
UDC 82-991

DOI 10.22455/2541-7894-2019-7-466-473

Roxana PREDA

MAKE IT NEW – THE DIGITAL MAGAZINE
OF THE EZRA POUND SOCIETY

Abstract: The article outlines the history and profile of the latest periodical dedicated to the work of Ezra Pound, the digital quarterly *Make It New*. It was created by Roxana Preda in 2014 as an organ of the Ezra Pound Society, and is still running today. *Make It New* was launched simultaneously with the Pound Society website at a time when the digital medium was ripe enough to include and present the global work done in Pound studies. The aim of the new serial was to inform members of Society events (conferences and awards) as well as announce and review new publications on or related to Pound. The structure of the magazine was inspired by Carroll F. Terrell's *Paideuma* to which the editor added the advantages of the electronic medium: speedy publication, multimedia, global sourcing of information. *Make It New* has a focus on reviews of new work in Pound studies and is a meeting ground of old and young scholars from all over the world.

Keywords: Ezra Pound, digital humanities, scholarly periodicals, digital quarterly *Make It New*, Pound studies, Ezra Pound Society, electronic medium, Carroll F. Terrell, *Paideuma*.

© 2019 Roxana Preda (Dr. Phil. in Literary Theory and American Literature, Leverhulme Fellow, University of Edinburgh, Great Britain) roxana.preda@ed.ac.uk

Роксана ПРЕДА

MAKE IT NEW – СЕТЕВОЙ НАУЧНЫЙ ЖУРНАЛ ОБЩЕСТВА ЭЗРЫ ПАУНДА

Аннотация: В статье рассказывается о научном профиле и истории создания сравнительно молодого сетевого паундоведческого журнала *Make It New* (периодичность – четыре раза в год). Журнал, который уже несколько лет существует и успешно развивается, был основан Роксаной Преда в 2014 г. как орган Общества Эзры Паунда. Сетевой журнальный проект был запущен одновременно с сайтом Общества Эзры Паунда, когда цифровые технологии достигли уровня развития, позволявшего объединить и представить мировые паундоведческие исследования как глобальный феномен. Целью нового периодического издания было информировать сообщество о деятельности Общества (конференции, премии), а также анонсировать и рецензировать новые публикации, посвященные Паунду или как-то связанные с ним. В структуре *Make It New* очевидна преемственность с журналом Кэррола Ф. Террела *Paideuma*; к этой основе добавились преимущества электронного ресурса: мультимедийность, оперативность издания, глобальный охват. *Make It New* уделяет особое внимание новым паундоведческим работам и является площадкой, объединяющей как состоявшихся, так и начинающих исследователей во всем мире.

Ключевые слова: Эзра Паунд, цифровые гуманитарные науки, научные периодические издания, сетевой научный журнал *Make It New*, паундоведение, Общество Эзры Паунда, электронный ресурс, Кэррол Ф. Террел, *Paideuma*.

© 2019 Роксана Преда (доктор филологии, стипендиат Фонда Ливерхалма, Университет Эдинбурга, Великобритания) goxana.preda@ed.ac.uk



MIN 1:1

The origins of the digital quarterly *Make It New* lie, as can well be supposed, in the rhythm and evolution of Ezra Pound studies over the decades and the succeeding generations of scholars. From 1972 to roughly 2001, the Pound studies community benefitted from the selfless dedication of Carroll F. Terrell. He is mostly known for the *Companion to The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, which he published in 1980 and 1984. It is less known that he founded the National Poetry Foundation in 1972; the journal *Paideuma*, dedicated to Ezra Pound studies in the same year; The Ezra Pound Society in 1979; the journal *Sagetrieb* in 1982; the New Poetry Foundation press in 1984. All these academic institutions worked for a long time, well into Terrell's old age. Especially *Paideuma* continues to be published today, albeit with a transformed, more general profile: it is now an annual, and includes studies of modernist literature as a whole. Younger scholars may not know that it had an exclusive focus on Ezra Pound for almost 40 years, from 1972 until 2001.



MIN 2:1

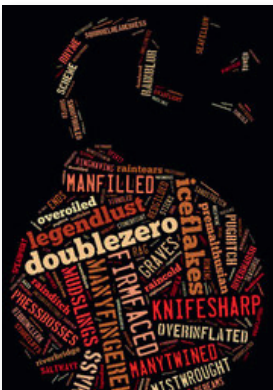
Terrell's passing away in 2003, in the same year as other great doers like Hugh Kenner and William Cookson, was a loss that left the Pound community profoundly disoriented. Nevertheless, in the welter of transformations that scholarly life was going through more generally, the effects were not immediately apparent. The internet, launched in 1991 by Tim Berners Lee, was making itself felt in academia: modes of research and publication were slowly transitioning to the digital medium. After 2010, we saw the rise of digital humanities



MIN 2:2

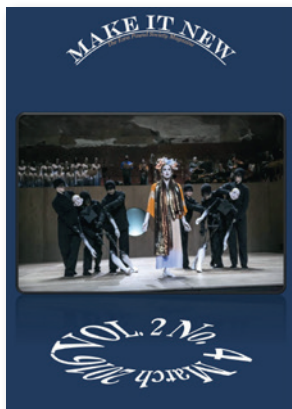
as an academic discipline, the creation of gigantic databases for storing scholarly articles, and the scanning of books by Google and Internet Archive. A generational shift was underway, yet there were no bridges built that could carry communication from the older Pound scholars to the younger. *Paideuma* had no digital version on JStor (it would come online only in 2018); it was an exclusively print publication with a minuscule run that had ceased to be a forum for Poundians; the society awarded prizes from time to time, but nobody knew who was leading it and how one could become a member; there was a mailing list at Terrell’s old University of Maine, but it was looking tired and was idle for long stretches of time.

By 2013, the channels of communication were disappearing—the only way Pound scholars could stay in contact with each other’s projects or keep informed about new research and publication was by attending the biennial Ezra Pound International Conferences (EPIC)s. They were organized by enthusiasts outside Terrell’s immediate circle and had miraculously achieved the generational leap. But the thread of conferences made it even clearer that the needs of the day were to recreate a sense of community, bring scholars together in a denser network, offer an outlet to young people to experiment with new methods and tools, and put one’s finger on the pulse of what was going on in the world of Pound studies — and beyond them, in the wide pastures of other media, in the art and fandom the poet inspired. These needs would only



MIN 2:3

be addressed with the reorganization of the society and its new digital quarterly *Make It New*, which I started in 2014.



MIN 2:4



MIN 3:2

The rationale of an Ezra Pound magazine was that *Paideuma* had slowed down and become irregular; further, it had ceased to be a dedicated journal. A sense of community liveliness derived from speedy information on publications and events was missing. A Society serial could be a cultural gazette, a review, and a workshop. Thus, *Make It New* did not aim to replace *Paideuma*, but to retrieve a sense of what made Pound interesting and valuable for life; it aimed to be a document that a scholar in the field might read with ease and pleasure. I designed the magazine as a forum for experiment that would bend the usual format of an academic journal. Hence, *Make It New* relied on *Paideuma*'s earliest practices of regular information, as well as on the openness and flexibility that I found in other periodicals with a Pound focus, like the British journal *Agenda*. Therefore, it did not include scholarly studies; rather, news, reviews, poetry, travelogues, bibliographies, and translations.

I launched *Make It New* simultaneously with the Pound Society website at a time when the digital medium was ripe enough to include and present the global work done in Pound studies. The aim of the new serial was to inform members of society events (conferences and awards) as well as announce and review new publications on or related to Pound. Hence the frequency of publication was much higher, aiming to respond quickly to the mass and quality of new publications,



MIN 3:3

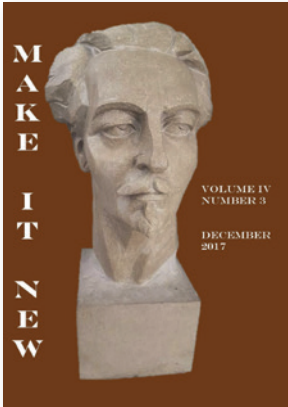


MIN 3:4

conferences, and events. If *Paideuma* in 2014 had been an annual publication for almost a decade, *Make It New* was designed as a digital quarterly. What I did not predict at the time was the speed with which the periodical would naturally grow. The first number had thirty-five pages, suitable for a “little magazine.” The second almost doubled that, reaching sixty-two pages. The third and the fourth reached eighty-five and ninety pages respectively. The magazine then reached its point of equilibrium at around a hundred pages per issue.

The architecture of *Make It New* took its inspiration from *Paideuma* and from Terrell’s concept and example. The periodical did not grow and change organically, like say, William Cookson’s *Agenda* in the UK – rather, from the start, it had a stable skeleton of article categories that made it coherent and gave it an identity across the years. In designing *Make It New*, I created headings that would, I hoped, generate article series. My purpose was to see Pound as a poet in the context of his contemporaries; to illuminate questions of influence; to highlight art that was inspired by his work; and to include reviews of books that while not specifically about the poet, would give contextual information necessary to Pound’s readers. Some of the more successful categories were: “Book in Focus”; “Pound in the World”; “The Modernism Review”; “Kulchural Affairs” and “Poundian Poetries.”

I was astonished to see that the quality of submitted contributions proved to be much



MIN 4:3



MIN 4:4

higher than the medium of a society magazine led readers to expect. The framework mentioned above had to be flexible—*Make It New* had to include materials that straddled categories: review essays, like “Imagism Status Rerum and a Note on Haiku” by David Ewick (*MIN* 2:1) and “WHY Joe/ izza hiz/ Torian” by Richard Sieburth (*MIN* 3:2); reports on research methodology, such as Jim Cocola’s “Notes Toward a Draft of ‘A Gazetteer to *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*’” (*MIN* 1:4); extended documentary and biographical reports, like Heriberto Cruz Cornejo’s “From Arcadia to Hell: The Fate of Gerhart and Vera Münch, 1937–1947” (*MIN* 3:3); and multimedia experiments like Margaret Fisher’s “Music Column” (*MIN* 1:1–2:4), which incorporated audio examples and Eloisa Bressan’s Poundian travelogues, that included google maps.

As the magazine was a society organ, the inclusion of bibliographic work was a salutary feature. In 2015 I started collaborating with Archie Henderson to compile the English language bibliography of Ezra Pound studies. Doing this work, I found that the previous year had witnessed four books and forty-eight articles on Pound published in English alone. This came as a surprise to many Poundians, since the coverage of the MLA Bibliography had not been extensive, and its very incompleteness gave a skewed idea of contemporary research. The digital medium was beneficial to bibliographic work, since it permitted easy supplementation and correction. Moreover, since more and more secondary literature was available online, the bibliography could form a convenient starting point for new work, since it provided not

only a complete tableau of publications, but also links to full-text resources. This bibliography was started in *Make It New*, but soon had to be moved to the society website, since it was becoming far too bulky. But the idea was there: The magazine continued to include secondary bibliographies mapping Pound studies in Italy, France, Japan, and Turkey; this provided the impetus for longer studies on the history of Pound studies in various countries, such as Russia, China, Jordan, and Brazil, essays which gave the quarterly a truly global opening. This work has only just made a dent in the coverage of Pound as a poet of the world and is a path worth pursuing in the future.

In 2018, a new president of the Ezra Pound Society, Prof. Mark Byron at the University of Sydney, took up the task of editing *Make It New*. It is already evident from Byron's work that he will be slowly re-centering the magazine towards Pound and Asian studies. In Terrell's time, *Paideuma* had a home in the United States: it was open to the American context and traced the influence of Pound's work on the next generation of U.S. poets. During my presidency (2013-8), *Make It New* had a more European bent while it was being written and edited in Edinburgh; now, with its move to Australia, it will reflect that part of the world in more detail – we will welcome more studies in Pound's relations to China and Japan.

Make It New is a magazine that has made the transition to the digital medium for Pound scholars; it has thus made possible experiments in new media and created a virtual meeting of old and young. Still, it has not replaced the comprehensive, centering work that *Paideuma* was doing for the older generation. Re-constituting a peer-reviewed professional journal on Ezra Pound which responds to the global nature of the studies on his work, remains the task for our future.