# Gods refusing to die: from Plutarch to Pound via Wilde, Cavafy, Palamas and Seferis*

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The purpose of this paper is to examine one small chapter in the long story of the transmission of an idea: the idea of the death of the gods of ancient Greece. This story begins in the first century A.D. in a famous (and famously misinterpreted) passage in Plutarch which refers only to the death of Pan. We shall come to Plutarch later, but I want to begin at the beginning of the particular chapter of the story that concerns me. This chapter begins in 1877 with Oscar Wilde's arrival in Greece and ends sometime around 1960 with Ezra Pound's final period of creativity, back in Italy, after his release from incarceration in St Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, in 1958.

Between the two English-language poets, Wilde and Pound, we shall take in two Greek poets: C. P. Cavafy and Kostis Palamas; a third Greek poet, George Seferis, is involved, but in the role of translator. We shall look at a poem in which Cavafy

* Earlier versions of this paper were given several years ago in King's College London, the University of Oxford and Queen's University Belfast. Between that time and the recent presentation in the University of Cambridge, overlapping presentations, slanted more towards Wilde's and Cavafy's encounters with Greece, were given at the Durrell School of Corfu ("Oscar Wilde and C. P. Cavafy in Corfu: The travel writing that almost never was and why"), at Trinity College Dublin ("Oscar Wilde with J. P. Mahaffy in Greece"), and at the Hellenic Centre in London as the 2008 C. N. Hadjipateras Memorial Lecture ("Oscar Wilde meets Greece"); a brief summary of the last (which could almost serve as an abstract for the present paper) was published in the newsletter of the Greek Embassy in London (Hirst 2008).

rewrites Wilde; and briefly at an excerpt from Palamas which appears to have provided the stimulus for Cavafy's rewriting of his rewriting of Wilde. Finally, I will propose the solution to a literary puzzle relating to one of Pound's last Cantos – a solution to which George Seferis is the key.

Of the six authors so far mentioned it is perhaps Wilde rather than Pound who would to most people appear the least connected with Modern Greek Studies or Hellenic Studies more generally, and I will first devote a little space to introducing Wilde and the particular juncture in his life we are concerned with: that is, the circumstances surrounding the writing of the sonnet "Santa Decca", which stands at the beginning – not of course of the whole story of the transmission of the idea of the death of the gods – but of the small chapter that I want to relate.

Oscar Wilde is celebrated primarily as a dramatist, and his witty and perceptive plays are still frequently performed both professionally and by amateur dramatic societies throughout the English-speaking world – and sometimes beyond. In 1996 I went to a performance in Athens of a play whose Greek title re-translates as "The importance of being serious": *Η σημασία του να είναι κανείς σοβαρός*. "Serious" is not what we think of Wilde as being in his plays (though *A Woman of No Importance* of 1893 can be seen as a proto-feminist text), but in his poetry he is often very serious and sometimes far too serious. His poetry is skilful and frequently interesting, but it reaches no great heights. His best known poem is the very late (1898) *Ballad of Reading Gaol*, but this is known not only for its literary merit but also for its biographical interest in relation to Wilde's own imprisonment after the notorious trial, at which he was convicted of "acts of gross indecency". Wilde and Pound, then, have at least this in common, that both experienced imprisonment. Cavafy, though never a prisoner, was concerned with imprisonment as a metaphor, and the theme of the "parallel prisons" of Cavafy and Wilde has been explored by Sarah Ekdawi;[1] and "Prisons" was one of the cat-

[1] Ekdawi 1993.

egories in Cavafy's earliest attempt at the thematic classification of his poems.[2]

Oscar Wilde was born in October 1854, less than nine years before Cavafy; but Wilde was established as a poet at least thirty years before Cavafy was. The first collected volume of Wilde's poetry was published in 1881, while it was really only from 1911 that Cavafy was able to place his poems regularly in the important literary journals of Alexandria and Athens, and there was no Collected Poems in his lifetime (though Cavafy made his own collections of his poetry, which were printed for private circulation).[3]

Wilde's early poetry – and most of his poetic output belongs to the early part of his career – is full of references to classical mythology, and many poems are centrally concerned with it. From his education at Trinity College Dublin and Magdalen College, Oxford, Wilde acquired considerable classical scholarship. A number of his poems have ancient Greek titles or epigraphs and even examples of his "Greek verse composition" saw their way into print.

Wilde had visited Italy in 1875, but it was not until 1877 that he first saw Greece. This was during the Easter vacation of his third, but not final, year at Oxford. Greece was an unplanned extension to a second trip to Italy, as Wilde explained in a letter written on 2 April 1877 to his tutor at Magdalen College:

> My dear Mr Bramley,
> My old tutor Mr Mahaffy, Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, met me on my way to Rome and insisted on my going with him to Mykenae and Athens. The chance of seeing such great places – and in such good company – was too great for me and I find myself now in Corfu. I am afraid that I will not be able to be back at the beginning of term. I hope that you will not mind if I miss ten days at the beginning: seeing Greece is really a great education for anyone and will I think benefit me greatly, and Mr

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[2] See Ekdawi and Hirst 1996.

[3] On Cavafy's collections see Savidis 1966, Hirst 1995, and my "Note on the Greek text" in Cavafy 2007: xxxiv-xxxix.

> Mahaffy is such a clever man that it is quite as good as going to lectures to be in his society.[4]

Whether Mr Bramley was impressed by this rather brash apology, we do not know; but the college authorities were not at all impressed when Wilde returned to Oxford not "ten days" but three-and-a-half weeks late: he was sent down for the rest of the term and deprived of half his scholarship for the year.[5]

A little more information about how Wilde "found himself in Corfu", and where he was going next, is provided by a postcard to a friend, written from Corfu on the same day as the letter to his tutor. From this postcard we learn that Wilde's stay on Corfu was a very brief one, probably lasting little more than twenty-four hours; and little else is known about the visit. The postcard reads, in part, as follows:

> We [...] left Brindisi last night, catching sight of Greece at 5.30 this morning. We go tomorrow to Zante and land near Olympia and then ride through Arcadia to Mykenae.[6]

"Catching sight of Greece" probably does not refer to the first view of Corfu from the ship crossing the Adriatic,[7] but to catching sight of the mainland beyond Corfu – the coast of Epirus, which, though part of historic, ancient Greece, was still within the Ottoman Empire in 1877, while Corfu and the other Ionian Islands had been united with the Kingdom of Greece since 1864. And yet it appears that Wilde did not consider either Corfu or Zakynthos as properly a part of Greece. This, at least, is the implication of his sonnet "Impressions de Voyage":

> The sea was sapphire coloured, and the sky
> Burned like a heated opal through the air;

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[4] Wilde 2000a: 45.
[5] Ellman 1988: 74-5.
[6] Wilde 2000a: 44.
[7] Perhaps contrary to Ellmann's assumption in his biography of Wilde: "They woke at dawn to see Corfu before them" (Ellmann 1988: 69).

We hoisted sail; the wind was blowing fair
For the blue lands that to the Eastward lie.
From the steep prow I marked with quickening eye
Zakynthos, every olive grove and creek,
Ithaca's cliff, Lycaon's snowy peak,
And all the flower-strewn plain of Arcady.
The flapping of the sail against the mast,
The ripple of the water on the side,
The ripple of girls' laughter at the stern,
The only sounds:– when 'gan the West to burn,
And a red sun upon the seas to ride,
I stood upon the soil of Greece at last![8]

The poem is datelined "Katakolo". Katakolo, in the Peloponnese, was the landfall "near Olympia" referred to in the postcard from Corfu; and the quayside at Katakolo was, it seems, the "soil of Greece" on which Wilde "stood [...] at last" – Katakolo, and not Corfu (where Wilde certainly went ashore) or Zakynthos or Zante (where the postcard implied that he would do).

Though Wilde, for whatever reason, separated the Ionian Islands from Greece in his mind, Corfu made a distinct – and distinctly un-Italian – impression on him, as this surviving fragment of a letter to his mother indicates:

> The island is full of idyllic loveliness. Set in its olive woods. In Italy nearly all the olives are pollarded and stunted, but here one sees them in the fullness of their natural beauty. What strikes one is extreme age, and the twisted broken writhing in pain such as Gustave Doré loves to draw. The delicate grey-green and silver of their leaves, changing to silver when the wind blows on them.[9]

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[8] Wilde 2000b: 34.

[9] Wilde 2000a: 46. The letter is assumed by all Wilde scholars to refer to Corfu (the only Greek island where he spent any time); it may have been written on Corfu (on either 2 or 3 April 1877) or later in the same trip.

And eighteen years later, writing to his friend, Lord Alfred Douglas, from Holloway Prison on 29 April 1895, his mind went back to Corfu as an ideal place to live in seclusion:

> If one day, at Corfu or some enchanted isle, there were a little house where we could live together, oh! life would be sweeter than it has ever been.[10]

Apart from these brief excerpts from his correspondence there seems to be nothing else in Wilde's writing about Corfu[11] – except for the sonnet "Santa Decca".

According to Wilde's most recent editors, Bobby Fong and Karl Beckson, Santa Decca is a mountain on Corfu now known as Mount Pantokrator.[12] But they are, I believe, wrong. Mount Pantokrator is the highest peak, situated in the northeast of Corfu and I find no evidence that it has ever been called Santa Decca. However, about six miles south of Corfu Town, there is a much smaller mountain known in Greek as Ἅγιοι Δέκα ("The Holy Ten" or "Ten Saints", ten *male* saints, that is). There is also a village of the same name on the lower slopes of the mountain. The Italian name, Santa Decca, suggesting an otherwise unknown and improbable female saint called Decca, must, surely, be a mistranslation of the Greek name Ἅγιοι Δέκα, substituting feminine singular for masculine plural. There is a Pantokrator monastery on this mountain (as on the larger one, and on at least three other hilltops in Corfu) and this is probably the source of the confusion with Mount Pantokrator.

Furthermore, it is most unlikely that in the course of his one-day stay on Corfu Wilde could have made an expedition to Mount Pantokrator from Corfu town, where he stayed in the Hotel St Georges, but it would have been an easy matter on horseback to

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[10] Wilde 2000a: 646.

[11] A few further details and extensive information about the rest of this trip to Greece may be found in the writings of Mahaffy and one of Wilde's student companions, George Macmillan (Mahaffy 1878, chapters 11-12; Macmillan 1878).

[12] Fong and Beckson, in Wilde 2000b: 245.

visit Ἅγιοι Δέκα. Wilde may or may not have done so. He may simply have picked up the Italian version of the name, and attached it to a sonnet to provide a convenient location; and the sonnet may even have been written some time after his visit to Corfu. The dateline "Corfu" was only added to the poem in the fourth edition of Wilde's collected verse, published in January 1882. It is this sonnet, "Santa Decca", undoubtedly associated with Corfu if not actually written, or even conceived, there, which brings us, at last, to our main theme. But first let me note the curious fact that the Hotel St Georges in the centre of Corfu Town[13] is perhaps the only building in the world of which we can say with certainty that Oscar Wilde and Cavafy both entered it, though twenty-four years apart. On 1 August 1901, Cavafy hung around in the hotel for about an hour while his brother Alexander was eating lunch there. Cavafy himself was not feeling hungry.[14] Here is Wilde's sonnet:

SANTA DECCA

The Gods are dead: no longer do we bring
To grey-eyed Pallas crowns of olive-leaves!
Demeter's child no more hath tithe of sheaves,
And in the noon the careless shepherds sing,
For Pan is dead, and all the wantoning
By secret glade and devious haunt is o'er:
Young Hylas seeks the water-springs no more;
Great Pan is dead, and Mary's Son is King.

And yet – perchance in this sea-trancèd isle,
Chewing the bitter fruit of memory,
Some God lies hidden in the asphodel.
Ah Love! if such there be, then it were well
For us to fly his anger: nay, but see,
The leaves are stirring: let us watch a-while.[15]

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[13] The hotel was at the northern end of the French-built Liston on the Spianada. The building remains but the hotel is no longer there.
[14] From Cavafy's own account (in English) in his journal of an extended trip to Greece (Cavafy 1963: 297-8).
[15] Wilde 2000b: 43-4.

"Great Pan is dead" is a direct translation of the phrase Πὰν ὁ μέγας τέθνηκεν ("Pan the Great has died") from the well-known story found in Plutarch's dialogue *On the obsolescence of oracles*. Although this story is separated in time by some eighteen hundred years from Wilde's sonnet, its setting is geographically not very far at all from Corfu, as Wilde would almost certainly have known. Paxi, which figures in the story, is the small island, more often known today in English as Paxos, immediately to the south of Corfu; the Echinades Islands, which are also mentioned in the story, are a group of small islands close to the mainland, opposite Kephalonia and Ithaca. The other location in the story is Palodes. Although this is the only reference in ancient literature to a place of such name in this part of the Greek world, the word survives as the Greek name of the lagoon at the archaeological site of Butrint in Albania, originally the ancient Greek city of Βουθρωτόν. It lies opposite the north-east point of Corfu, and the channel there (little more than a mile wide at the narrowest point) can be dangerous for shipping. This may explain the captain's reluctance in the story to be distracted as he passed Palodes unless there was no wind.[16]

The discussion in Plutarch's dialogue has turned to demigods (δαίμονες in the original, from which comes the English word "demons"). The issues are whether the demigods, rather than the gods, are responsible for oracles, and whether they are immortal or mortal. In support of the idea that the demigods are mortal, one of the participants in the dialogue, given the name Philippos, reports, at second hand, the story we are concerned with. "As for death among such beings", says Philippos,

> I have heard the words of a man who was not a fool nor an impostor. The father of Aemilianus the orator, to whom some of you have listened, was Epitherses, who lived in our town and was my teacher in grammar. He said that once upon a time in making a voyage to Italy he embarked on a ship carrying freight and many passengers. It was already evening when, near the

[16] See also Gifford 1903: vol. 4, 182.

> Echinades Islands, the wind dropped, and the ship drifted near Paxi. Almost everybody was awake and a good many had not finished their after-dinner wine. Suddenly from the island of Paxi was heard the voice of someone loudly calling Thamus, so that all were amazed. Thamus was an Egyptian pilot, not known by name even to many on board. Twice he was called and made no reply, but the third time he answered; and the caller, raising his voice, said, "When you come opposite Palodes, announce that Great Pan is dead." On hearing this, all, said Epitherses, were astounded and reasoned among themselves whether it were better to carry out the order or to refuse to meddle and let the matter go. Under the circumstances Thamus made up his mind that if there should be a breeze, he would sail past and keep quiet, but with no wind and a smooth sea about the place that he would announce what he had heard. So, when he came opposite Palodes, and there was neither wind nor wave, Thamus from the stern, looking towards the land, said the words as he had heard them: "Great Pan is dead." Even before he had finished there was a great cry of lamentation, not of one person, but of many, mingled with exclamations of amazement. As many persons were on the vessel, the story was soon spread abroad in Rome, and Thamus was sent for by Tiberius Caesar. Tiberius became so convinced of the truth of the story that he caused an inquiry and investigation to be made about Pan; and the scholars, who were numerous at his court, conjectured that he was the son born of Hermes and Penelope.[17]

Tiberius was emperor of Rome from A.D. 14 to A.D. 37, and these dates allowed Christian writers, beginning as far as we know with Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century, to place the story of Thamous and the cry "Great Pan is dead", in the time of Christ, and to draw conclusions from that. And it is not so much the story itself, as the Christian interpretations of it which account for the popularity of the motif of the death of Pan in Western literature. Eusebius, in his *Preparation for the Gospel*, a critique of pagan religion, written, probably, between 314 and 324, quotes Plutarch at greater length than I have done, and adds that

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[17] Plutarch, *Moralia* 419a-e; tr. Babbitt 1936: 419-20.

> it is important to observe the time at which [Plutarch] says that the death of the daemon took place. For it was the time of Tiberius, in which our Saviour, making His sojourn among men, is recorded to have been ridding human life from daemons of every kind: so that there were some of them now kneeling before Him and beseeching Him not to deliver them over to the Tartarus that awaited them.
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> You have therefore the date of the overthrow of the daemons, of which there was no record at any other time[...].[18]

In common with most Christian writers of the fourth and many subsequent centuries, Eusebius does not deny the existence of the pagan gods but regards them as inferior and sometimes evil spiritual beings, not distinguishing between gods and demigods but regarding all of them as δαίμονες ("demons").

Although Eusebius does not really spell out his conclusion in the passage quoted, it is clear that he is making a causal connection between the ministry of Christ and the death of Pan: Pan is one of the demons Christ banished from the world. This, then, is the origin of the idea put much more simply by Oscar Wilde, "Great Pan is dead, and Mary's Son is King."

There is an alternative Christian interpretation, appearing much later – in the fifteenth century – according to which the cry "Great Pan is dead" had nothing to do with the pagan demigod Pan, but was an announcement of the death of Christ. This bizarre reading of Plutarch turns on dubious etymology and faulty grammar, conflating Πὰν (with capial *pi*) the grammatically masculine name of the demigod, with πᾶν (with small *pi*) the neuter form of the Greek adjective meaning "all". Christ is Lord of All, the argument runs, and so the cry "the Great All is dead" refers to Christ. We need concern ourselves no further with this interpretation, since, although it is found in Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, and hinted at in Milton's "Ode on the morning of Christ's Nativity", it is the other, Eusebian interpretation which is constantly reiterated, and sometimes challenged, in poetry, prose narrative and discursive

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[18] Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 5.17; tr. Gifford 1903.

writing, from the Renaissance to the present, prompting George Steiner to describe Plutarch's story as "one of the most haunting passages in Western literature".[19]

As I have already indicated, is not my purpose to survey the wealth of literary echoes of "Great Pan is dead", on which there is a considerable critical literature, but to trace some specific links between poems written in a period of just over eighty years, beginning with Wilde's sonnet of 1877, "Santa Decca", to which I now return.

In "Santa Decca" the speaker both reiterates and questions, though without directly challenging, the idea that Pan is dead, or, more generally, that the ancient gods are dead. Having declared in the octet of the sonnet "The Gods are dead [...] Pan is dead [...] Great Pan is dead", in the sestet he begins to undermine these apparently unequivocal statements: "perchance [...] Some God lies hidden in the asphodel." And then, addressing a companion whom Victorian convention obliges us to think of as a woman, he says, "Ah Love! if such there be, then it were well / For us to fly his anger". The "hidden" god might well have been angry because he was one of those gods whose death the poet had just asserted; or because he had been so long a fugitive in a world where "Mary's Son is King". The latter fits with the reference to the god "chewing the bitter fruit of memory".

The poem ends, tantalizingly, with this god almost-but-not-quite appearing, and with the poet's injunction to himself and his supposed companion to stay rather than "fly his anger": "nay, but see, / The leaves are stirring: let us watch a-while."

It is now time to turn to Cavafy, and to one of at least two poems which were, I believe, written in direct response to, and as a corrective to, poems by Wilde.[20] It is as well to admit here that

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[19] In a lecture delivered at Boston University on 29 March 1999, and reported in *B. U. Bridge: Boston University's Weekly Newspaper* 2.29 (2 April 1999).

[20] The second is "Beneath the house" (Κάτω ἀπ' τὸ σπίτι), whose relation to Wilde's "The Harlot's House" is the subject of an essay in preparation.

the *direct* evidence for Cavafy's reading of Wilde is slim. In the catalogue of what remains of Cavafy's personal library, there are only two relevant entries: a French translation of Wilde's novel, *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, and a curious item, *The Oscar Wilde Calendar*, published in 1910, with the subtitle, *A quotation from the works of Oscar Wilde for every day of the year with some unrecorded sayings*.[21] The absence of an edition of Wilde's poetry does not mean that Cavafy never possessed one. Much of the library was lost or dispersed between Cavafy's death in 1933 and its purchase by George Savidis in the 1960s, and particularly in the 1950s when Cavafy's heir, Alekos Sengopoulos moved from Alexandria to Athens. I should add that there is also no volume of Robert Browning's poetry among Cavafy's remaining books, but the influence of Browning on Cavafy is hardly something that can be questioned by anyone familiar with the work of both poets.

Cavafy's poem "Μνήμη" (Memory) was published in an Athenian newspaper in October 1896. Its opening lines can be read as though they are a reply, a part of an argument already begun, a contradiction of what someone else has just said:

> The gods don't die. It is the faith of the ungrateful host
> of mortal men that dies.
> Gods are immortal.

This poem is, I shall argue, a reply to Wilde's "Santa Decca". Wilde begins his sonnet, "The Gods are dead", and Cavafy retorts "The gods don't die":

ΜΝΗΜΗ

> Δὲν ἀποθνήσκουν οἱ θεοί. Ἡ πίστις ἀποθνήσκει
> τοῦ ἀχαρίστου ὄχλου τῶν θνητῶν.
> Εἶν' οἱ θεοὶ ἀθάνατοι. Ἀπὸ τὰ βλέμματά μας
> τοὺς κρύπτουσι νεφέλαι ἀργυραῖ.
> Ὦ Θεσσαλία ἱερά, Σὲ ἀγαπῶσιν ἔτι,
> Σε ἐνθυμοῦνται αἱ ψυχαὶ αὐτῶν.
> Ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς, ὡς ἐν ἡμῖν, ἀνθοῦσιν ἀναμνήσεις,

[21] Karambini-Iatrou 2003: 112 (No. 8.339) and 74 (No. 7.143).

τῆς πρώτης των ἀγάπης οἱ παλμοί.
Ὅτε ἐρῶν τὸ λυκαυγὲς φιλεῖ τὴν Θεσσαλίαν
σφρῖγος ἀπὸ τὸν βίον τῶν θεῶν
περνᾷ τὴν ἀτμοσφαῖραν της· καὶ κἄποτ᾽ αἰθερία
μορφὴ ἐπὶ τῶν λόφων της πετᾷ.[22]

MEMORY

The gods don't die. It is the faith of the ungrateful host
of mortal men that dies.
Gods are immortal. But from our sight
do silver clouds conceal them.
O sacred Thessaly, they love thee still,
their souls remember thee.
For gods, just as for us, memories may bloom,
the quickening pulse of their first love.
And when dawn, her lover, kisses Thessaly
a tremor from the life of gods
runs through her atmosphere, and sometimes an
ethereal form flies o'er her hills.[23]

George Savidis suggested that this poem "was perhaps written originally in May 1886" and "probably rewritten in July 1905 with the title Θεσσαλία [Thessaly]".[24] Earlier, though, Savidis had said something rather different:

> As is evident from other records in the Cavafy Archive, the original title was "Thessaly" [...] this allows the conjecture that the poem could have been inspired by the atmosphere of the Thessalian operations of May 1886.[25]

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[22] Transcribed with some changes from *Τὸ Ἄστυ* (13 [=25] October 1896): 2. Two typographic errors have been corrected (θνητῶν in line 2 and τὸν θεῶν in line 10); the second accent in ἀτμοσφαῖράν της (line 11) has been removed, since, although it follows ancient – and thus arguably *katharevousa* – rules of accentuation, it is inimical to the metre and was almost certainly added by the newspaper editors; and a grave accent before a comma (ἱερὰ, in line 5) has been changed to an acute, following Cavafy's preferred usage.

[23] All translations from Greek are my own unless otherwise stated.

[24] In Cavafy 1983: 111.

[25] Savidis 1966: 110, n.18.

Thessaly had been incorporated into Greece in 1881, with a small part of Epirus. In 1886 there was a short-lived attempt by the Greek army in Thessaly to seize further territory in Epirus, and I assume it was this episode that Savidis was referring to.[26] The footnote just quoted is attached to the appearance of the title "Μνήμη" in a list of poems first published between 1891 and 1904 whose composition was not recorded by Cavafy. Without access to the Cavafy Archive this confusion cannot be resolved.[27] To reconcile Savidis's two statements we would have to posit an original title "Thessaly", possibly dating from 1886, changed to "Memory" by the time of publication in 1896 and changed back to "Thessaly" in the revision 1905. Cavafy's original composition record for July 1905 simply gives the title "Θεσσαλία" with no indication that it was a revision or rewriting (ξαναγράψιμο, the term Cavafy uses in such cases, does not appear); however, when, in 1912, he made a fair copy of the records from 1891 to date, he substituted for "Θεσσαλία" the title under which the poem had been published in 1911, "Ἰωνικὸν" (Ionic).[28] The 1911 publication will be discussed below.

There is, surely, no need to look for historical circumstances to explain the appearance of Thessaly in Cavafy's "Memory". We need only turn to mythology, for *of course* Thessaly would be especially dear to the gods, since their earthly home, Mount Olympus, was in Thessaly. And for an earlier association of Thessaly with the assertion that the gods are not dead, we need look no further than another of Oscar Wilde's poems, "The burden

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[26] Ricks (1993: 104) suggests as an alternative historical connection "a vague nationalist feeling relating to the disaster of 1897", when Greek force invaded Ottoman Macedonia but was defeated by the Turks, who countered by briefly occupying parts of Thessaly. These events were, however, later than the first publication of the poem (October 1896), though they might have prompted the change of title from "Μνήμη" to "Θεσσαλία", in an intermediate and unpublished version of the poem.

[27] The recent purchase of the Cavafy Archive by the Onassis Foundation means that it will soon be accessible to the public without the personal permission of a private owner.

[28] Savidis 1987: 80 and 56.

of Itys",[29] which has in its sights William Blake's "Jerusalem", for it contains a kind of pagan reworking of Blake's key idea. Blake's opening lines "And did those feet in ancient time / walk upon England's mountains green / and was the Holy Lamb of God / in England's pleasant pastures seen" are clearly parodied in "The burden of Itys" (lines 67-9), where Wilde writes:

> But sweeter far if silver-sandalled foot
> Of some long hidden God should ever tread
> The Nuneham meadows [...].

The Nuneham meadows are near Oxford. And in similar vein, again set in the environs of Oxford (but bringing us back to Cavafy and Thessaly), we find in the same poem (lines 145-50):

> For well I know they are not dead at all,
> The ancient Gods of Grecian poesy,
> They are asleep, and when they hear thee call
> Will wake to think 'tis very Thessaly,
> This Thames the Daulian waters, this cool glade
> The yellow-irised mead where once young Itys laughed and played.

(The "thee" of "when they hear thee call" is a bird.) And Cavafy's idea of an ethereal (and by implication *divine*) form flying over the hills of Thessaly at dawn may have its origin in Wilde's "The Garden of Eros", where the god above the hills is the rising sun itself (lines 269-70):

> Hung in the burning east, see, the red rim
> O'ertops the expectant hills! it is the God![30]

These lines and those from "The burden of Itys" no doubt played their part in the genesis of Cavafy's poem, but "Memory" is written essentially as a response to Wilde's "Santa Decca".

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[29] Wilde 2000b: 57-67.
[30] Wilde 2000b: 135.

Wilde's opening, "The Gods are dead" is directly contradicted by Cavafy's "The gods don't die". Wilde goes on to say that the practices through which the ancient gods were honoured have stopped, or, rather that *we* no longer perform them ("no longer do we bring / to grey-eyed Pallas crowns of olive-leaves" etc.); and this is perhaps no more than a logical consequence of the gods being dead, not a failure on our part. At the same point in *his* poem, Cavafy also turns to the human contribution to the situation, but from a different perspective and with evident censure: "It is the faith of the ungrateful host of mortal men that dies". "Faith" is perhaps not the ideal translation of πίστις in this context, because of its particular association in English with Christian *belief*. We should think of "faith" in the sense of loyalty, of "keeping faith with". Cavafy's speaker tells us that mortals have *betrayed* the gods of ancient Greece. He has no more to say about this, though, and proceeds to assert the immortality of the gods, "Gods are immortal", essentially repeating the opening statement that "The gods don't die", just as Wilde's contrary opening statement "The Gods are dead" is reinforced first by "Pan is dead" and then by "Great Pan is dead".

It is really only the first two-and-a-half lines of Cavafy's poem that correspond to the octet of "Santa Decca", for with the gods hidden from our sight, Cavafy is already in the territory of Wilde's sestet, the question of the hidden presence of a god. Despite his initial assertion that "the gods are dead", Wilde allows that in the "sea-trancèd isle" of Corfu "some God" may still lie "hidden in the asphodel". Cavafy takes up the notion of the hidden god, or, rather, gods (since he makes it more general), and translates it from earth to air: "from our sight / do silver clouds conceal them". Wilde's "sea-trancèd isle", by implication dear to the gods, finds a kind of echo in Cavafy's apostrophe, "O sacred Thessaly, they love thee still".

There is also an apostrophe in Wilde:

> Ah Love! if such there be, then it were well
> For us to fly his anger.

For a long time I stupidly misread this line-and-a-half, thinking that "such" referred to "Love" and that "Love" was an alternative name for the god hidden in the foliage. I am grateful to Charlotte Rouché for putting me right on this score when I delivered an earlier version of this paper at King's College London. "Ah Love!", as already noted, must be addressed to the speaker's companion, who otherwise plays no part in the poem. I wonder if Cavafy was also puzzled by this odd line ("Ah Love! if such there be...") and whether it contributed to the emphasis on love in "Memory"? – the gods *love* Thessaly; they remember "their first *love*"; and "dawn, her *lover,* kisses Thessaly". (I use "her lover" to translate the participle ἐρῶν, since the English equivalent, "loving", would be very weak, and the adverb "lovingly" not much better.)

In Wilde it is we who must "fly" the god's "anger". Cavafy restores, as it were, the flying to its proper place: "an ethereal form flies o'er her hills". In Wilde the presence of a god is suggested by a movement in the foliage: "but see, the leaves are stirring" – a god about to emerge from the undergrowth is appropriate for Pan – but here again Cavafy generalizes and transfers the image from earth to sky. Just as "silver clouds" not "asphodels" hide the gods, so the stirring of the leaves becomes "a tremor [σφρῖγος – literally "vigour"] from their life" which "runs through [the] *atmosphere*" of Thessaly. But even as he diverges from "Santa Decca" Cavafy may be drawing on another, the longest and perhaps the best known, of Wilde's early poems, "Charmides". The wood nymph who has lain all day with the body of the drowned Charmides, believing that her sea god (as she thinks he is) will eventually awake, suddenly hears her mistress, the goddess Artemis, approaching. Knowing that her punishment will be death if she is caught with her lover, she makes one last plea to him to take her to what she supposes to be his home beneath the waves (lines 509-13):

> "[...] O come Love come,
> Still we have time to reach the cavern of thine azure home."

> Scarce had she spoken when the shuddering trees
> Shook, and the leaves divided, and the air
> Grew conscious of a God [...].[31]

The "God" is the goddess Artemis who, as expected, puts and arrow to her bow and shoots the wood nymph through the breast. "The air / Grew conscious of a God" seems to me an original and powerful metaphor, which, in close proximity to the "shuddering" of the trees may have been transmuted by Cavafy into the "tremor" or "vigour" which "runs through" the "air" or "atmosphere" of Thessaly. And one final comment: Wilde's hidden god is "chewing the *bitter* fruits of memory", while in Cavafy memory is entirely positive. Not only is "Memory" the title of the poem, but Cavafy's gods *remember* Thessaly lovingly.

As already noted, "Memory" was revised in July 1905 with the title "Thessaly", but when the radically reworked demotic version was finally published in 1911, the location had been changed from Thessaly, and the title was now "Ionic" (Ἰωνικόν). This refers of course to Ionia in Asia Minor and has nothing to do with the Ionian Islands.

In pointing to Christianity as the force which has supplanted the gods or caused their death – "Great Pan is dead, and Mary's son is King" – Wilde sounds a note which is entirely lacking in Cavafy's early poem, "Memory". Its introduction in "Ionic" is the major thematic difference (as distinct from the extensive metrical and linguistic differences) between the two versions of the poem. The speaker in "Ionic" begins by identifying himself with the destruction of pagan idols and temples by the Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries. The rest of the poem simply rewrites and abbreviates "Memory".

ΙΩΝΙΚΟΝ

> Γιατὶ τὰ σπάσαμε τ᾽ ἀγάλματά των,
> γιατὶ τοὺς διώξαμεν ἀπ᾽ τοὺς ναούς των,
> διόλου δὲν πέθαναν γι᾽ αὐτὸ οἱ θεοί.

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[31] Wilde 2000b: 85.

Ὦ γῆ τῆς Ἰωνίας, σένα ἀγαποῦν ἀκόμη,
σένα ἡ ψυχές των ἐνθυμοῦνται ἀκόμη.
Σὰν ξημερώνει ἐπάνω σου πρωΐ αὐγουστιάτικο
τὴν ἀτμοσφαῖρα σου περνᾶ σφρῖγος ἀπ᾽ τὴν ζωή των·
καὶ κάποτ᾽ αἰθερία ἐφηβικὴ μορφή,
ἀόριστη μὲ διάβα γρήγορο,
ἐπάνω ἀπὸ τοὺς λόφους σου περνᾶ.[32]

IONIC

Although we smashed their statues,
although we drove them from their temples,
despite all that the gods have never died.
Land of Ionia, they love you still,
still do their souls remember you.
When August mornings dawn upon you
a tremor of their life runs through your atmosphere;
and sometimes too a youthful form, ethereal
and indistinct, its passage swift,
above your hills goes by.

A literal translation of the Greek of the first three lines would be more like "Because we smashed their statues, / because we drove them from their temples, / the gods did not for this reason die at all." This syntactical structure – "because" followed by a negative assertion contrary to what the "because" clauses would lead one to expect, simply does not work in English; hence my use of "although", "despite" and "never".

The introduction in these lines of the antagonism between Christianity and pagan religion (a recurrent theme in Cavafy's historical poems) and the use of "we" might be thought to move the poem closer to Wilde's "Santa Decca". I doubt, though, whether Cavafy was thinking of Wilde at all at this stage. By the time he wrote the new opening to the poem, there was Kostis Palamas to contend with. We do not know whether the opening lines of Cavafy's poem reached their final form (or some approximation to it) in the revision of 1905 or only in a final, unrecorded

[32] Cavafy 2007: 70.

revision shortly before its publication as "Ionic" in June 1911. The answer may lie in the Cavafy Archive, if a manuscript of the 1905 revision survives there. In either case, though, as I shall explain, Cavafy could have had before him these lines of Palamas from *Ἡ φλογέρα τοῦ βασιλιᾶ* (*The Emperor's Reed Pipe*, but more often known by the established mistranslation, *The King's Flute*)[33] – lines in which the speaker is Mount Parnassus:

> Τώρα οἱ θεοὶ καὶ οἱ θεΐσσες πιὰ δὲν εἶναι, μιὰ γιὰ πάντα
> κ' οἱ λειτουργοί, οἱ προφήτισσες, τὰ τάματα, οἱ παιάνες,
> τ' ἀγάλματα, οἱ χρησμοί, οἱ ναοί, κ' οἱ θησαυροί, καὶ ἡ νιότη,
> πὰν ὅλα· πάνε τα εἴδωλα, θαμμένα, ἀσβολωμένα,
> βάρβαροι τὰ συντρίψανε καὶ Γαλιλαῖοι τὰ διώξαν,
> καὶ δαιμόνοι γινήκανε καὶ σκιάχτρα τοῦ ἄλλου κόσμου[.][34]

> The gods and goddesses are now no more, once and for all
> the priests and prophetesses, votive offerings and pagan
> worshippers,
> statues and oracles, temples and treasure stores, and youth
> are gone, all gone; gone are the idols, buried, done away with,
> barbarians smashed them and Galileans drove them out,
> demons they became and monsters of the other world.

Although *The Emperor's Reedpipe* was not published in its entirety until 1910, an excerpt from Canto V, "The song of Parnassus", in which these lines occur, was published in the periodical *Ὁ Νουμᾶς* in January 1905,[35] seven months before Cavafy's recorded revision of the poem. And whether the new opening of "Ionic" was conceived at the time of the 1905 revision or only in 1911, there can be little doubt that it these lines of Palamas that Cavafy was contesting.

See how Cavafy's intensified denial, "διόλου δὲν πέθαναν" ("they have not died at all" or "they have never died") reflects

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[33] On the translation of the title, see Beaton 1994: 86, n. 55.
[34] Palamas 1989: 102.
[35] *Ὁ Νουμᾶς* 3 (2 [=15] January 1905) 1. See Kasinis in Palamas 1989: 10 and n. 13.

Palamas's emphatic affirmation, "μιὰ γιὰ πάντα [...] πὰν ὅλα" ("once and for all [...] are gone, all gone").

But, more significantly, notice how the first two lines of "Ionic" are simply an adaptation of Palamas's line, "barbarians smashed them and Galileans drove them out". There is a change from third- to first-person plural, so that the "barbarians" and the "Galileans" (that is, in both cases, Christians) are replaced by "we". "We smashed their statues" (τὰ σπάσαμε τ' ἀγάλματά των) writes Cavafy. Palamas's expression "barbarians smashed them" employs a different Greek verb (συνέτριψαν), and "them" refers to "idols" or "images" (εἴδωλα), but the word "statues" (ἀγάλματα) occurs in Palamas in the line above, in the long list of pagan things and people that are gone. Cavafy's "We drove them from their temples" (τοὺς διώξαμεν ἀπ' τοὺς ναούς τους) uses the same verb as Palamas does in "Galileans drove them out" (Γαλιλαῖοι τὰ διώξαν). "Them" here refers again to the idols, and in Cavafy to "gods" but the idols stood for the presence of the gods in their temples; so this is no different from Cavafy saying that "we drove them from their temples"; and the words "temples" (ναοί) and "gods" (θεοί) are both in Palamas's list. Besides, Palamas implicitly slips from "idols" to the gods they represent when he adds "demons they became".

As David Ricks has noted in his discussion of the problems of translating "Ἰωνικὸν", "the time at which the poem is spoken, and the identity of the speaker, are not the clearest of matters."[36] I have always preferred to think of the poem as spoken by a persona contemporary with Cavafy and not far removed from the poet himself. On that view, the "we" of the poem is extremely general, referring to contemporary inheritors of the Christian tradition, rather than to the Christians of Late Antiquity in the generations after Constantine.

The inclusion of the poem among the sensual rather than the historical poems in Cavafy's self-published thematic collection

[36] Ricks 1993: 104; and see also 107.

*Poems (1905-1915)* suggests that he thought of it in this way.[37] It is placed in that collection between two more obviously aesthetic or sensual poems "Morning Sea" (Θάλασσα τοῦ πρωϊοῦ) and "At the café entrance" (Στοῦ καφενείου τὴν εἴσοδο).[38] The earlier poem, "Memory", raises less doubt than "Ionic" about the time of speaking of the poem, since the speaker is not there identified with the anti-pagan activities of Christians in Late Antiquity. In Wilde's sonnet, the specific place-name, Santa Decca, of its title and the dateline "Corfu" attaches its speaker to Wilde's own experience. The close connection between both versions of Cavafy's poem and Wilde's sonnet, could perhaps be seen as supporting the idea that the speakers in the poems "Memory" and "Ionic" are Cavafy's contemporaries or the poet himself.

Through the speaker's identification in "Ionic" with the Christians who destroyed pagan temples, Cavafy strikes a strange note, for this, at least nominal, Christian or heir to the Christian tradition is asserting the continued existence of the pagan gods and the failure of Christianity to destroy them. By contrast, the voice of Mount Parnassus in Palamas's poem speaks from a gloomy pagan perspective, calling the Christians "barbarians", but barbarians who have been completely successful in destroying the ancient culture. This is, though, a pre-Renaissance perspective, for Mount Parnassus is observing the approach to Athens of the Byzantine emperor, Basil II, with his entourage and army, in the year 1018.

The Renaissance may be seen not only as the rebirth of classical culture but also as the rebirth of the ancient gods. On a visit to Venice a few years ago, I was walking around the Gallerie dell'Accademia where the works of Italian painters from the fourteenth to the early eighteenth centuries are arranged to some extent chronologically; and I got from this very condensed walk through time a clearer-than-ever sense of the evident relief and exhilaration with which artists, liberated from the constraints of Christian iconography and subject matter, turned to the exploits of

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[37] For more details see Hirst 1995: 33-61, and especially 42 and 58-9.
[38] Cavafy 2007: 68-70.

the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece and Rome. The same development can of course be traced in literature. But if the ancient gods were, in some sense, reborn in the Renaissance, perhaps they are now dying again as, in its rapid and technologically-driven development, Western culture becomes increasingly detached from its roots.

But to return to Cavafy and his responses to Wilde's and Palamas's treatment of the death of the gods: it would – obviously, I think – be wrong to speak of Cavafy's poems "Memory" and "Ionic" as being *inspired* by Wilde's "Santa Decca" and Palamas's "Song of Parnassus". Nor need we use the term "anxiety of influence", since Cavafy is not trying to outdo established masters of the past, but reacting to his contemporaries, and reacting negatively, opposing their perspectives, and, in the process, I suggest, making something better than the poems that appear to have *provoked* (rather than inspired) his own. That Palamas and Cavafy did not have high opinions of each other's poetry is well known. Palamas could not see what it was that made Cavafy's poetry poetic, and Cavafy is said to have remarked, with a characteristic reference to himself in the third person, "Palamas is a lyric poet; and Cavafy does not like lyric poetry." Much of Wilde's poetry has the lyric qualities which Cavafy came not to like; I say "came not to like" because many of Cavafy's own early poems are from the same late Victorian lyric mould as Wilde's. And there is at least one poem in the Cavafy Canon, "The funeral of Sarpedon", which is very much in the manner of Wilde's treatment of classical themes.

If I may borrow for a moment from David Ricks the phrase, "Cavafy, reader and read", which was the title of a course of seminars given in Princeton many years ago, and is, I understand, the title of a forthcoming book, I can say that I have so far dealt with Cavafy as reader; as reader of Wilde and Palamas. But the intertextual story of these dead or not-dead gods, and their eastward passage from Corfu to Thessaly and then Ionia, does not necessarily end in 1911. There is another potential episode in the

story, an episode in which we perhaps see Cavafy as read – read, that is, by Ezra Pound.

In a lecture entitled "Cavafy Translated" given in Cambridge in 1993 and published in the first issue of *Κάμπος*, David Ricks cited for comparison with "Ionic" the following lines from Pound's Canto CXIII, implicitly raising the question of whether they might contain an echo of Cavafy's poem:

> The Gods have not returned. "They never left us."
> They have not returned.
> Cloud's processional and the air moves with their living.[39]

The first two of these three lines probably allude to (and contradict) Pound's own early poem "The Return" first published in 1912. It begins "See, they return" and describes the stumbling and seemingly half-awake ancient gods returning to the world;[40] but the third line, "Cloud's processional and the air moves with their living", seems to echo Cavafy.

Intrigued by the question David Ricks had prompted, it seemed to me at first that it was highly unlikely that Pound could have seen "Memory", since, after its first publication in 1886 in an Athens newspaper, it was only republished twice, in Greek periodicals in 1939 and 1958, prior to its republication in the 1980s in two collections of Cavafy's so-called "repudiated" poems edited independently by George Savidis and Timos Malanos.[41] 1958 is a rather late date (as you will see) to propose an influence on Pound,

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[39] Ricks 1993: 105; Pound 1987: 801.

[40] Pound 1982: 198. It is worth noting that around the same time Pound also wrote a poem entitled "Pan is dead" (ibid. 196). There is enough in it to suggest that Pound was aware of Wilde's "Santa Decca" but, aside from that, it plays no part in this story. It does, though, suggest its own subtle link between Christ and Pan in the expression "he [death] has taken our Lord [Pan] away", alluding to Mary Magdalene's words to Peter and John: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre" (John 20.2, AV).

[41] Cavafy 1983: 47; Cavafy 1984: 49-50.

especially from a minor Greek periodical.[42] We will return to the 1939 publication later. It seemed to me much more likely that Pound had come across "Ionic", either in the original Greek, or, more likely, in English translation.

So, whether or not we can call on Cavafy's "silver clouds" which hide the gods from our sight in "Memory", to account for Pound's "Cloud's processional", Cavafy's lines "a tremor from their life / runs through your atmosphere" in "Ionic" are sufficiently close in vocabulary and conception to Pound's "the air moves with their living" to suggest the likelihood of direct influence; and particularly if it came through Rae Dalven's translation, which has at this point "a vigor from *their life moves through your air*".[43]

When I first identified Rae Dalven's translation as the most likely vehicle for the possible influence of Cavafy's "Ionic" on Pound's Canto CXIII, there appeared to be an insuperable objection, namely, that Dalven's volume of *The complete poems of C. P. Cavafy* was not published until 1961, by when Pound had virtually ceased writing.

As the Pound scholar, Peter Makin, tells us, when Pound "sailed for Italy on 30 June 1958 [...] He had fourteen more years to live, but only two or three more years in which he would be able to write."[44] Three more years does indeed take us to 1961; and Canto CXIII was not published until 1962, in the October-November issue of the journal *Poetry*; and then in 1968 republished in the volume *Drafts and fragments of Cantos CX-*

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[42] I have not seen this republication and it is difficult to trace it from the scant detail provided in Daskolopoulos's monumental Cavafy *Bibliography*, where, under the year heading 1958, the relevant entry reads: "A461 Μνήμη. *Ἐποχή*, 305." (Daskalopoulos 2003: 100). In the "Index of Periodicals" the only periodical with the one-word title *Ἐποχή* is a journal published in Volos, but entry A461 is not listed under this heading, nor does it appear under the newspaper *Ἡ Ἐποχή* or the journal *Καινούρια Ἐποχή*, though in the context *Ἐποχή* may well be an abbreviation for the latter, which did publish a number of Cavafy items in 1958 (ibid. 99-100, 1161, 1164).

[43] Cavafy1961: 32.

[44] Makin 1992: 289.

*CXVII*. However, Makin states (referring to the summer of 1959), "the last of *Drafts and fragments*, probably begun only a few months before, were written then." Pound's biographer, Humphrey Carpenter is even clearer on this point, writing that "In March 1960 Pound showed [Donald] Hall the drafts for new cantos – essentially the lines collected in 1968 in *Drafts and fragments*, [... though] he worked on them again [a little] in 1960 from March through June."[45] It is clear, then, that if Pound did ever see Dalven's 1961 volume of Cavafy translations, it could have had no influence on his Canto CXIII.

There the matter rested until I looked into the bibliography of Rae Dalven's translations, and discovered that, unsurprisingly, many of Dalven's translations of individual poems by Cavafy had appeared in poetry journals going back to the late 1940s. "Ionic", though, was not among them. However, "Ionic", with the title "Ionian song" *was* included in Dalven's general anthology of her translations from Greek, published with the title *Modern Greek poetry* in New York in 1949. There would have been plenty of opportunity for Pound to have come across it during his long enforced stay in St Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington. He was confined there from 1946 to 1958; he was very far from being "criminally insane", the official description of his condition at the time; in St Elizabeth's he read extensively – books brought to him by his many literary visitors – and wrote extensively too, completing *The Pisan Cantos* (LXXIV-LXXXIV) begun in a US Detention Camp in Italy, and composing and preparing for publication two further volumes of Cantos, *Rock-Drill* and *Thrones*, comprising between them Cantos LXXXV-CIX; and it is likely that some of the *Drafts and fragments of Cantos CX-CXVII* were also begun before he left St Elizabeth's.

Dalven's *Modern Greek Poetry* of 1949 is a very rare book now. However, some years ago now, just before I gave a version of this paper as a lecture in Oxford, I had discovered there was a copy in Oxford, in the reserved Dawkins collection of the Greek

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[45] Carpenter 1988: 867.

and Slavonic Library. And just before I gave the lecture, I examined this volume, and my theory was destroyed. For I found that the line in question was quite different in Dalven's original translation. It reads:

> the vigor of their being passes through your air.[46]

This lacks two of the three terms which bring her later version of the line so close to Pound: it has "being" instead of "life" and "passes" instead of "moves". Whereas "a vigor from their life moves through your air" seems close enough to Pound's "the air moves with their living" to suggest influence, "the vigor of their being passes through your air" is definitely not close enough. And so I had to acknowledge that the puzzle David Ricks had started was still unsolved. And unsolved it remained for a further thirty minutes!

I referred before to the 1939 republication of "Memory". This was in the Athenian literary journal *Τὰ Νέα Γράμματα* (roughly, *New Writing*) and I had already looked that up earlier that same afternoon in the Oxford library, though in connection with a totally unrelated project. But it was only when I went to photocopy it that I noticed what was on the facing page. The heading on the facing page reads: EZRA POUND / ΤΡΙΑ "KANTO„. Under this is the start of a six-page "Note by the translator", who is none other than the poet George Seferis, followed by Seferis's Greek translations of Pound's "Three Cantos": I, XIII and XXX.[47]

It is a virtual certainty that Seferis (if no one else) would have sent Pound a copy of the issue of the journal and that Pound would, therefore, have seen Cavafy's poem "Μνήμη" (Memory) next to a translation of his own work in a Greek journal in 1939.

As "Memory" is in *katharevousa,* Pound would have had little trouble in making sense of it on the basis of the Ancient Greek he

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[46] Dalven 1949: 153.

[47] *Τὰ Νέα Γράμματα* 5 (1939) 186 (Μνήμη), 187-93 (Σημείωμα τοῦ μεταφραστῆ), 193-5 (Κάντο I), 195-7 (Κάντο XIII), 198-200 (Κάντο XXX).

knew. And we may suppose that phrases from it, in the original, or in a translation made in his head (or even perhaps on paper) at the time of reading, stuck in his memory.

Not only, then, is Cavafy's "tremor from the life of the gods" which "runs through her atmosphere" plausibly reflected in Pound's "the air moves with their living" but we may also call on Cavafy's "from our sight do silver clouds conceal them" to account, perhaps, in part, for Pound's "Cloud's processional". And so Modern Greek Studies may contribute one tiny detail to some future commentary on the *Cantos* of Ezra Pound.

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