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Ezra Pound's Enjambment from Italian Fascism to American Neo-Fascism

MATTHEW FELDMAN
Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom
Email: matthew@academicconsulting.co.uk

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Abstract The extensive evidence that Pound was a committed and influential propagandist for fascism and, by 1935, a hardened antisemite is typically dismissed by Pound's defenders on grounds that he was more than just a fascist and racist. Inevitably, fascists are more than just fascists: Mussolini was a journalist; Hitler a painter; and Quisling a military officer. All also led fascist movements and contributed to the Holocaust. The same is true of fascist writers: Celine was initially a travelling doctor and Hamsun received the Nobel Prize for Literature long before he gifted it to Goebbels in 1943. People contain multitudes; and yes, fascists are also people. Somehow these truths have wholly eluded Ezra Pound's hagiographers. Further proof is therefore adduced in this article of Pound's central role in the launching of postwar American fascism. Short case studies of Eustace Mullins, John Kasper and Matthias Koehl — who all visited Pound during his institutionalisation at St Elizabeths — makes plain that Pound became more than even a leading poet and fascist propagandist after 1945: he was also a leading neo-Nazi. This can no longer be denied. Pound took ideas seriously; when are we going to take his core ideas seriously?

Keywords Ezra Pound, fascism, racism, Nazism, white supremacy, Matthias Koehl, Martin Kerr, Eustace Mullins

Behind the reinforced concrete walls and iron-latticed windows enclosing St. Elizabeths Hospital for the mentally ill, Ezra Pound's worldly belongings were registered on Boxing Day 1945: 4 towels, 2 facecloths, varied toiletries,

several days' clothing, a box of cookies, and bottle of instant coffee — controlled by all stuffed into a mailbag-cum-knapsack that was also tallied. On his person were $18.70; 21 stamps; one cane; one broken watch; one brush and comb; one pair of sunglasses; a check book with an uncashed $50 check; 7 books (soon to be locked into the hospital's vault); and a weathered briefcase containing his recent poems and translations of Confucius (Swift 33, 36). Only the year before, Pound's Confucian translation was printed in the Salò Republic as *The Axis Does Not Waver* [*L'asse che non vacilla*; later reworked in English as *The Unwobbling Pivot*]. Confucius and industrial-strength warfare likely seem strange bedfellows for most, but that's scarcely how they appeared to Pound at the time. To one Fascist official in the Nazi-satrapy Salò Republic, duly recorded in his mammoth FBI file, Pound argued at the end of the war that "Confucius is the material which should be taken into the trenches" (Pound, cited in Feldman, 2013: 139).[1] Just two years earlier, at the apex of World War Two, the 56-year-old Pound had seemed ready to enlist in letters to the same *confidante*, the officer and Fascist die-hard Ubaldo degli Uberti from the (by that time, functionally defunct) Italian Navy:

> 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. (Ubaldi, cited in Feldman, 2013: 139)

The first two months of 1945 witnessed Pound's two new Cantos, 72 and 73, appearing with *Marina Repubblicana* — controlled by Admiral Ubaldi, the navy's head of propaganda, it was one of the few outlets still appearing in war-torn northern Italy — the first poetry he had published since Italy's entry into the war five long years before. In 1940, the Cantos were perfectly timed to move from the Dantesque *Inferno* and *Purgatory* cycles to his intended "paradiso terrestre" of an Axis-led "New Order" in Europe (Pound, cited in Feldman, 2013: 139, xii). Far from "entering the empyrean" as Pound had hoped for both his poetry and in politics, the course of the war had already tarnished fascism so irrecoverably that even poetry became little more than death-cult propaganda:

> Glory of the fatherland!
>
> To die for the fatherland
>
> in the Romagna!

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![2]

Since he regarded *The Cantos* as "the tale of the tribe" by this time (Pound, *Guide* 194), Pound made sure to send the two poems to Mussolini at Lake Garda upon publication (Wilhelm 207). It was one of more than a dozen fan letters to "the Boss" from 1933 on.[3] Like the Italian Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and the Norwegian Knut Hamsun, there is a strong case that Pound was a fully-fledged "fascist writer" by the 1930s or, at least, was working on a "Fascist epic," in one neglected scholar's phrase (Lauber). While that view has never been given a fair hearing in scholarship on Pound, the rare case has been made that *The Cantos* was, "among other things, the sacred poem of the Nazi-Fascist millennium, which mercifully never eventuated" (Bacigalupo, *Forméd Trace* x). The "Nazi-Fascist" millennium, and, with it, fascism, never eventuated because it was shot to pieces by the Allies (ibid.). Pound's mania for fascism began in earnest in the early 1930s, around the time his wavy hair started greying. Having lived in Italy since 1924, his interest was piqued after meeting with the fellow fascist artist, Filippo Marinetti, in spring 1932, and then that winter as one of 3.8 million visitors to the *Mostra delle Rivoluzione Fascista* exhibition, marking 10 years of Fascist rule. Ezra Pound's devotion to Mussolini turned cult-like after his meeting with "the Boss" on 30 January 1933 — at nearly the exact time that Adolf Hitler took power in Germany. Were that not ominous enough, Pound spent the next 10 days feverishly writing his fascist "coming out" book, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (although this was not published until 1935). Soon an

outspoken devotee of universal fascism, Pound corresponded with most of its leadership: Ciano, Camagna, Coselchi, Mussolini, Pellizzi, Polverelli, Por, Sarfatti, Villari, *Antieuropa*, and others — and that was just in Italy. (These and other regime functionaries are included in the veritable Who's Who of Fascist Italy, with quite a few of whom Pound corresponded frequently and enthusiastically). Being an American abroad in no way impeded Pound's lockstep march with changes in Fascist policy during the 1930s. In 1934, for instance, Pound dismissed an isolated Nazi Germany as an unserious "Children's Crusade kind of hysteria."[4] Italian Fascism was still just about fascism's First Amongst Equals — though Nazism would take over this mantle by the middle of the 1930s. Having praised Mussolini as a man of peace for years, the Duce's invasion of Abyssinia prompted a remarkable U-turn in Pound's fascist politics. By early 1936, he was assailing the "criminal falsity" of the League of Nations, cheering the colonization of Abyssinia and bragging in print of his "propaganda for the sake of a decent Europe" (Pound, "For A Decent Europe") — with "decent" synonymous, of course, with "fascist."[5]

Like a man with delirium, Pound published 29 articles in the *British-Italian Bulletin* — an Italian propaganda rag targeting Britain and squarely aimed making Fascist conquest palatable — which only ran for 50 weeks. With war propaganda no longer needed by October 1936, Pound now developed a taste for transnational fascist advocacy. That same month, Pound began writing for the *British Union of Fascists and National Socialists*; an article a month would appear until the BUF press was closed down in spring 1940, its leadership interned as a wartime threat. Amongst his many letters to Oswald Mosley, in March 1938, Pound offered his "Usura Canto" (Canto 45), a term for moneylending that a later sequence in *The Cantos*, completed around that time, presented as the Yiddish (or Hebrew) "neschek" (thus dispelling any doubts over the poet's antisemitism):

> better keep out the jews
> or yr grand children will curse you
> jews, real jews,
> chazims, and neschek. (812-813)[6]

Most ominously of all, from 1937, a few letters began to be signed off with "Heil Hitler" and, exactly a year after the Fascists' "Manifesto of Race" was published, Pound sent a letter to the US bedecked with a swastika.[7] Such

was the black hole of Nazi influence that a leading poet of his age, widely regarded as a genius — who only five years previously referred to the Führer as "Shitler" — told German correspondents that World War II was "a war of jew finance and mercantilism against Hitler."[8] Now a fully formed biological racist, Pound also asserted to British fascists in 1940 "the native races of Europe" ought not be "annihilated for the jew."[9] Put another way, in slavishly following PNF policy, Pound's fascist activism moved from anti-Nazi and universal fascism in the early 1930s, to cheering on the takeover of Abyssinia in 1936 and Austria in 1938, prior to coming out with some of the basest antisemitic propaganda ever broadcast during in the Second World War.

Pound worked for a fascist utopia until the bitter end, with records showing expansive and proactive wartime collaboration. Pound broadcast the Axis radio program "Jerry's Front Calling" well into 1945: dutifully liaising with his German handlers, pressing for improved "radio hookups" and, as ever, offering suggestions for improving propaganda. Pound's wide-ranging administrative duties seem to have been unpaid given that his real income, about $40,000 a year in today's currency, came from composing perhaps the foulest antisemitism ever produced for radio. The following example is dated 26 January 1945 by Pound, one day prior to the Soviet liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau on 27 January (the date thereafter selected to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day):

> 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. (Pound, cited in Feldman, 2013: 3)[10]

Tommy guns in hand, Italian partisans came knocking at Pound's home 3 May 1945, by which time he had composed and broadcast many hundreds of broadcasts, roundtable interviews, and scrips for the Axis, not infrequently with violent invective at the height of the Holocaust. Before being whisked away, Pound slipped a copy of Confucius into his pocket and, quite reasonably, insisted upon being immediately turned over to US forces. After travelling by jeep to Genoa on V-E Day, Pound declared to the FBI investigators sent from the US to arrest him, "I am not anti-Semitic" but "I think that

Hitler was a Saint, and wanted nothing for himself" (Pound, cited in Feldman, 2013: 3, 5). Pound remained talkative that day, still hoping for a western alliance against communism, even offering his knowledge of eastern wisdom to "bring the slaughter in the Pacific to a sane and speedy end" (Pound and Pound 73). It has been argued now for 80 years that Pound was insane at this time.[11]

Either way, a new and brutal reality began toward the end of the month, when Pound was transferred to the US Army's Disciplinary Training Center (DTC). Upon arrival, Pound was issued laceless boots, fatigues, blankets, and a Bible. Allowed to keep his copy of Confucius, he was led to the "'death cells,'" "used for holding prisoners awaiting execution." A "special cell" was prepared beforehand: a toilet-less cement floor surrounded by 6 x 6 wire mesh and reinforced with military junk steel, ending a row of what he later called "gorilla cages," under the watch of armed soldiers pacing a perimeter fence ringed with barbed wire. Due process, such as it was, was served humid and harsh under the Pisan sun. After three weeks, Pound collapsed and was transferred to the DTC's infirmary where, after recovering sufficiently, he composed many of his award-winning Pisan Cantos (Cantos 74-84). By the end of the year, Pound had been charged with treason, transferred to Washington DC, and declared "of unsound mind" in a precedent-setting (if brief and ultimately unresolved) case. An Icarus who had flown too close to the fascist sun was now melting within eyeshot of the Leaning Tower, that testament to human imperfection. It was as if Pound, modernism's notorious hater of symbols, had become one himself.

And not just for Pound, of course, 1945 transformed the entire world: destruction of the European Axis in May; birth of the Atomic Age and Japanese surrender in August; establishment of the United Nations in October; and, arguably, the hard-to-pinpoint "start" of the Cold War (the term was first used by Orwell on 19 October). Arriving at St. Elizabeths Hospital for the mentally ill over Christmastime 1945, Pound jostled with more than 7,000 institutionalized patients as number 58,102. His registration photograph depicts a slightly startled man with hair askew, garbed in double-breasted suit, black tie, and unkempt shirt. Between the furrowed brow and thick goatee was a piercing, sad, seemingly defiant gaze staring straight at the camera lens. From one pocket emerged a notebook and, according to

a recent study, he gave "a short speech about Italian politics and how he was not a traitor but a saviour" (Swift 33). "'Delusions of persecution and grandeur,'" duly noted an attending doctor (ibid.). Or perhaps Pound was crazy like a fox. Of greater moment here is that if anyone truly personified the rise and fall of fascism in Europe, it was America's greatest living poet, still unapologetic and greying steadily in an asylum where he would spend the next 150 months.

Mad or bad? Or both? Treasonous or vilified? As a parable of fascism's defeat and disgrace, it is hard to beat what was already being described in late 1945 as the "Pound Case." As usual, the revolutionary left staked out a maximal position, refusing any possibility of redemption for fascists. The very day before Pound's registration at St. Elizabeths, gracing the cover of the *New Masses*' Christmas-day edition was the question "Should Ezra Pound Be Shot?" None of the six respondents demurred, and one, Arthur Miller, later Pulitzer-Prize winner and author of that classic witchfinders' cautionary tale, *The Crucible*, went so far as to declare: "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 and with an effect equal to any short-wave propagandist" (Miller 4). Amongst the latter "radio traitors," William "Lord Haw Haw" Joyce was strung up by British authorities on 3 January 1946, while another Axis broadcaster, Douglas Chandler (aka "Paul Revere"), had his attempted insanity defense laughed out of court later that year (Shirer, 1943: 400). In 1947, Chandler was convicted of treason, fined, stripped of American citizenship (later commuted after 16 years), and ultimately deported to Germany. For both the far-left and the US justice system, Pound escaped lightly. In the US, as across the postwar world, this Cold War concord between left, center, and much of the right has been dubbed "the anti-fascist consensus" (Stone 10).

Pound may have walked and quacked like a fascist duck for more than a decade by 1945, but for his ardent defenders — roughly split between postwar fascists and "Pound Studies" professional critics (yes, really) — Ezra Pound was in reality a black swan in Fascist Italy: "scapegoat" and "flawed idealist," guilty only of "excess" in his crusade for a "well-ordered society"; neither traitor nor Fascist (Moody xiii). These assertions are taken from the opening page (volume three) of Pound's authorized biography, commencing

a learned example of propaganda on behalf of fascism's most learned propagandist (ibid.). On the whole, Pound's more unseemly defenders — fascists and, in particular, white supremacists — seem to have a rather better grasp of those political ideals the mature Pound held so dear. He was no naïve utopian or democrat gone mildly awry but, for fascists, celebrated as one of "their" leading intellectuals. Self-styled "Fascists of the Third Millennium," CasaPound Italia, for example, were so enchanted by the fascist poet that they named themselves after him early in the 21st century:

> Ezra Pound was a revolutionary and a fascist. Ezra Pound had to suffer for his ideas, he was sent to jail for ten years to make him stop speaking. We see in Ezra Pound a free man who paid for his ideas; he is a symbol of the "democratic views" of the winners. (Iannone, cited in Feldman, 2013: 154)

In the months after V-E Day on 8 May, admittedly, there was no shortage of victor's justice. It sometimes took the form of veritable mob rule, as in France's purge of collaborationists — with effective summary executions meted out to thousands — or of show trials in the Soviet Union, first perfected by Stalin in the 1930s. Many were also arrested, tried, and sometimes hanged after an extensive judicial process — most famously at Nuremberg, where leading Nazi war criminals sat in the dock. By then shorn of all menace, Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, Frick, Jodl, and more than a dozen others were strung up. Tens of thousands of others were convicted for crimes that stretched the imagination. Still, others like Julius Streicher and Robert Brasillach were executed as propagandists without ever firing a shot at the enemy. Aided by near-universal revulsion at its wartime crimes, fascism was shattered into tiny pieces following World War Two.

Was fascism dead? Is it possible to kill an idea in any case, or kill off an ideology? 1945 stress-tested that question to near destruction, and the answer is no. For the Axis in Europe defeat was total and justice sometimes as rough as the Allied (particularly Soviet) postwar occupation. Expressions of fascism were banned across most of Europe, and for the rest, contempt and stigma were enough to push revolutionary right politics largely underground after the war. All the same, millions in Europe and elsewhere between the wars that had transformed into Ionescu's rhinos did not simply turn back again, magically, on 9 May 1945. Many ex-party members and collaborators tried to blend into the background of the very changed political picture. A hard-

core few, however, nurtured fascism's flickering flame. For them, 1945 meant fight or flight. When not taken literally, the latter strand sought to spiritually prepare activists for a stoic journey of silent opposition, of uncertain length and much humiliation. These and other early steps in the second half of the 1940s were tenuous, shell-shocked, and occasionally pathetic. Other fascist initiatives were more durable. By the mid-1950s, Pound had become a different kind of symbol — at least for some. Forgotten by most, he had been locked away in a sanitorium for a decade having been convicted of no crime. It looked a lot like imprisonment without charge, stinking of liberal hypocrisy at a time when moral superiority between rival blocs carried great significance. Aside from the Great Power rivalry, however, briefly returning to Pound at St. Elizabeths highlights three key themes to be covered below, while also demonstrating how a self-styled "EZUversity" reared a new generation of would-be Führers — including Matthias Koehl. It may be no overstatement to claim that, from his hospital room in St. Elizabeths, Pound was a prime mover in the postwar re-emergence of fascism in the US and beyond.

Perhaps unexpectedly, Pound was quite productive at St. Elizabeths, completing his final two poetic sequences (*Rock-Drill and Thrones de los Cantaros*, Cantos 85-109), characterized in a recent study as a tale of "racialized," eugenic conflict "between Semitic destroyers and Aryan culture-builders;" that is, Jews and fascists (Marsh, *Ezra Pound's Washington Cantos* 36). Despite needing to take care given his liminal and incarcerated circumstances, Pound also published cryptic prose texts, usually anonymously, in a succession of far-right journals like Mosley's postwar venture, *The European*. That Pound's fascist convictions were obvious and unwobbling complicated his prospects for release. "One cannot leave him there to rot," reasoned Archibald MacLeish, the celebrated modernist poet and coordinator of elite actors engaged in Pound's release that included Robert Frost, Ernest Hemingway, TS Eliot, and other luminaries (Feldman, "The Pound Case" 88). "But whoever offers him a hand will have his fingers broken" (Donaldson 446). Following a visit in which the doughty, now-balding MacLeish witnessed the squalid conditions at St. Elizabeths, the campaign to get Pound out quickly gathered pace (Feldman, "The Pound Case" 88).[12]

Yet, the main sticking point during the lawyerly negotiations for Pound's release over 1956 and 1957 were the activities of his self-described "disciples." The Master's intransigence might be overcome, but the radicalism of fascist apostles in Pound's circle was doing serious harm. Like many other fascists, all had repeatedly visited St. Elizabeths, literally sitting at Pound's feet in a corner of the well-kept lawn, a blanket sometimes hung by clothespins drawn for privacy. In differing ways, the three focused upon here exemplify fascism's belated uptake in the US, as well as the different strategic paths on offer after 1945. If overlapping in practice — because real life is invariably messier than conceptual themes — thematically, these fascist activists led key developments over the second half of the 20th century. Embodied by these Poundian apostles, postwar ideologues chose one of three paths to make fascism "great" again: street-based and violent; intellectual and vanguardist; or nostalgic tribute acts with ever-wackier views (the last two, in particular, are not easily separable, as detailed below).

First and worst, Pound's "most perspicacious reader" during his interregnum in St. Elizabeths was a tall, thin and stooping, clean-cut Columbia university English graduate named John Kasper (Marsh, *John Kasper* xvi). He was an "evangelist and emissary" for, and "trusted disciple" of, Pound for most of the 1950s according to the leading specialist and truth-telling heretic, Alec Marsh (233). Recently out of institutionalization himself, Kasper's devotion to Pound was such that he called him "Grampaw" and moved from New York to Washington DC to visit him multiple times a week (6). At this time in the mid-1950s, Kasper was stoking race riots and engaged in what we would now consider terroristic hate crimes. Like Pound, Kasper's chief hatred was Jews, who allegedly manipulated African Americans toward desiring full, legal equality. (Both were quick to recognize that the resistance to desegregation was consonant with their ideas and harbored a potential for violence). Proclaiming that "1956 fascism" had arrived amidst dozens of letters to Pound (138), Kasper spent that summer threatening newly desegregated schools across the US south; the cross burnings, bombings, and race riots that seemed to follow him were so violent the National Guard was called in more than once. With a small gang of tagalong thugs, Kasper stood sentry on the frontlines of integrated schools following *Brown v. Board of Education*, hurling such racial abuse and anything to hand at children walking into

school that less extreme, 'law and order' segregationists roundly denounced him. For one victimized rabbi after a dynamite attack on his synagogue in Nashville, it was obvious: "Notice the plan and the pattern — wherever John Kasp[e]r has incited against the Jews: Miami, Charlotte[sville], N.C. Gastonia, N.C. and Nashville, there have been bombing and dynamiting of Jewish institutions" (Rabbi Silverman, cited in Webb 93).[13]

Dynamited schools and synagogues, crosses burned on the lawns of federal officials (including a Supreme Court Judge) and African American families, bloody riots seemingly wherever he went; this was what John Kasper meant by "1956 fascism" (Marsh, *John Kasper* 138). A "kind of itinerant agitator for white resistance" (McMillen 317), Kasper was so noxious that only 10 days' canvassing, leafletting, alternating between public speaking in sleeping inside his car in Clinton, Tennessee, brought violent race riots and the breakdown of civil order in Clinton, Tennessee.[14] Undoubtedly, concludes Marsh, Pound "could have stopped Kasper, who worshipped the poet as a father, teacher, and Master, at any time had he thought his young protégé had gone too far" (*John Kasper* xv). Few doubted that Kasper "was largely inspired, if not directed, by Pound" (Rockwell 146). That, at least, was the view taken by the top postwar "Führer" and soon-to-be dictator of the sect-like American Nazi Party, George Lincoln Rockwell, about whom more below, upon meeting Kasper in the late 1950s:

> We confessed to one another our dedication to Adolf Hitler, whom he called "The Saint" — but he had an even greater love: Ezra Pound, the famous poet and broadcaster for Mussolini who was locked up as a nut in Saint Elizabeth's [sic]. John Kasper led a circle of worshipful admirers who sat at the master's feet there in the ward full of raving madmen. I attended one of these sessions with my wife one Sunday, and it was an unbelievable afternoon. There was a barefoot lunatic pacing up and down beside the group seated around Pound, loudly giving hell to an invisible companion. There was another man crouched in eternal terror in a windowsill, and still others giving the most threatening looks. Meanwhile, the group was at the feet of Ezra, who wore shorts, sandals, a loud shirt and a beard. (145–146)

Like Rockwell, antisemitism of "sheer violent intensity" motivated Kasper's notorious 1956 "Segregation or Death" pamphlet (Webb 58), alleging Jewish control of efforts to "promote the mongrelization of the races" (59). The cartoon on page 4 depicts a snake with a stereotypically Jewish head, winding around the White House, Supreme Court and, of course, the United

Nations and the US Capitol building — the rotunda of which could just be glimpsed from St. Elizabeths. Notwithstanding the vehement anti-Jewish hatred coursing through speeches and writings, an allegedly value-neutral case for racial, eugenic segregation places Kasper's 1950s movement, the Seaboard White Citizens' Council, in a fascist tradition later taken up intellectually after 1968 by France's "Nouvelle Droite" (New Right). As Kasper put it in a piece called "Segregation or Death,"

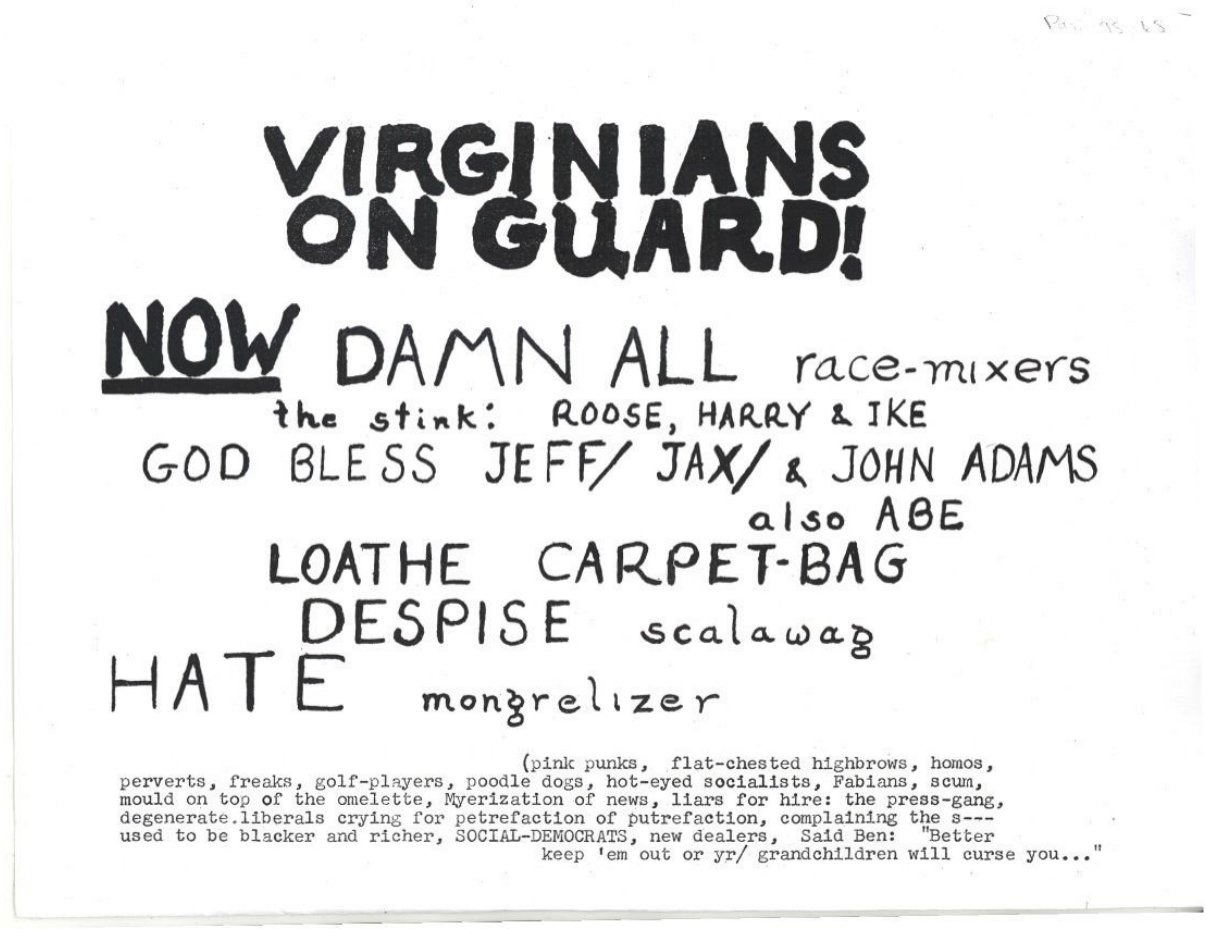
> we view government as an organic construction which takes unto itself the highest duty of protecting the various racial components which make up the nation, allowing each to develop according to its highest destiny, without at anytime interfering with the unimpeded development of any other. (Marsh, *Ezra Pound's Washington Cantos* 83)

Latching onto the populist issue of segregation in the US South, Kasper went state to state that Jews were behind desegregation. In his barroom brawl against "race mixers," Kasper had more seasoned propaganda help (Feldman, *Politics* 237). In shocking letters, Pound enjoined Kasper to "Get ku kluxers to keep their eye on main issue, not the immediate irritant" (119). Kasper's response is amongst the scores of letters in Pound's archives at Yale:

> Dear Gramp:
>
> COPY COPY. Can you write some short quotable slogans. Nothing highbrow. Stuff to stick in mass-mind. Repeated over and over so they don't forget.
>
> And 5 minute speeches and 15 minute speeches.
>
> on Segregation/ States Rights.
>
> Mongrelization/ Separation of Races.
>
> NIGGERS
>
> And JEWS: the Admiral [Crommelin] has taken up *THE Question* openly and it hasn't hurt him. The kike behind the nigger.
>
> No war to save Israel.
>
> Awful busy here. (Pound and Kasper, cited in Feldman, 2013: 119)[15]

Kasper's connection to Pound hit the news in early 1957 when the *New York Herald Tribune* announced: "Segregationist Kasper Is Ezra Pound Disciple" (Donaldson 447). In his steadfast support for the "rabble rousing segregationist" (Donaldson 446), Pound demurred: "At least he's a man of action" (Pound, cited in Donaldson 447). That likely cost more than an extra year of internment.[16] By that time, Pound and Kasper had collaborated on several activist schemes, from starting a fascist political party called "Wheat in our

bread" (a "sincere expression of agrarian and racial virtue" — essentially shorthand for "purity") (Marsh 184); launching the Kasper & Gordon publishing house; corresponding over speechwriting and strategy; and most shockingly, jointly producing a 32-page racist manifesto called "Virginians on Guard," sent to state representatives in the Commonwealth, "advocating extreme segregation, written and edited in collaboration with Pound" (Marsh 2; see Figure 1).


VIRGINIANS
ON GUARD!

NOW DAMN ALL race-mixers
the stink: ROOSE, HARRY & IKE
GOD BLESS JEFF/ JAX/ & JOHN ADAMS
also ABE
LOATHE CARPET-BAG
DESPISE scalawag
HATE mongrelizer

(pink punks, flat-chested highbrows, homos, perverts, freaks, golf-players, poodle dogs, hot-eyed socialists, Fabians, scum, mould on top of the omelette, Myerization of news, liars for hire: the press-gang, degenerate.liberals crying for petrefaction of putrefaction, complaining the s--- used to be blacker and richer, SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, new dealers, Said Ben: "Better keep 'em out or yr/ grandchildren will curse you..."

Figure 1. First page of *Virginians on Guard* (Seaboard White Citizens' Council, 1956).

Kasper used street politics and gutter racism to incite riots with Pound's blessing; or at least, without objection. According to the FBI, he drew "nation-wide publicity" for credible links to arson, terrorism, and inciting racist rioting ("KASPER" C — cover page). This, in turn, led to Kasper's serial incarceration — fittingly, he was in jail for obstructing desegregation just as Pound was being released in April 1958 — including an incident when he was photographed entering prison with Hitler's *Mein Kampf* under his arm.

Repeated imprisonment choked off Kasper's brief fascist uprising, his close association with Ku Klux Klan white supremacism, and much of the anti-black violence sustaining both right during the Civil Rights era. In addition to engaging in generations-long terror of African Americans in the Jim Crow south, the KKK were linked to no fewer than 118 bombings between 1956 and 1963. It was an intensely violent time, and as late as 1959, the FBI noted that "KASPER had interrupted a meeting of the local chapter of Virginia Council on Human Relations in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 23, 1959, and a cross was burned on the lawn of the Church where the meeting was in progress" (30). But that was the last of it for Kasper.

By the 1960s, it seems, Kasper was all bombed out. The historian Clive Webb is probably right that being cut off from the Master, compounded by years in and out of high-security prisons, likely "broke his spirit" (96). Ultimately, retirement from public life ended Kasper's reign of terror (he died in 1998 after at least 30 years' silence). In his 1950s heyday, however, Kasper was a veritable time-bomb travelling across the southern US, and both Webb and Marsh present shocking portraits of the artist's disciple as a young terrorist.[17] Kasper's collaboration with the Klan, importantly, speaks to fascism's attempts to align itself with nearly single-issue white supremacism (during struggles over equality and civil rights in the desegregation-era US south) as a window into the mainstream. By the time Kasper was on the scene, fascism, in its political expression, looked nearly identical to older traditions of white supremacism — whether a resurgent Ku Klux Klan in the US, South African apartheid, or the decolonization of Zimbabwe (then-Rhodesia). Beyond these white-supremacist causes, opportunities for street politics were limited by stigma and risk.

A second impulse, similar to the wait-and-see concept of an interregnum, was at the same time preparing for the future by publishing, lecturing and, above all, trying to rehabilitate fascism's brutal past. Amongst the most notable of this sizeable crop of authors is the wartime veteran Eustace Mullins, Pound's first biographer and (at least self-appointed) protégé. Mullins lived, worked, and died out of his family home in Staunton, Virginia, perfectly representing the impatient waiting — or better, activist stasis — for many postwar fascists. In taking up writing, Mullins claimed that Pound explicitly commissioned his first monograph, the conspiracy-laden *Secrets*

of the Federal Reserve (today a standard-issue .pdf shared amongst the far-right online). It was published in the same year that the 29-year-old Mullins' "Adolf Hitler: An Appreciation" appeared in the organ for the US National Renaissance Party (NRP, one of the earliest overtly postwar fascist political parties). Although principally a speaker and writer, the tall and dour-faced Mullins's early connections with fascist political parties should teach us that these paths are not distinct, especially given the dearth of activists fascism could call upon at this time. Alongside heading the Committee to Free Ezra Pound, Mullins was a member of the NRP, the National Association for the Advancement of White People, and the Aryan League of America (which he also directed). Using the latter's letterhead, Mullins cautioned his mentor in 1956 that he could hold back violent radicals for only so long:

> I have the hard core of a group of determined fanatics who are willing to [go] to the limit with me. I have done my country a great service by acting as a restraining influence and preventing them from assassinating some of our great public-spirited leaders, but perhaps I will not be able to hold them in check much longer. Quien sabe? (Mullins, cited in Feldman, 2013: 118). [18]

That said, the above may be one more fantastical tale by a notorious conspiracy theorist. During Pound's institutionalization, the scheming Mullins was probably best known for forging a *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*-type text later read into the Congressional Record. Purportedly first drafted by an "Israel Cohen" in 1912 on behalf of Britain's Communist Party (then non-existent, and strangely preferring American to British spelling), *A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century* claimed that "racial tension," stoking a "white guilt complex" and increased intermarriage were key tools for Judeo-Communist subversion of the US (Boller and George 14-16). Two months before Pound's release, Mullins was exposed by the *Washington Star* as a liar making up "phony claims and counterfeit creations" (16). Nevertheless, his lie continued making the fascist rounds until the 1980s. By then, according to one watchdog group, Eustace Mullins' notoriety had turned him into a "one-man organization of hate" (Berrier).[19] All of Mullins' racist ventures operated out of the same family home in Staunton, Virginia, where he lived nearly all his life, churning out asinine conspiracy theories conceived for the hard of thinking. Mullins was widely considered a leading US fascist intellectual upon his death in 2010 (this is itself a commentary on the dearth of fascist intellectuals). In Mullins' obituary, even allies decried his "unbalanced

statements," which did more harm than good to the white supremacist cause (Mott). They were perhaps referring to comparisons like "Hitler, like Christ before him…" or to claims like "Either the Aryan or the Jew must yield in the world struggle," both taken from his "Adolf Hitler: An Appreciation" (Mullins 27). He was remembered as having produced "some of the worst researched" texts to be found amongst fascist thinkers — and these are criticisms from self-described friends (Mott).[20]

The lack of quality control standards and reasoned argumentation proved to be no barrier for Mullins. On the contrary, he produced, in the words of one report, "an endless list of hate literature including: *Proof of Negro Inferiority*, which compares African Americans to gorillas; 'Who Brought the Slaves to America,' a study 'proving' that the Jews were responsible for America's slave trade; and *The Hitler We Loved and Why*" — to which could be added works like *The Biological Jew*, *Jewish TV: Sick, Sick Sick*; and *Jewish War against the Western World*.[21] Unquestionably, antisemitism remained a foundational theme in Mullins's writings for some 60 years. From variations on the "blood libel" that Jews killed children or drank blood to shadowy elites conspiring to rule the world, Jews were guilty of every imaginable infamy. A revealing example derives from his 1983 "An Appeal Against Racism:" "The Jewish World Murder Plan to exterminate the white race is considered essential by their top planners if they are to attain universal power" (Mullins 6). Given these "genocidal laws designed to destroy the white race" (the only evidence produced is the Old Testament Book of Esther), Mullins concludes that "[t]he Jew has only one goal, total extermination of the White race. In the face of this implacable racism, we appeal to men of goodwill to band together and to battle racism in the United States" (6-7). Despite the overt white supremacy and early use of the "white genocide" conspiracy — more familiar today when repackaged as the "'Great Replacement' theory" — the unintended irony of hateful antisemitism as anti-racism is astounding. So too was the connection of these ideas to Pound, Mullins's Master: only the next year, his *The World Order: A Study of The Hegemony of Parasitism*, appeared under the imprint of the newly formed Ezra Pound Institute of Civilization in Staunton, VA.[22]

Consistently clear about his racist influences, "My Struggle," the title of Mullins's 1978 autobiography, credited Pound with filling "the ideological gap in my life" (6), since, in Mullins's accounting, he "fought the Jews openly"

and ended up in a "urine-soaked madhouse" (3). So too did Mullins, even if his cell was an ancestral home with a much-used P.O. box. For decades, that address acted as a key node in the dissemination of Holocaust denial texts, some of the earliest of which were produced by Mullins. The changing arguments he uses to deny basic documentary history are revealing. As early as the 1952 "Blood and Gold" — a time in which he was particularly close to Pound at St. Elizabeths — Mullins alleged that the "claim that that Hitler killed 6,000,000 Jews is belied by their own figures in the World Almanac" ("The Holocaust Explained"). The 1968 Mullins's *New History of the Jews* (part of a very old tradition) was already lying about Auschwitz-Birkenau's "gas chambers and ovens which were built by German slave labor in 1946, as part of the Jewish campaign to tell the world about the missing 'six million'" (117). By the 1980s, Mullins was writing that Jewish wartime deaths stemming from typhus or Soviet massacres, were pinned on Germany in an elaborate post-war Jewish extortion plot. Despite overwhelming evidence about the Nazi-led Holocaust available at the time, Mullins instead argued that "[t]here was a Holocaust in Germany during World War II, but the victims were Germans, in a well-planned campaign of genocide, while the evacuated Jews survived en masse" ("The Holocaust Explained"). This was the "Secret Holocaust," which Mullins juxtaposed with the postwar "Myth of the Six Million" — later an oft-cited phrase amongst fascists — whereby Jews urged "their bewitched television audience to send more money to them, and of course, to Israel" ("The Secret Holocaust" 14).[23]

Where Kasper's fanaticism wore him out by the 1960s, Mullins had another half-century of conspiracism left in him. (Pound's exhaustive archive at Yale makes clear both vied for the Master's blessings at St. Elizabeths, after which Pound cut off contact with American fascists in favor of Europeans like Oswald Mosely. Leaving the US for Italy on 30 June 1958, when Pound reached Naples, he gave the fascist salute to the crowd and declared "all America is an asylum"). Carrying his antisemitic tune well into the new century, Mullins showered praise upon his mentor as a direct inspiration for his fascist conspiracism: Pound's "research was turned over to me and became the basis of my work" (Mullins, "Eustace Mullins on The Jeff Rense Show" 15). More succinctly, in Mullins' words from a 2005 interview with Alex Jones, long the leading American far-right conspiracy theorist: "I got my education

in a nuthouse" ("Eustace Mullins on Alex Jones" 08:09-08:30). By that point, in his eighties, Mullins must have felt that he had finally made it — tens of thousands breathlessly watched his interview with Alex Jones, and it remains widely-viewed on major social media channels to this day. Finally, his long-standing, influential lies about the Holocaust were but one of Mullins's lasting legacies. And that is significant enough: as much as 20% of American youth under 30 believe "the Holocaust is a myth," according to a recent article in *The Economist*.[24] Perhaps of still greater influence was Mullins's crusade to put fascism online. This is underscored by the ready availability of Mullins' works, his many digital media interviews with notable subcultural figures, and indeed the continued accessibility of his website. Even in death, Mullins is forthright about both his fascist influences and his advocacy (note, like in Figure 2, the images of Pound, links to "Adolf" and staged photo of unintentional computing malpractice on Mullins's homepage):

"I got my education in a nuthouse."

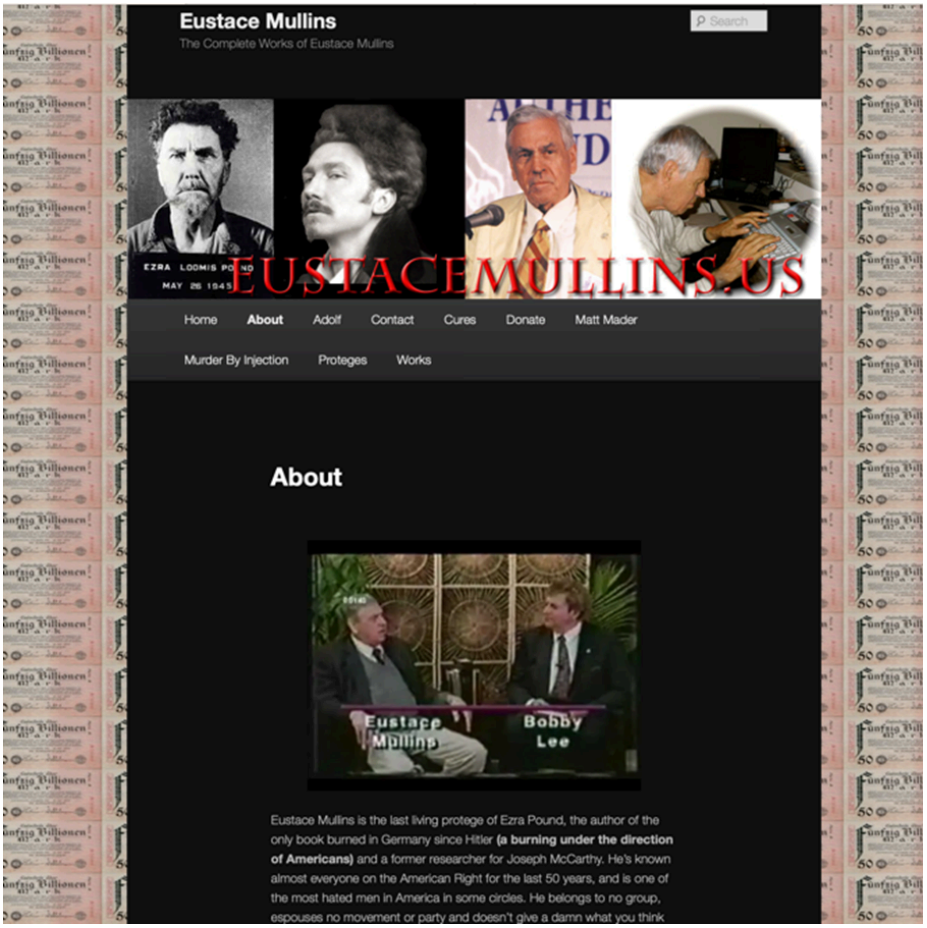


Figure 2. Homepage for deceased Pound "protégé" and conspiracist, Eustace Mullins.

If John Kasper represented a form of postwar fascist "fight" on behalf of white supremacism, and Eustace Mullins was a fitting example of fascist "flight" into conspiratorial writings (after some early party-political activism), then SA-uniformed Matthias Koehl was somewhere between the two, providing the bread and circuses. Already a committed antisemite at 13 and a violinist-turned-fascist activist during high school, at 18 Koehl moved in with Mullins in 1953. The older man made Koehl secretary-general of the Committee to Free Ezra Pound upon introducing him to the Master. In a revealing interview on Pound late in life, Koehl vividly recalled their first meeting "on a pleasant spring day in 1953":

> The Ezra Pound I knew was cheerfully unrepentant, firm in his beliefs, and staunchly true to those principles he had upheld throughout his life. Never once did he give so much as the slightest hint that he had any regret about anything he had ever done or spoken during the '30s and '40s—not excluding his celebrated views on the Jewish Question. (Koehl, cited in Hanson)

Albeit less closely connected than to Kasper or Mullins, there can no doubt that Pound encouraged the teenager's extremist's views, quite possibly pushing them further, radicalizing Koehl's beliefs:

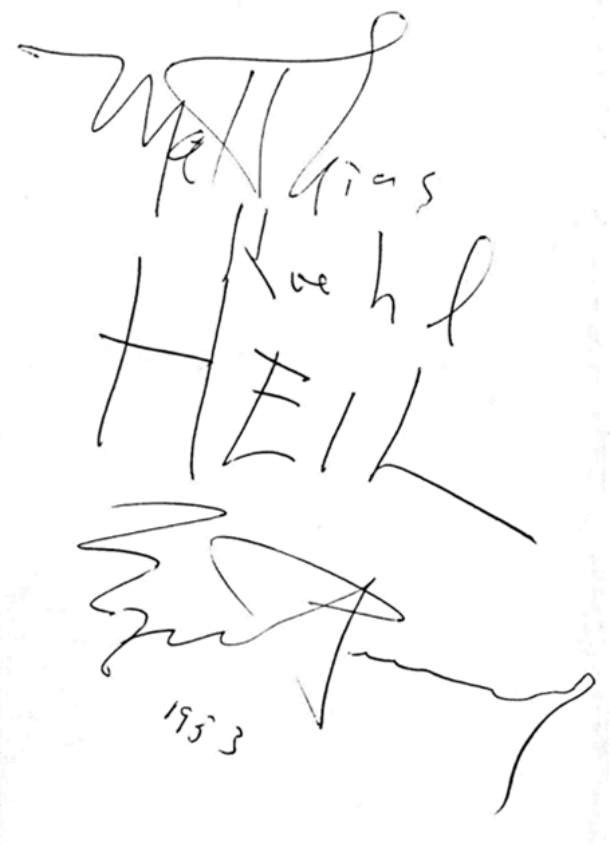


Figure 3. Inscription of *Personae*: 'Matthias Koehl /. HEIL / Ezra Pound / 1953' (see Hanson).

By the time Pound was released in 1958, Koehl had become a Marine Corps veteran — and a fully-fledged neo-Nazi. That year, he met and became "fast friends" with George Lincoln Rockwell (Simonelli 78), a "Martin Bormann craving an Adolf Hitler" (ibid.). Launched soon after, Rockwell's American Nazi Party (ANP) was the first overt Nazi political party since World War II. Its stunts drew global attention in the 1960s, at a time when Koehl commanded the movement's Arlington, VA, "headquarters"; rose to the rank of "deputy Führer"; and edited both the US-based *NS Bulletin*, and the "universal Nazi" *National Socialist World.* It seems likely the ANP and its successors have put out more issues of the *NS Bulletin* than they have ever had activists at one time. Despite members and supporters numbering only in the hundreds, the ANP has existed undeterred under one name or another

since March 1959 (in 1967, it was renamed the National Socialist White People's Party, and in 1983, it was again "reorganized" as New Order). For most of that time the dark-haired, mustachioed Koehl has officiated over the "official" American neo-Nazi movement with leadership that alienated supporters, led to several major party splits, and saw several would-be American mini-Führers come and go. Throughout, Koehl remained visible — making sure, to protest against Israel in every conflict, for instance, or marching around Arlington with a few dozen followers on Hitler's birthday — although his lasting influence points in starkly different directions.

First, as much as anyone and far earlier than most, Koehl viewed postwar Nazism as a fully-fledged, *practicing* religion. Koehl, deeply influenced by the Franco-Greek fascist mystic, Savitri Devi — whose ashes he kept near Rockwell's in a purpose-built mausoleum — traded complete legalism (save for taking part in elections) for "a full-blown Hitler cult" and "Nazi church," in the words of Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, author of a leading study of cultic fascism (*Hitler's Priestess* 213; *Black Sun* 28). While Koehl shared with Pound the belief that "Christianity [is] a 'Jew religion'" (Pound, cited in Marsh, *Ezra Pound's Washington Cantos* 19-20), his leadership of American neo-Nazism offered little more than an obvious and shameless "imitation of Christian liturgy" (Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun* 16). Indeed, "[i]t would be harder to find a more fervent expression of Hitler worship than these messianic and apocalyptic outpourings so obviously taken from Christian models" (18). Here, merchandising "presents small votive pictures of Hitler with the caption 'He lives!'" (16) while there, Koehl gives speeches proclaiming: "'Hitler lives in our very own hearts and minds.... Our Leader is risen. *He is risen indeed!*'" (17). Goodrick-Clarke lists even more blasphemous examples of this religious rhetoric (18).

Naturally enough, Koehl's neo-Nazi apostles were required to recite an "Our Creed" (printed on cards in English and German):

> We believe in Adolf Hitler,
>
> the immortal Leader of our race, singular gift of Providence,
> greatest figure of all time,
> alive in our hearts today and forever.
>
> We believe in his holy Cause,

> which is the *New Order*,
> the fulfillment of Aryan destiny
>
> in accordance with the eternal laws of life,
>
> the hope and future of our kind on earth.
>
> We believe in his Movement,
>
> the true, undivided body of his followers,
>
> which bears the name of his Cause
> as the instrument of his will,
> consecrated by the blood of heroes and martyrs
>
> —*the only way to world redemption.*
>
> HEIL HITLER!
>
> (Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun* 16-17).[25]

This "esoteric Nazism," as it came to be called, spawned all manner of devotional material. One example from 1972 was apparently broadcast over radio by Koehl:

> Today, many people think that Hitler is dead and gone—that He was a failure. Well, a lot of people felt the same way about another great figure after His crucifixion 2,000 years ago. No, Adolf Hitler was not a failure. For He has changed the course of history for all time to come. With His mighty doctrine, He has given us the means for the salvation of our race. Through His superhuman effort, He has provided us with the heroic inspiration needed in this crucial hour of Aryan mankind. Adolf Hitler fought and died so that Aryan man might live. By paying the supreme sacrifice, by shedding His life's blood, He has assured our race of a glorious future. But it is up to us to grasp His race-saving message. We must show ourselves worthy of that future by recognizing the immortal man of Braunau (Koehl, "The Future Calls").[26]

Koehl's blasphemous message of Hitlerian salvation likely cost more physical members than he gained for the ANP and its successor parties. But postwar National Socialists were also building for the future. In seizing upon modern means of propaganda like AM and short-wave radio, cheap mail order propaganda and, in this century, a website, Koehl's antics aimed at preserving a virtually unchanged and unapologetic Nazism at a time when fascism, let alone neo-Nazism, was out in the cold.

While neither original nor unique, Koehl did, however, influence one of fascism's largest shifts in ideological emphasis: "Aryan racialism." In 1967, with his first article in *National Socialist World*, Koehl praised Hitler as the founder of "pan-Aryanism" ("Adolf Hitler"). Rejecting the view (robustly

supported) that Hitler acted as an outsized German expansionist, Koehl attacked as "narrow" and outdated 19th and 20th century nationalism; a "perverse concept" superseded by his demigod's "ultimate goal — a world in which it ['state-nationalism'] would be superseded by an enlightened racial nationalism" (ibid.). Even white-majority states must wither for a broader "revitalization of the Aryan peoples of the world" (ibid.). Cherry-picking several of Hitler's more delirious statements at the Nazi empire's wartime peak, Koehl stressed that Nazism's true mission — only partly realized, for the first time in history, by Waffen SS legions — was in reality "the salvation of an embattled Aryan mankind" (ibid.). Koehl's messianic calling recognized no "geographical boundary, nor one of language, nor even one of local culture and tradition, but one of blood which delineated the Aryan nationality for which they fought" (ibid.). If anything, for Koehl, Nazi Germany was too limited in scope to truly implement Hitler's real vision, which had been left to later generations to complete.

It is doubtful that historical accuracy was Koehl's aim in positioning himself as more authentically Nazi than the Nazis, from his affected German accent to knock-off Nazi flags and replica uniforms. More realistically, like his late Führer Rockwell — assassinated by a disgruntled follower on 25 August 1967 — Koehl wanted "universal Nazism" to speak with an American twang. Support for Koehl's stunts to globalize Nazism may have looked and sounded ridiculous in the 1970s, with his few dozen hardcore activists little more than a cult, but the neo-Nazi message of "white pride worldwide" was deadly serious. It offered, in the words of Goodrick-Clarke, "a global Aryan mystique for defenders of an embattled white world" (*Black Sun* 106). Simplistic but effective slogans like "white genocide," "the System," and "ZOG" were intended to outlast the Cold War. And they did (with digital help). At a low point for fascism, Koehl, like Mullins and Kasper, played important roles in shifting fascism's center of gravity to the Americas. That too would be a lasting development. In slowly and unsteadily preparing for a "new order," Koehl and fellow fascist theorists of the Interregnum were keen to connect themselves to a more "respectable" heritage shorn of war and genocide — if only to keep the revolutionary flame alive for future generations. Just such a historical line, drawn from Nietzsche via Pound to the NSWPP program and anti-Zionism a

century on, is exemplified by Koehl's relaunched "universal Nazi" journal *The National Socialist* from 1980:

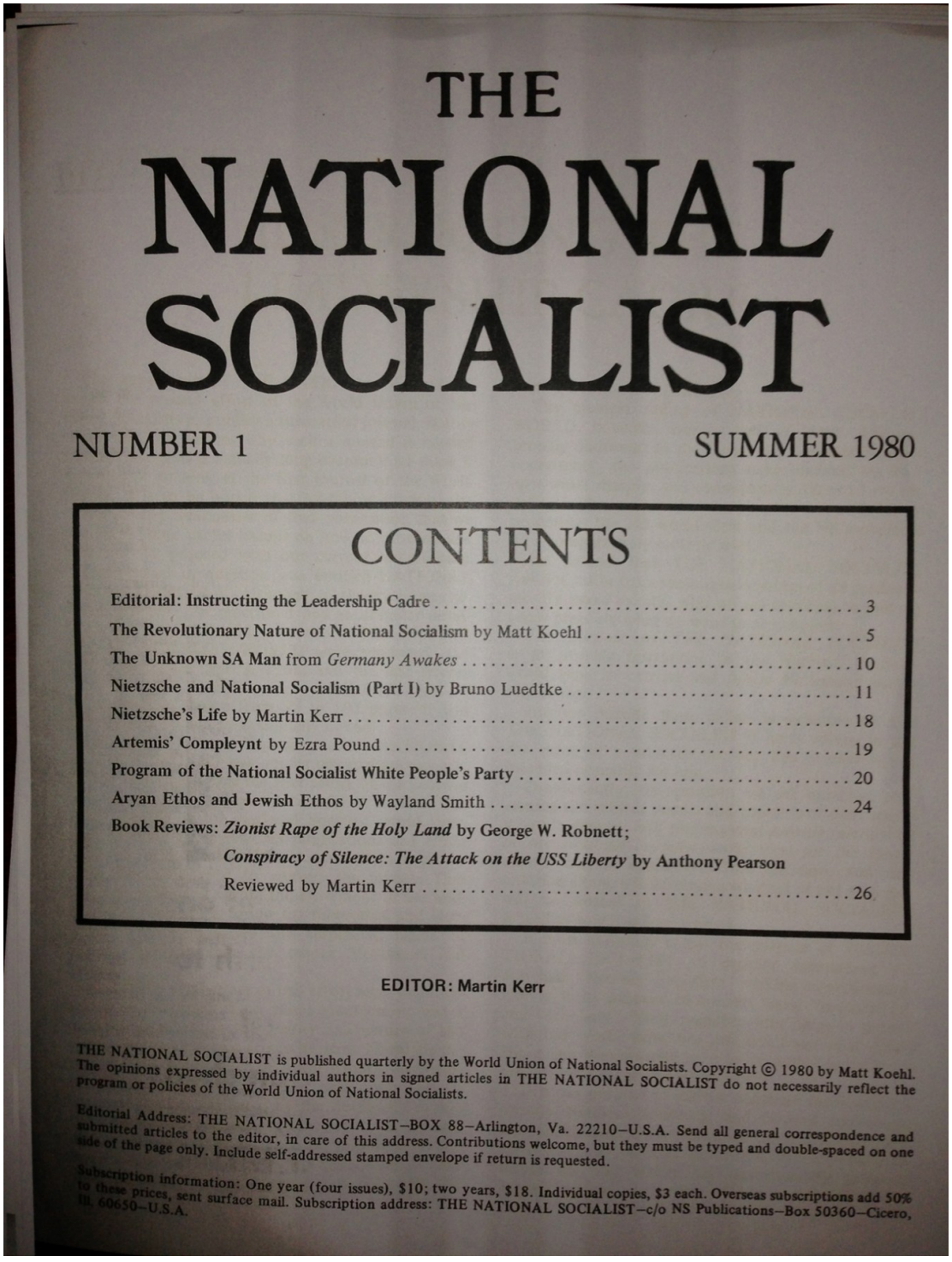


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Figure 4. First page of *The National Socialist* (1980, reproducing Pound's Canto XXX)

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Notes

1. The FBI source is online at: https://www.gale.com/intl/c/fbi-file-on-ezra-pound#:~:text=Charged%20with%20treason%20by%20the,being%20deemed%20unfit%20for%20trial.

2. As highlighted by Noel Stock in *The Life of Ezra Pound*, when the American edition of the *Cantos* came out, a pamphlet from James Laughlin was pasted inside the back cover (376). Laughlin asked Pound to consider a preface for the new cantos, but Pound refused on 5 February 1940 (Homberger 338). Romagna was Mussolini's

birthplace; see the translation and annotations provided by Massimo Bacigalupo in "*Ezra Pound's Cantos 72 and 73: An Annotated Translation*" (18-19). The Italian originals for these poems were first presented in the 1986 Faber & Faber versions of the fourth paperback edition of *The Cantos* (424-435).

3. For most of Pound's letters to the Duce see Ezra Pound, "Letters to Benito Mussolini" in the impressive edition by C. David Heymann, *Ezra Pound, The Last Rower: A Political Profile* (325).

4. This phrase and the next ("criminal falsity") are from scans provided at the Beinecke: https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/17122578

5. Ezra Pound's correspondences with many "universal fascist" Italian ideologues are held at Yale University's *Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*, including with the war veteran, antisemite, and militant fascist Graham Seton Hutchinson toward whom the poet was dismissive of Hitler's economic understanding; digital scans are available online at: https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/17122578. The dozens of articles for the Estero's *British-Italian Bulletin* and the BUF in the second half of the 1930s, as well as many other "expressions of fascist faith," as Pound termed it (Wilhelm 194), are examined in my "Make it Crude: Ezra Pound's Antisemitic Propaganda for the BUF and PNF," in *Politics, Intellectuals, and Faith: Essays by Matthew Feldman* (81, 95). See also *The Historical Dictionary of Fascist Italy*, edited by Philip Cannistraro.

6. All references to *The Cantos* are to the Fifth Impression 1998 version.

7. Pound's "Cantos" and 14 July 1939 letter to Ibbotson are cited in *Politics, Intellectuals, and Faith* (Feldman 71, 98). Details of "Canto XLV [45]" and "Canto LII [52]" are online at *The Cantos Project*, respectively at: https://ezrapoundcantos.org/canto-xlv/companion-to-xlv; and https://ezrapoundcantos.org/canto-lii?start=1. "Canto 45" was almost certainly transmitted as one of Pound's paid propaganda broadcasts for Radio Rome in February 1942, around the same time as his most antisemitic rendering of usury as "neschek" was drafted:

The Evil is Usury, neschek
the serpent
neschek whose name is known, the defiler,
Beyond race
and against race
the defiler

For the complete passage, see "Addendum for C," included in the 1998 Faber & Faber reprint of Pound's *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (812–813). For an analysis of "Canto 45," see also John Lauber's, "Pound's *Cantos*: A Fascist Epic" (13-14).

8. Pound's 25 October 1939 letter to "Germany and You" and 13 February 1940 letter to *Action* are available online as digital scans via the *Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*, respectively at: https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/11/archival_objects/2387711; and https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/17122516.

9. Pound's 25 October 1939 letter to "Germany and You" and 13 Feb. 1940 letter to *Action* are available online as digital scans via the *Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*, respectively at: https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/11/archival_objects/2387711; and https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/17122516.

10. The original source for this material is Pound, "Anon: 'Corpses of Course': Typescript," 26 January 1945, "Ezra Pound Papers", Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Library, YCAL MSS 43, 130/5425.

11. Ezra Pound's statement to the FBI is dated 8 May 1945 and is reproduced in Omar Pound and Robert Spoo, eds., *Ezra and Dorothy Pound, Letters in Captivity, 1945-1946*; on the broader context, see also pp. 5ff. For debates over Pound's sanity and wartime culpability, see: Andrew J. Kappel, "Psychiatrists, Paranoia, and the Mind of Ezra Pound," *Literature and Medicine*, no. 4, 1985, pp. 70-85; William M. Chace, "Ezra Pound: 'Insanity', 'Treason', and Care," *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1987, pp. 134-141; and most recently, Ian Freckleton, "Fitness to Stand Trial: Learning from the Ezra Pound Saga," *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, vol. 21, no. 5, 2014, pp. 625-644.

12. Despite a tumultuous relationship with Pound spanning 30 years by that time, as a leading government official during the war, MacLeish became attuned to perceptions of American liberal hypocrisy, adding in a letter to Ernest Hemingway: "I made up my mind I wouldn't rest until he got out. Not only for his sake but for the good name of the country: after ten years it was beginning to look like persecution" (MacLeish, cited in Donaldson 444).

13. Rabbi Silverman's sermon, "We Will Not Yield: The Answer of Prophetic Judaism to Violence, Threats and Dynamite," was published in David J. Meyer, "Fighting Segregation, Threats, and Dynamite: Rabbi William B. Silverman's Nashville Battle," *American Jewish Archives Journal*, vol. 60, 2008, p. 107.

14. For a more extensive note on Kasper's actions, see Neil R. McMillen, "Organized Resistance to School Desegregation In Tennessee," which continues: "Elaborating on the idea, Kasper said during a tour of Alabama: 'By a roving force we mean simply a hand core of fearless patriots who will give aid--material, physical, moral, and every other type--to any school board that has been brought under siege by race mongrelifers'" (317). McMillen ads, "[...] as Benjamin Muse has written, it was Kasper, this 'tall, brooding fanatic, with his tone of literate sophist ability to cast a strange spell over the ignorant, [who] was the foremost kindler of the blaze'" (319).

15. The original reference is John Kasper to Pound, letter of 10 April 1956, Yale University's Beinecke Library Pound Collection, YCAL MSS Box 26, Folder 1127.

16. MacLeish told Pound on 22 July 1957 that "so long as the Kasper mess is boiling and stewing" (MacLeish 401–402), the government would not free him. Kasper's imminent string of imprisonments from later that year did not reduce the heat.

17. For the complete, now-declassified FBI files on John Kasper, see "KASPER, Frederick John -- HQ 67-105095." More on the topic, also in William Randel's analysis, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Century of Infamy* (36), and in Clive Webb's volume, *Rabble Rousers* (91). For his part, Alec Marsh believes Pound's postwar poetry contains key tropes for "white supremacy, and of colored nonwhite inferiority that underwrites a theory of history as racial struggle" (*Ezra Pound's Washington Cantos* 2); that is to say, in both his politics and his art, "Pound is promoting not only Aryan religion and economy here but a whole way of being. In a word: 'civilization.' Aryans build civilizations; Semites destroy them" (101).

18. The original reference is Eustace Mullins to Pound, undated letter from 1956, Yale University's Beinecke Library Pound Collection, YCAL MSS Box 43, Folder 1500.

19. On 18 Feb. 1958, *The Washington Star* debunked Mullins' forgery in a story entitled "Story of a Phony Quotation - A Futile Effort to Pin It Down - 'A Radical Program for the 20th Century' Seems to Exist Only in Somebody's Imagination"; see Paul F. Boller Jr., ed., *They Never Said It: A Book of Fake Quotes, Misquotes, and Misleading Attributions* (15–16). Extensive declassified FBI files on Eustace Mullins are available online at: https://archive.org/details/EustaceC.Mullins/Mullins%2C%20Eustace%20C.-HQ-1/. Mullins' outsized influence is suggested by the Southern Poverty Law Center (2000) dubbing Mullins a "one-man organization of hate" in an article highly critical of right-wing populist Glenn Beck's use of Mullins' *Secrets of the Federal Reserve*; see Justin Berrier, "Fox's History Of Mainstreaming Hate," *Media Matters for America*, 8 Aug. 2011, online at: www.mediamatters.org/fox-friends/foxs-history-mainstreaming-hate.

20. To access the whole text from Mullins, see the "HUAC" (House Un-American Committee) "Preliminary Report on Neo-Fascist and Hate Groups," which reproduces what Mullins wrote in his October 1952 *National Renaissance Bulletin* article, "Adolf Hitler: An Appreciation." While noting that the early 1950s *National Renaissance Bulletin* billed itself as "the only Fascist publication in America" and rightly asserting that Mullins "frankly eulogizes Hitler" ("HUAC" 4, 14), the limited 17 December 1954 Congressional report on American hate groups makes no mention of John Kasper, the Seaboard White Citizens Council – nor the Ku Klux Klan. For broader context and an argument that fascism is impossible without lying, see Federico Finchelstein, *A Brief History of Fascist Lies*, University of California Press, 2020.

21. For the list of these titles, see https://www.equip.org/articles/the-patriot-movement/.

22. Along with Mullins's "An Appeal against Racism," see also his pamphlet, "Ezra Pound," where he writes:

"The case of Ezra Pound proves that the biological parasite has gained complete control of the mental processes of the host people. Throughout his life, Ezra Pound lived as a saint, sacrificing everything for the American people, yet the parasites have prevented us from knowing about his work" (7).

23. The republishing of Mullins's works for the internet has ensured the continued circulation of his conspiracy theories.

24. See the article on *The Economist*, "One in five young Americans thinks the Holocaust is a myth," available online at: https://www.economist.com/united-states/2023/12/07/one-in-five-young-americans-thinks-the-holocaust-is-a-myth; and Eustace Mullins' Pound-festooned website, online at: www.eustacemullins.us.

25. Also in Goodrick-Clarke's *Black Sun*, one reads, importantly: "millenarianism and the messianic status of Hitler in neo-Nazism, makes this doctrine of racial salvation intelligible to individuals in a culture where Christian fundamentalism has always flourished" (29).

26. Matthias Koehl's "The Future Calls" radio broadcast dates 16 April 1972, and is available online at *The New Order* website. "The New Order" movement was previously known as "The World Union of Free Enterprise National Socialists," "The American Nazi Party," and "The National Socialist White People's Party," currently online at: www.theneworder.org/fc-website.html.

About the author

Matthew Feldman is Emeritus Professor in the Modern History of Ideas, and co-edits the Bloomsbury book series, *Historicizing Modernism* and *Modernist Archives*. He has published widely on modernism, including the monographs *Beckett's Books* (Bloomsbury, 2006) and *Ezra Pound's Fascist Propaganda, 1935-1945* (Palgrave, 2013). Alongside many (co-) edited collections, chapters and articles in this field, he is also described in *The Independent* as "the leading expert on the radical right" and by ITV as the 'UK's leading specialist in this area'. He is currently completing a transnational study of fascist ideology, to be published by Yale in 2026, entitled *Full Circle: A history of fascism, 1919-present*.