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Ezra Pound and Confucius: The West Encounters The East

The art of translation is a complicated balance of meanings. Translators have the power to take liberty if they so choose, and often it is more a matter of public reception than it is truth in determining the validity of said liberty. St. Jerome is best known for the vulgate. In order to get permission to translate pagan texts he explained that the vellum and his ink is a parallel to a ritual in the bible wherein a man could marry a woman if she properly converted. She would need to be tattooed and a kind of imprint would make her a foreigner acceptable, likewise Jerome employed his ink to do the same thing to a foreign text. That is all to say that the west often encounters foreign cultures in a way that westernizes it. A kind of cycle takes place where future western audiences then read these translations and then the next generation has preconceptions reinforced. Thus was the case for Ezra Pound and his relationship with East Asian culture. He primarily relied upon French Jesuits and orientalist so that he could translate Confucius' works, and this removed his interpretation by two steps. Pound, like St. Jerome, would find himself leaving his imprint. Through his encounters with East Asian culture he began to also see how it could influence his own poetry, philosophy, economics. He then gave a retelling of Confucianism that would serve his ideological interest. There was a certain urgency to it all, because in his own words: "The blossoms of the apricot / blow from east to west / And I have tried to keep the from falling" (XIII/60), his way of saying that his intention was to revamp the image of Confucianism for the west, put another way, he wanted to make it new. What that often

meant was an interpretation: that on the one hand presented a mostly false view of Confucian politics, a defensible understanding of Confucian religion, and a mostly fair translation when regarded as poetry.

Before Pound there was Ernest Fenollosa¹; whose translations guided a young Pound. Pound, using Fenollosa's notes, released *Cathay*. "Cathay" is an anachronistic name for China. It is an early example of a modernist translation. Poet James Laughlin, a student at Pound's "Ezruversity" in Rapallo Italy, was impressed with Pound's ability: "He had, in his way, mastered the tones – Chinese is spoken with four different voice tones – and he gave a good performance, an up-and-down singsong (Visiting St. Elizabeths: page 197)." Pound focused his translations to best capture the tones that come natural in Chinese. The translations become more stylized as a result. *Song of the Bowmen of Shu* by Kutsugen is a beautiful opening for the collection:

By heaven, his horse are tired.

The generals are on them, the soldiers are by them

The horses are well trained, the generals have ivory arrows

The anxiety of the battlefield comes to light, and since it is written in 1915 it gives this added parallel to the First World War. The focus of the horse is important; Kutsugen is reflecting the fear of the Mongol horsemen. For Pound, it would have been the early mobility of motorized warfare that struck new fear. Perhaps it is less coincidence that Central powers such as the Germans and Hungarians would be referred to as Huns. The last line: "who will know our grief?" takes on new meaning as the men of these wars would be forgotten while Pound attempts

¹ Ernest Fenollosa was active in bringing Eastern art to America, and he eventually became a buddhist. His wife, being widowed in 1908, decided to give Ezra Pound exclusive access to Fenollosa's translations, which included Chinese poetry and the Japanese play, Noh.

to commemorate them. Pound was too young for World War I, but too old for World War II. Additionally, he believed that artists should be exempt from drafts. This younger Pound was less confident as his notes indicate: “I have dared openly to declare my belief in certain young artists, will be brought to bear first on the flaws of such translation ... therefore I only give these unquestionable poems (Cathay 260)”, he was described by many as swinging from anxious to overly confident. Another poet, Charles Olson, thought that Pound would use different identities to hide himself: “Pound took the role of Confucius, put on that mask, for good (196),” Pound saw himself as authentically translating. Followers of Confucius, even in 5th century China, had their own points of view on the true meaning. Pound brought his own unique interpretation which was informed by preconceived political notions which at times weaken his effort in translating.

Pound’s interest in Confucianism is surprising, because other reactionaries are associated with ideas of a “yellow peril”². His fascination led him to translate or more accurately interpret many Eastern texts. He was quoted as saying: “one does not need to learn a whole language in order to understand some one poem or some dozen poems. It is often enough to understand thoroughly the poem, and every one of the few dozen or few hundred words that compose it” (LE, 37). Pound as a self-identified Confucian thought his intuition would be enough to explain meaning beyond what conventional scholars could show. The question arises if his vision enforces or disarms negative Western perception on East Asians. His intention was certainly good, but many scholars worry that his readings of Confucius were detrimental. His reading begins to become more clear in light of *A Guide to Kulcher*: in Chapter 49 Kung, Pound explains

² “Yellow Peril” became a prominent term for the rise of China and Japan at the turn of the 19th century. Lothrop Stoddard popularized the term and though Pound was certainly familiar with the concept he felt more sympathetic to East Asians. Consistent with his support of the Axis powers, Pound supported Japanese efforts in territorial expansion.

the failure of the West to understand China. He wryly says that: “The America of our immediate forebears considered ideogram as a laundry check (274).” Shortly after, he shares his thought that since Western scholars were burdened by taxes, they had less time to do a thorough review on China. Pound has a tendency to be reductive, even if it makes for a sharp transition in his writing. He was a firm believer in social credit theory³ which he believed would have allowed for the intelligentsia to produce culture free from the constraints of the market. In this case, the scholars would have been fairer to China. This chapter ends with: “The enemies of mankind are those who petrify thought, that is KILL it (277),” the economic systems of capitalism and communism both stifle cultural development. Pound saw Confucius thought as a way to transcend American politics, and hence his more unique interpretation. *Kulcher* opens with his *Digest of the Analects*: “May we not suppose that XII, 9 of the Analects teaches the folly of taxation? (18)” Pound concludes after an instance where a new granary would be more expensive to the people than what it would be worth. At least here Pound comes off as a little presumptive, because social credit theory was relatively new. To project social credit theory onto Confucians is analogous to the Western Left when it is too eager to claim examples of “primitive communism”⁴. Therefore, Pound’s Confucianism has some western characteristics.

Another aspect that is noteworthy is the more Jeffersonian perspective that influenced Pound: “[Jefferson} he never foresaw modern advertising, and if had he wd. Have loathed the

³ Social credit theory was an economic movement that sought to give power back to consumers in a free market by creating debt free currency. C.H Douglas, the founder, has been criticized for his theory and anti Semitism. His ideas can be seen today as influencing modern monetary theory.

⁴ Primitive communism is an idea by Frederick Engels to describe pre capitalist societies, because they lacked private property as a concept. The framing is Euro centric, because it fits radically different contexts to fit Europe’s industrial revolution paradigm.

It should also be noted that Pound explains himself more in his notorious *What is Money For* pamphlet where he does cite an example in China where they created new currency to allow the people to buy newly mined copper. This is his basic example on how social credit theory can work

underlying diseases (255 Kulcher)”, as much as he considers the context of different civilizations, he also thinks that a kind of re-historization can take place and that the West could then derive more from the Confucians. Pound’s attraction to Mussolini is a result of this thinking, because Mussolini is a Jefferson for his context. Whether they realized it or not, Pound asserts that these two were abiding by Confucian principles of government.

Pound was fascinated with the Haiku form and how it could be rendered into English properly. Imagism and what would later become vorticism is largely inspired by the Haikus he read. Though Haikus are outside of Confucianism, they do shed light on Pound’s greater project to bring Asian culture to America. The poem *In a Station of a Metro* perfectly captures the sense of the image that Pound wanted to present to America for cultural and artistic understanding. By sacrificing the Haiku form of 5 syllables, followed by 7, and then another five, it finds a special meaning for English speakers:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd:

Petals on a wet, black bough.

Jack Kerouac and others would later follow Pound’s Haiku style. Pound’s ability to bring this artform to English speakers builds appreciation for both cultures. Indeed, the poem itself seems to show it. Pound as part of the modernist movement was conscious of new cities effects of alienation, and so the first line gives us this sense. The crowd on the platform is all too familiar. The final line takes from a more common nature motif in Haiku, hence completing this image of Western Modernity encountering Eastern tradition. The parallels manifest in the image of the crowd’s similarity to the bough. Pound’s meaning shines clearer than how it did in the analects. When he spends less time on issues of usury or politics, his poetry functions better. This is true especially now, because the politics have become dated.

A pattern began to emerge where Pound noticed that the basis of Western thought was mostly centered around negation. As much as the Greeks were interested in what was true, they occupied themselves far more with what was false. Pound noted that much of Western thought was a dialect between Aristotelians and Platonists. In his opening to his translation entitled: *Procedure* he asserts that: “Aristotle gives may we say, 90% of his time to errors” (*Procedure* page 659). Along with his preconceived notion that Confucius could provide a break from traditional economics, he believed the same could be said for philosophy. As a result, much of the way he translates sacrifices word ambiguity for clarity, even when these ideograms are commonly accepted to change meaning at times. Recall that many more mainstream translators see merit in Pound’s work as poetry; what might be more accurate is its function as manifesto. Manifestos are typically devoid of nuance and as a result are all too clear, because they need to reach the masses. There is something particularly modernist in his bringing high East Asian culture to everyday English speakers. Feng Lan provides an archetypal example of Pound doing exactly this: “Wu yi yi fu ... (Lun yu 9.8), which he translates as ‘I’ve only myself to rely on’ (Con, 229)” (Ezra Pound and Confucius (37)). Pound here portrays Confucius as more confident than he is typically seen, it reflects his own growing self confidence in his project as time went on.

There are times where Pound appears to hedge his bets on what the reader may prefer. The meaning itself can still hold, but it is as if the style is up to the reader:

He said: Settle the names (determine a precise terminology)

He said: You bumpkin! Sprout! When a proper man don’t know a thing, he shows some reserve.

If words (terminology) are not (is not) precise, they cannot be followed out (book 13 of Analects 711).

It is downright eccentric to allow for alternative ways of reading like this. It is likely that he wants to contrast a more accurate or sterile translation with a more artistic choice. The analects are supposed to be less artistically oriented and more function oriented, and so it truly is a unique choice. It is as if that the art has ceased to be this analect, and rather translating itself.

Of course, there were also ideas he valued from the West. Although they require a type of scrutiny, his view of Christianity, with the exception of Catholicism, is mostly negative. More accurately, his issue was with the Reformation. The Reformation was the reason why the West had degenerated. Confucianism appealed to him as an alternative. This is very different to T.S. Eliot, Eliot wanted to restore the West through Christianity. Pound had this to say: “Until he succeeds in detaching the Jewish from the European elements of his peculiar view he will never find the right formula” (143). The God of the Old Testament came off very cruel, and so often Jesus would be referred to as the “God of Dante”. For Calvinists more specifically he said it: “is a semitic cuckoo’s egg in a European nest. He has no connection to Dante’s God. That later concept of supreme Love and Intelligence is certainly not derived from the Old Testament” (143). Pound’s antisemitism had economic and religious implication. (Although it is also important as Daniel Pearlman notes in his essay, Pound: America’s Wandering Jew, that he also believed that bankers sometimes actually financed conspiracy theorists to distract from real economic issues.) His translations often show parallels to Western concepts. Pound wanted to use Confucianism to reinforce Western tradition; however, this also meant that the West’s perception that Asia was an inferior place intellectually was simultaneously undermined.

French Jesuit Moyriac de Milla is partly responsible for Western perceptions of Asians. In the early eighth century he published: *Histoire generale de la Chine*. *Tian* is the word commonly used for heaven, *Tian* soon became the more specific term to relate Christianity to Confucianism. Pound does something different in his *Pisan Cantos*. In LXXIV he says: “Yu has nothing pinned on Jehovah.” Hence, *Tian* becomes less specific to Christianity with Pound. It is worth mentioning that he took issue with the idea of original sin. It makes more sense why he would lean towards the more authentic version of *Tian*. Missionaries used their works to persuade China to accept Christianity. Pound wanted to persuade westerners to look into Confucius. In chapter 26 of *Kulcher* “On Answering Critics,” he mentions that if he is being criticized by a Catholic, then the: “analogies between New Testament thought and that everywhere diffused through the analects and the Ta Hio (172),” should be brought to light. He did present a type of unity by showing these connections. Notice that he only finds parallels in the New Testament; his disdain for the Old Testament has implications for Western audiences. Pound’s desire to make Confucianism less alien has baggage that makes Jewish people more alien. Jewish people are Pound’s ultimate “other,” because he is able to reconcile the differences found in Confucianism without being able to find meaning in Jewish culture. His translations that detract can often be the result of his antisemitism.

Although it is important that Pound’s antisemitic tendencies had little to do with religious difference. Religion was an afterthought. In Book 4 of the Analects, Pound’s thoughts on a more universal approach to spirituality come to light: “A man’s errors, every one of ‘em belong to his environment (clique, party, gang he associates with), watch his faults and you can judge his humanity (673).” It is obvious why this would appeal to Pound. There is a running theme that simple ideas can contain the most wisdom. There is truth that religious debate became more of

an issue when Christianity arrived in Europe. Pound saw the West as getting too complicated, because of modernity. The West was losing identity in a changing world. Confucianism was a way to remind the West of what it had abandoned.

Dao says something about our underlying human nature. *Dao* is typically understood by Westerners to mean 'Way,' for Pound it meant 'Process.' Also important is that despite themes of collective humanity and culture for West and East, there are underlying messages of individuality. In one such poem, *Rendondillas*, he writes: "The chief god in hell is convention". It can be helpful to view his translations as individualist exercises, and yet in the background is his endorsement of the conformity in fascism. Some of his translations do reflect a fascist point of view, and others are benign.

Pound had a particular liking for Kung, he wrote in Kulcher that: "Kung's first job was a Douglasite assessment of the productivity of the province set for his inspection" (272). He goes onto contrast him with Ovid, a Roman poet, and how Kung is superior. Later he makes comparisons with Dante. An explicit reference to social credit theorist, Douglas, is made. Pound saw similarities in the political crisis that China was experiencing around the fifth century. For Pound this hit to close to home, because he was old enough to see the First World War, the depression, and then another war. His context heavily influenced his translations.

At times his interpretation of specific ideograms can be a little too calculated. In chapter 9 of *Da Xue*, a character, *junzi*, which most translations will say 'gentleman,' he decides to say 'real man,' thus the more accurate meaning is lost and it is clear why he is interested in doing this. *Da Xue* is a focus on education, something that Pound had specific for his audience to *Kulcher*: "It is written for men who have not been able to afford an university education or for young men" (6). It becomes the case that he wants to be the teacher for the impressionable and

that he is in fact the 'real man' from Da Xue. Also, that by listening to him, then you too could become a 'real man'. The sense of authority is by Pound's design, and it dovetails into the Cantos when he writes: "It may depend on one man" (128). The 'man' here is a line lifted from the Confucius text, lifted into his Cantos 583, and is intended to support autocracy. The intention with the use of translation is personal and very political. He had a great distrust for academia, and that was why he sought to translate himself: "The stupidity of my age is nowhere more gross, blatant and futile than in the time-lag for getting Chinese texts into bilingual editions. The *Ta Hio* is so edited (Kulcher page 147)," he decided to fill some of that gap. His translations reflected this mentality, and the result varies. His point is that the texts have been bowdlerized and that his simpler understanding would be more helpful to a general audience. There is truth here, because there comes a point in a classicist's career where he or she stops reading translation and reads the original. Pound understood that most would lack the opportunity to read the original and so the translations should err on the side of smoothness rather than literalness.

Pound was quite deliberate when it came to who he wrote for, his *Confucius The Great Digest & Unwobbling Pivot*, is intended to give the sense that rulers need to be held to principles. He writes in his note: "China was tranquil when her rulers understood these few pages" (615), the tone is very different. Translator Burt Watson has it listed as the Doctrine of the Mean. The implication is that political leaders should be narrow minded: "You do not depart from the process even for an instant" (630), this assuming that they are living by a right moral code. He elaborates further with a section titled *politics*: "one holds one axe handle while chopping the other. Thus one uses men in governing men" (634), and then with *Ethics*: "The archer when he misses the bullseye, turns and seeks the cause of the error in himself" (634). What makes this translation more accurate than others is that Pound relies more on 11th century

Confucian commentator Chu Hsi than he does on his own instinct or western scholarship. Hsi's argument is that Tsze Sze, the Confucian who recorded *Unwobbling Pivot*, starts with one simple principle which can then be applied to any number of problems. Pound liked this reading, because the first principles listed are about personal responsibility, or more appropriately, individualism. Societies begin and end on the actions of the individuals in charge, and only by this recognition will society progress: "What heaven has disposed and sealed is called the inborn nature. The realization of this nature is called the process. The clarification of this process ... is called education" (635), this is the framework that Hsi and Pound believe that the text supports. Recall that Pound's 'process' is the word for 'Dao' which means 'way', and the meaning still holds in this case.

Sometimes the words 'way' and process will be used in the same text also. Tsze Lu, or Lao Tzu, questions Kung at the end of part one of Pound's *Unwobbling Pivot*. The dialogue is about energy: "Kung answered: "Do you mean the energy of the South or do you mean Nordic energy, or your own, that which you ought to have yourself and improve?" (638), his decision to use Nordic instead of North seems out of place. It is explained that: "To sleep on a heap of arms and untanned skins, to die unflinching and as if dying were not enough" (638), it makes sense that this could be a point of emphasis, but that then shifts to an explanation of the energy of the self. The last stanza finishes on what is distinctively Pound:

The man of breed comes into harmony with the process and continues his way.

Go half way then stop, I can't let it go at that.

The man of breed pivots himself on the unchanging and has faith. To withdraw from the world, unseens and unirritated by being unseen, his knowledge ignored (619).

Ultimately, he drops any language here that sounds too racial, regarding energy and location. Instead, he reinforces his takeaway from Confucianism. It is about the individual finding balance by doing what is right.

One of Pound's more ambitious translations is, *The Classic Anthology defined by Confucius*, this is because many of the poems pre-date Confucius. They matter, because Confucius considered them to be essential to education as previously discussed. Pound is rather matter of fact by entitling the first section, *Folk Songs or Lessons of the State*, James Legge translates it as, *Lessons of Manners*. It clearly shows where Pound over stretches, because an average reader will be prompted very differently then Legge's title:

“Hid! Hid!” the fish hawk saith,

By isle in Ho the fish hawk saith:

Dark and clear

Dark and clear,

So shall be the Prince's fere (755)

In this first stanza, it becomes obvious that the translation was more a lyrical exercise than it was intended to communicate what the odes would have meant initially. Though possible, it is strange to say 'dark and clear.' Pound was also interested in old English and so to capture the effect of old Chinese, he resorts to using an outdated word for spouse, fere. His translations of texts that were less old often use more modern language. It is one of his most subtle tricks as a translator. What is lost in clarity is gained in giving readers the sense of harmony. To complicate matters further, he decides to use Greek at one point to translate the sixth poem:

καλη κα γαθη

O omen tree, that art so frail and young,

So glossy fair to shine with flaming flower;

That goest to wed

And make fair house and bower (758)

The sense of the Greek is something like beauty and good; Pound is setting up a type of duality of good things and this becomes more apparent in the context of royal marriage. “Γαθη” likely represents the female side, or the good, this is where we get the name Agatha. It is interesting, because this implicitly lumps the entirety of Western culture as a single unit. The poem then continues to describe that the fruit produced is a peach and that the tree is eventually cut down for man. If the poem is read as sequences of history, then it makes more sense why it would start off in Greek; it highlights the sequence of history.

In Book 5, *Wei Wind*, Pound returns to using Greek to introduce the poem. ‘πολυμητις’ which perhaps means “many minded,” (it should be noted that the meaning for isolated Greek words, like isolated Chinese ideograms can be subject to discussion) is a strange way to begin book 5. It is a famous epithet of Odysseus and it feels out of place, because Odysseus can be seen as rather selfish, especially outside of Homer. Pound certainly thought differently and many of his other poems would feature Odysseus. The subtitle is an axiom, *The bamboos grow well under good rule*, and then he goes on to describe a good leader. The context is that Wei, a region, was going through a famine:

As jade is ground by wheel;

He careth his people’s weal,

Stern in attent,

Steady as sun’s turn bent

On his folk’s betterment (782)

It becomes apparent why Pound was interested in the Confucius odes when at a time most scholars were relegating them. The odes often foreshadow the frameworks found in later Confucius writing, emphasis on leaders being accountable to their people. This poem gives the sense that, because a good leader has shown up to: “careth his people’s weal”, the famine itself has ended. Which is exactly what the axiom about bamboo describes. Pound observed America and saw it in the midst of the great depression, and in this mindset, one would have to conclude that it was bad leadership that was the cause. The boom bust cycle of Wall Street and the dust bowl were all results of bad leadership. If America elected a Jefferson, Mussolini, or Confucius then America would be back on track.

Pound saw Legge as one of the main detractors from Confucius but was also aware of his use as a reference to translate. Like many writers he felt a need to do more than his predecessors, but this leads to reacting for its own sake, In book 3, “The Decade of T’ang”, this is highlighted clearly in the second poem’s third stanza:

How stand we now? Confusion in government,

Bemused chaos up, and conscience down,

Flat down, be it on back or front,

But sunk at any rate – thou art so drunk

And deep in nothing save it be merriment.

Severed continuance, thou dunce,

Shallow in law of antient kingly light

That might, in this darkness, tow thy bark aright.

Monica E.M Zipki quotes Karlgren and his translation for compare: “you do not think of your (continuance =) heritage, you do not widely (seek =) study the former kings, so as to be able to

hold fast their bright laws” (Rescuing the odes from Modernity). It does become apparent how Pound wishes to portray the political crisis as a deviation from ‘antient kingly light’ which is much more pointed than Karlgren’s ‘bright laws.’ It is interesting how Pound shows the lack of introspection as a cause for crisis, that so much of what is happening around us is a result of internal discord. When he says that the ‘conscience is down,’ it shows how this leader has lost sight of what really matters, and hence is ‘so drunk.’ Pound even cites Karlgren as a source, but he seemed to be more interested in tweaking Legge’s and this results in some discrepancy. The intended effect that Pound had was in order to make the classic anthology Confucian, it had to be made Poundian.

In Book 3, “The Odes of Shang,” which Pound asserts are the oldest in the collection, it seems that he tried to force a parallel between Confucianism and Christianity. Instead of obscuring the connection by using Greek’s Cyrillic script, this time he transliterates, so he writes out KYRIE ELEISON. Which means Lord have mercy, next to this in English he writes: “father of all our line” (987). The most likely thread is in the final stanza:

Come to the fane and feast
That plenty ever descend, attend,
Bale fire and harvest home,
T’ang’s heir at the turn of the moon.

The anthology lends itself to a type of backwards organization, the odes of Shang despite being first are at the direct end of it all. The first two poems end on the same last lines: “Bale fire and harvest home / T’angs heir at the turn of the moon,” and so this, combined with KYRIE ELEISON, make it come off like this dynasty is about to produce a savior. The Christian imagery is somewhat there, the portrayal of this birth as a feast for many to attend to. Many such

parables are found in the Gospels. The anthology closes with a sense of Armageddon, because of all the discussion of civil war. It becomes possible to view the heir of T'ang as either the god that failed, or perhaps as fulfilling revelation.

One of Pound's most controversial artistic liberties, or as Paul Morrison claims in *Poetics of Fascism*: "Pound's apparent failure to recognize that the discursive title of a second poem was precisely that" (16) is found in *The River Song* by Rihaku, and it is the apparent splicing of 2 poems together. Looking and reading at the finished product, it is hard to tell that the poems are separate. Such an error is only made noticeable as Reka Mihalka notes: "the fact that the two poems are written in different form: the first in the so-called five-character form (five Chinese characters make up a line), the second in the seven-character form (seven characters in a line)" (Traduttore. Traditore?), and this raises the question if even aesthetic concern was present.

Fennesolla's notes should have also indicated that these were separate. Still, the Poundian motifs of image are all still there, and it is very smooth. The poem begins with: "This boat is of shato-wood, and its gunwhales are cut / magnolia" and then later: "South of the pond the willow-tips are half-blue and bluer, / Their cords tangle in mist, against the brocade like palace" (251), these show very deliberate word choice, and it is as if these poems were meant to be together, because the way it begins on more open water only to move to the shore by a palace, it shows direction.

At worst it is a mistake that worked.

The unwobbling pivot closes in an interesting way:

As silky light, King Wen's virtue

Coming down with the sunlight, what purity!

He looks in his heart

And does. -Shi King, IV (654)

There is almost excessive emphasis on light. Most scholars choose 'illustrative.' Mary Cheadle thinks this is a combination of both neoplatonic influence and an outdated dictionary (*The Vision of Light* in Ezra Pound's *Unwobbling Pivot*). Here is yet another example of Pound trying to make Confucianism more digestible to Western audiences. Later in the poem the word 'immaculata' appears which is a way to draw attention to Christian parallels:

The unmixed functions (in time and space) without bourne.

This unmixed is the tensile light, The Immaculata. There is no end to its action (655)

The irony is still there that it was Jesuits who initially gave access to Confucius thought, and then it was taken to show how it could be used to persuade Westerners to take up Confucianism. It is important to recall that at the beginning he mentions metaphysics: "Only the most absolute sincerity under heaven can effect any change. (634)" This is important, because there are such people who are Confucian and yet secular. Confucianism lacks a defined god; Pound and other Confucians decide to insert a god where it is less than clear.

It has been more than 70 years since Pound began publishing his translations, and Western audiences are still largely in the dark about East Asian philosophy. Pound, in this way, failed to raise such awareness. Perhaps, the question should be asked why have Americans maintained such obstinacy, and that answer will have much to do with the negative relationship the West has historically and currently has with China. It is regrettable that even if Pound had meant well, his work lacked a focus of breaking down negative stereotypes of Asians. It did show that they had cultural merit and that is significant. Though at times there are certainly positive forms of engagement, there are other times where it is being done for political gain.

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