

Pigs and Craps



Reading his Hugh Selwyn Mauberley but thinking of your Circe poem and the crassness of men who imitate outlaws. And how much fun it was a Christmas long ago when the kids were young and I not so but younger and we were playing not with some electronic game now in some landfill but Pass the Pigs. And Ezra Pound. The critics, maybe some, who knows? there are so many, never make the connection to Poe: *E. P. ODE POUR L'ÉLECTION DE SON SEPULCHRE.*



According to Wikipedia *Pass the Pigs* is a commercial version of the dice game *Pig*, but using asymmetrical throwing dice, similar to *shagai*.

But that was then. Now what I remember are these two lines: *Observed the elegance of Circe's hair* and *believing in old men's lies*. Never More.



Ezra Pound Escapes the Nut House and Arrives in Ashland

In the pawn shop on Main
I found the rules to the game
stuck in a busted rusted typewriter
that Ezra Pound got on credit
but once belonged to Stephen Mallarmé
Pound had been seen weaving from left to right
needing money he hocked one dark night
muttering I strayed
I strayed
I lost my way.

And there she was as he wanted her to be
the poet he was afraid to love. HD.
From the kindness of her own volition
she appeared as an apparition.
What else could he say?
“...at midnight Ashland, Kentucky,
and a lonely girl under the marquee
of a closed up show.”
Where did she go?
“ The dark and mysterious Ohio....”

What's up Jack Kerouac?
He didn't say that
to the other midnight gambler.
The two outlaw ramblers
down river and away.
He sang I didn't want to slight her
I fixed the typewriter
But you should know
as you do know
she never showed.

Shagai refers to the astragalus of the ankle of a sheep or goat. The bones are collected and used for traditional games and fortune-telling throughout Central Asia, and games involving the ankle bones may also be referred to by the name of the bones. They may be painted bright colours. Such bones have been used throughout history, and are thought to be the first forms of dice. In English language sources, shagai may be referred to as "ankle bones", and playing with shagai is sometimes called ankle bone shooting.

Colophon:

Raven image from Wiki Commons, cover photo by the author, Pig and Shagai quote from Wikipedia. This small thing, but still a book, is for the Winter Solstice, 2018, something of a gift to myself, a two year anniversary of my heart surgery recognizing the gift of the poetry of Christine Barron, Australian, whose December solstice is summer time ("and the living is easy").
—Joe Napora