here as images, not words. However, elsewhere he translated them in this way (1969, 83): "A *ren* king is known by his spending on the people, a

king who is not *ren* by his taking from the people” (*ren zhe, yi cai fa shen, bu ren zhe, yi shen fa cai*). Pound’s focus on the Chinese character *ren* 仁 is significant. In Confucianism, *ren*, meaning “benevolence and kindness,” is the central virtue that must be possessed by a person (Ames and Rosemont 1998, 54). It is formed by combining the character for “person” (人) with the number “two” (二), indicating the stress placed on human interrelatedness and social harmony at the heart of Confucianism. In the cantos that follow LVI, Pound calls attention to the worthy Confucian exemplars who outlawed mutilation of criminals,⁵ built halls devoted to Confucius, diminished the legal reasons for death and exile, discontinued the corvée requirement, drove out the taozers turning from their superstitions, and made the Hochang return to work. All of these rulers found ways to “make it new” in their own generation by establishing the value of interdependence and harmony over the ideals of absolute individuality and competition.

Pound noticed as well that leaders in Chinese history who did not find ways to make Confucius’s teachings new invariably implemented changes that brought destruction. Pound illustrated this oft-repeated pattern in his remarks on the Hongzhi Emperor, Zhu Youtong, known in *The Cantos* by his temple name, Hsiao-tsung (Xiaozong 孝宗, 1470–1505). From this emperor, Pound’s poetic mirror reflects the Chinese character for change, *bian* 變, but this time—in Canto LVII (1948, 59)—the mirror offers a warning to Western society:

another Lord seeking elixir
 seeking the transmutation of metals
 seeking a word to make change

變

HOAI of SUNG was nearly ruined by taozers
 HIEN of TANG died seeking elixir

Whenever injustice, high taxes, frivolous palace life, inhumane treatment of criminals, and thirst for war take hold, these are signs of change; but, for Pound, those redirections of culture that abandon the way of Yao, Shun, and Yu were the same as deserting Confucius’s teachings. Pound associated these destructive and debilitating actions with a turn to religion by the ruler. Rulers who were not *ren* dabbled in the religion of the taozers, seeking immortality through their elixirs; and they put burdens on the poor and hungry by using resources to open thousands of temples to curry the favor of the Buddhists rather than to aid those in need. Tu Weiming (1992, 4) holds that Pound had a clear understanding that “the religiousness of Confucianism does not rest on the mysterious atmosphere of a personal God, but rather on the solemnity, transcendence, and infinity of the self-

development of the individual." Pound insisted that Confucianism was humanism, not a transcendent religion. Feng Lan (2005, 147) concludes: "For Pound, one particular advantage of Confucianism was its unswerving humanist orientation, which places the human individual, not the Divinity, in the centre of its theological considerations." In Canto LVI, Pound used 變 to communicate not just the history of China but the enduring universal truth that, when rulers turn their attention away from the vast needs of their people and focus on transcendent quests, they deviate from their primary responsibilities and fail to live up to the people's expectations. Most often, their sovereignty would subsequently collapse. This kind of change is dangerous and destructive.

De Mailla's history of China reports that heaven (*tian* 天) will find a way to show its displeasure at the abandonment of Confucian values and ideals, but this displeasure is not thought of as a divine judgment upon humanity. As used in this sense, *heaven* does not refer to a transcendent, personal deity who will punish the ruler or people. The displeasure of heaven refers to a set of catastrophes which people would be prepared to manage if they were walking the Confucian way. Pound's poetic mirror converts de Mailla's narrative into these lines from two consecutive cantos in the "China Cantos." The first is from Canto LV (1948, 39):

Dry spring, a dry summer
locusts and rain in autumn
and beyond that, lack of specie
tax collectors inhuman.

The second is from Canto LVI (1948, 48):

all mulberries frozen in Pa Yang
Where were two million trees and beyond that
Literati fought fiercer than other men
Hail breaking the trees and walls
in I-Tching-tcheou
Crops gone.

Likewise, while de Mailla spends pages describing the fall of the Yuan 元 dynasty (1271–1368), Pound summarizes it all in one line (1948, 54), using the ancestral epigram for the courtesy name of Confucius, Chung Ni, in his poetic mirror:

Mongols are fallen
from losing the law of Chung Ni
(Confucius) 仲尼

the mould must hold what is poured into it
 in
 discourse
 what matters is
 to get it across e poi basta⁷

辭
 達

Pound's "China Cantos" acts as an intaglio. The components of the work mirror onto the reader the great truths that Pound believed: Whenever Confucian ideas are put into action, the human experience is the better for it. If the West could appropriate these ideals and values, its decay and destruction could be healed.

Notes

¹Pound used his own Romanization system for Chinese characters, but he was acquainted with the older British system known as Wade-Giles. To avoid the idiosyncrasy of Pound's system and to make it easier for the reader to follow the references as they come up in scholarly writing on *The Cantos*, John Nolde (1983, 435–40) includes an appendix that puts Pound's system alongside the Wade-Giles system for many Chinese names and dynasties. In this article, except when quoting from Pound, I use the *Hanyu pinyin* system.

²All quotations from *The Cantos* in this article are taken from the 1948 New Directions compilation of Cantos I–LXXXIV. A *canto* is one of the main or larger divisions of a long poem, but scholars of Pound often refer to Pound's cantos as standalone units.

³It is now generally agreed that Fenollosa's essay is filled with various misunderstandings about the Chinese language; consequently, Pound's appropriation of the work has also been criticized, as has his understanding of Chinese characters exclusively as ideograms. One essay exploring Fenollosa's grasp of Chinese and his influence on Pound is Kennedy (1964).

⁴Near the end of the General Prologue of the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer uses the word *sentence* to mean "best teaching" or "best lesson or insight about life."

⁵For an example of how the Confucian stance against the mutilation of criminals affected Christian proselytization in China, see Anthony Clark's "Early Modern Chinese Reactions to Western Missionary Iconography" in this volume (pp. 5–22).

⁶In China, these thinkers are known as *xiandai xin rujia* 现代新儒家 (modern new Confucians), and they are represented by Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885–1968), Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909–96) and Tu Weiming 杜維明 (b. 1940). See especially Tu (1985, 1993). In the United States, the New Confucians include Tu, Robert Neville, Henry Rosemont Jr., and Roger Ames, as well as other thinkers identified by Neville (2000). For a set of essays on the works of the key figures in this current movement, see Makeham (2003). And see pp. 232–34 of this volume for a review of a recently published collection of essays in honor of Henry Rosemont Jr.

⁷*E poi basta* is Italian for "and that is enough."

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