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Beyond Diplomacy

Perspectives on Dag Hammarskjöld from the papers of George Ivan Smith and the Ezra Pound case

With contributions by
Manuel Fröhlich
Marie-Noëlle Little

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation
Uppsala 2008

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation pays tribute to the memory of the second Secretary-General of the UN by searching for and examining workable alternatives for a socially and economically just, ecologically sustainable, peaceful and secure world.

In the spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld's integrity, his readiness to challenge the dominant powers and his passionate plea for the sovereignty of small nations and their right to shape their own destiny, the Foundation seeks to examine mainstream understanding of development and bring to the debate alternative perspectives of often unheard voices.

By making possible the meeting of minds, experiences and perspectives through the organising of seminars and dialogues, the Foundation plays a catalysing role in the identification of new issues and the formulation of new concepts, policy proposals, strategies and work plans towards solutions. The Foundation seeks to be at the cutting edge of the debates on development, security and environment, thereby continuously embarking on new themes in close collaboration with a wide and constantly expanding international network.

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Preface

In parallel with its work on development alternatives for a sustainable and peaceful world, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation has emerged over the decades as an informal centre for the study of different aspects of Dag Hammarskjöld's life and person. It has initiated a number of original studies that have been published in the Foundation's publications such as *Development Dialogue* (1987:1 and 2001:1) and the *Dag Hammarskjöld Lectures*, particularly those by Kofi Annan and Hans Blix held in the anniversary years of 2001 and 2005 respectively.

The 2001 issue of *Development Dialogue* highlighted the important part that culture in all its forms played in Dag Hammarskjöld's life and documented his passionate devotion to it. Sir Brian Urquhart writes in his introduction to that issue ('Dag Hammarskjöld: A Leader in the Field of Culture'): 'One of the most impressive, and unusual, features of Dag Hammarskjöld's way of life was the integration into one scheme of activity of all his interests and pursuits. ... Literature, music, the visual arts, and nature were both his recreation and an important and sustaining part of his routine. They were true companions of his bachelor life. They refreshed him and lightened the burden of his very public office.'

The issue also published articles by Manuel Fröhlich and Marie-Noëlle Little. The former wrote about Hammarskjöld's correspondence with the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth ('A Fully Integrated Vision: Politics and the Arts in the Dag Hammarskjöld–Barbara Hepworth Correspondence'); the latter's contribution ('Travellers in Two Worlds: Dag Hammarskjöld and Alexis Leger') focuses on Hammarskjöld's correspondence with the French poet and Nobel Prize winner Saint-John Perse.

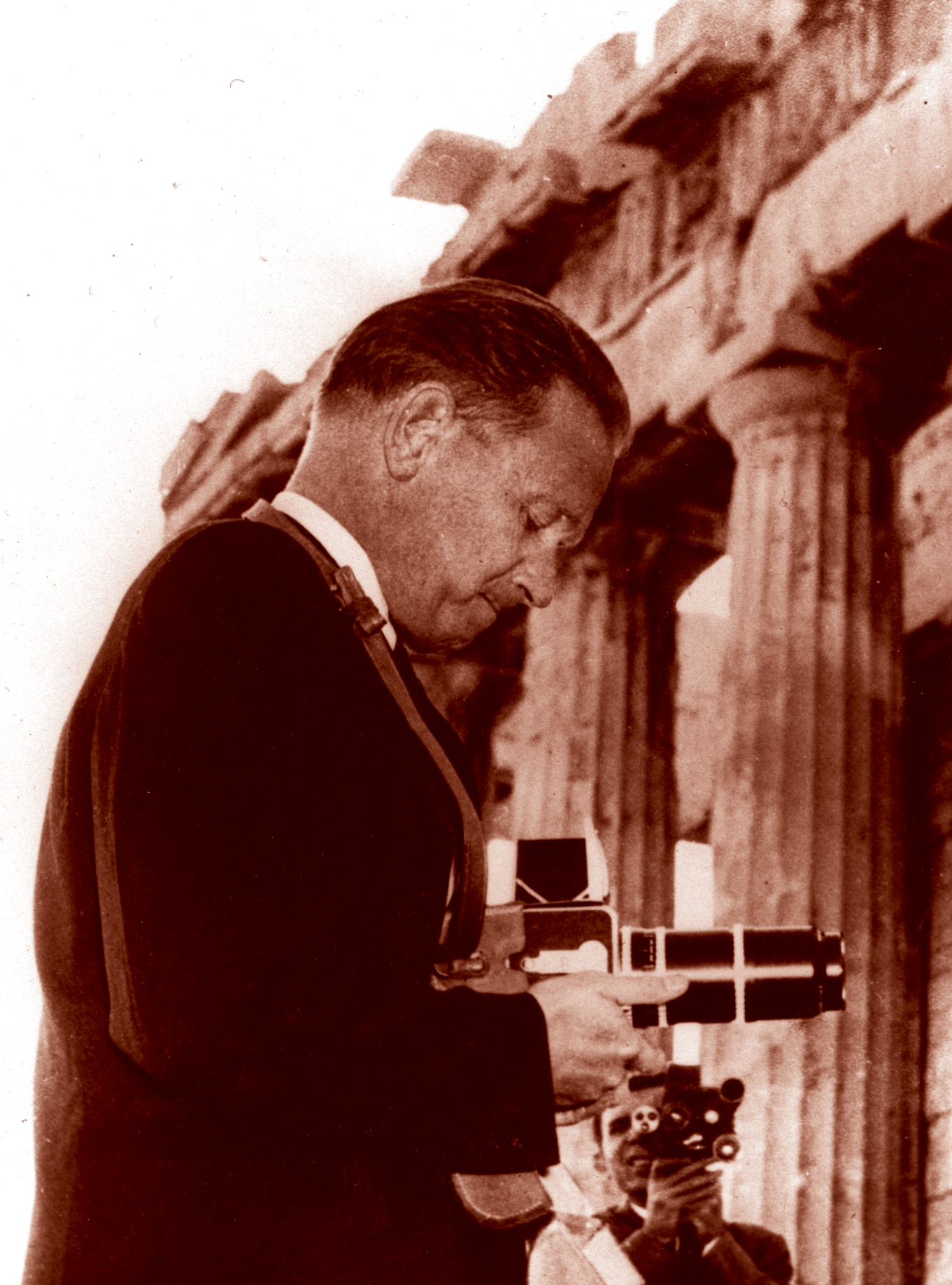
In this second issue of *Critical Currents*, these authors present interesting new material on Dag Hammarskjöld. While the earlier essays were drafted in connection with the 40th anniversary of Hammarskjöld's death the new texts were first discussed in the context of the centenary of his birth in 2005. Since then they have been further developed and revised.

In '"The Unknown Assignation": Dag Hammarskjöld in the Papers of George Ivan Smith', Manuel Fröhlich has accessed the archives of George Ivan Smith, held in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The Australian journalist and UN Information Director was a close friend of Dag Hammarskjöld's. Fröhlich has concentrated on three aspects of Smith's relationship with Hammarskjöld: his perspective on Hammarskjöld as a private man; his view of Hammarskjöld as Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Hammarskjöld's death in the air crash at Ndola. His essay offers a fascinating insight into the work and collaboration of these two men who held central positions in world politics in the 1950s and early 1960s. The author brings us, through the papers of George Ivan Smith, into close contact with the daily life of an international leader and adds importantly to the picture of a man who did not talk a lot about himself.

Marie-Noëlle Little, in her essay on 'Ezra Pound, and Dag Hammarskjöld's Quiet Diplomacy', studies the relationship between Hammarskjöld and the world-famous American poet. Dag Hammarskjöld was an avid reader of poetry, both classical and modern, in many different languages and from many continents. He was a member of the Swedish Academy of Letters and was influential in the selection of the Noble Prize Winners in literature. Ezra Pound, who lived in Italy between the wars, had expressed sympathies for the fascist regime. At the end of the war in 1945 he was brought to the United States and locked up for more than 12 years at St Elizabeths Federal Hospital, an asylum in Washington. It was not surprising that colleagues and admirers of Pound reacted to his difficult situation; but it was striking that Dag Hammarskjöld had the courage and energy to engage himself in the efforts to secure Pound's release. He did so despite his position as Secretary-General, all the more sensitive after his confrontation with the FBI over its involvement in and infiltration of UN staff matters in 1953. Marie-Noëlle Little carefully elucidates the story in her essay, and will do so more fully in a forthcoming book.

We believe that these two essays genuinely expand our knowledge of Dag Hammarskjöld and his time, reveal important aspects of his personality, and contribute to a more complete picture of a highly creative world leader with an important legacy in our times.

Olle Nordberg
(Executive Director, 1994-2006)



'The Unknown Assignation': Dag Hammarskjöld in the Papers of George Ivan Smith

Manuel Fröhlich[*]

Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness*, published for the first time in the spring of 1899, opens with the thoughts evoked in the minds of a group of seamen watching the Thames. The river, for them, represents the continuing stream of history not only connecting faraway places and people but also linking the fate and experiences of past generations across centuries: 'Hunters for gold or pursuers of fame they all had gone out on that stream, bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the might within the land, bearers of a spark from sacred fire. What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of the unknown earth? … The dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empires.'[1]

Manuel Fröhlich is Junior Professor at the Department for Political Science, Friedrich-Schiller-University, Jena. His fields of research include international organisations, peace and conflict, and globalisation, as well as contemporary political philosophy. His book *Political Ethics and the United Nations: Dag Hammarskjöld as Secretary-General* deals with the connection between Hammarskjöld's concern with ethical questions and a number of the political and legal innovations in UN action and diplomacy, which he established as the special potential for international leadership by the UN Secretary-General.

* *The author wishes to dedicate this article to Olle Nordberg on the occasion of his formal retirement as Executive Director of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, a position in which he successfully translated Hammarskjöld's ideas into concrete projects for today's world.*

1 Conrad, Joseph, *Heart of Darkness*. An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism, ed. by Robert Kimbrough, New York and London, 3rd ed. 1988, p. 8.

Dag Hammarskjöld and George Ivan Smith during their climb of Mount Ruapehu, New Zealand

The drama of human aspiration and the spirit of exploration thus resonate in the majestic waters of the river. Streaming in permanent motion it carries with it the debris of fortunate as well as fateful adventures. The men sailing the sea, at least for Conrad, were the bearers of this wisdom about the human condition and the tidal waves of destiny. Invited by a director of trade companies, the group at the beginning of *Heart of Darkness* also included Marlow, the protagonist of the metaphoric journey into the Congo and the abyss of human behaviour.

George Ivan Smith, international civil servant for the United Nations who had travelled widely and worked in many crisis spots from the 1940s to the 1970s, recalls this opening scene from Conrad in a letter to his boss and personal friend, Dag Hammarskjöld: 'Remember on the first pages of "heart of darkness", when the Director of Companies is leaning over the rail ... he resembled a navigator and was therefore trustworthiness personified. I thought of that often as I watched you at the window looking down the East river, at Suez, Gaza and the other distant places that are laced together by the river and the sea.'[2] This recollection from 1957 is quite telling for the story of George Ivan Smith and Dag Hammarskjöld. First, it pays tribute to the fact that Smith had the chance to work close to Hammarskjöld and so to speak look over his shoulders during many of the events that shaped the tenure of the Swedish UN Secretary-General. Second, his perspective on Hammarskjöld is not only determined by professional necessities but also by a deep mutual understanding and even by admiration for Hammarskjöld. Sharing thoughts about works of art and literature, as in this case Conrad's novel, was a key component of their relationship and inspired much of their work for the UN. Third, although neither Hammarskjöld nor Smith could have foreseen it in 1957, Conrad's dark depiction of the Congo would become reality in the troubles that both the UN and the Congolese were to experience after the country gained independence in 1960. Hammarskjöld would lose his life in a plane crash in Ndola and Smith would never stop trying to solve the mystery surrounding the death of the Secretary-General who was en route to negotiate with the leader of secessionist Katanga, Moise Tshombe, after serious fire-fights had broken out between the UN blue helmets and the mercenary-led Gendarmerie of Katanga.[3]

Two years before his death in 1995, Smith had decided to give his personal papers to the Bodleian Library in Oxford. They were arranged and ordered by the Library staff and the catalogue was completed in 2003.[4] The papers consist of several thematic groups from Smith's BBC career to his work as an international civil servant. Apart from these more

2 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 15 April 1957. The letter is with the Dag Hammarskjöld Samling at the Kungliga Biblioteket in Stockholm (hereinafter cited as KB DHS). The original Conrad text reads: 'The Director of Companies was our Captain and our host. We four affectionately watched his back as he stood in the bows looking to seaward. On the whole river there was nothing that looked half so nautical. He resembled a pilot which to a seaman is trustworthiness personified. It was difficult to realise his work was not out there in the luminous estuary, but behind him, within the brooding gloom.' Cf. Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, op.cit, p. 7.

3 Cf. Brian Urquhart, *Hammarskjöld*, New York and London, 1972/1994, pp. 565-578.

4 See Lucy McCann, *Catalogue of the Papers of George Ivan Smith*, 1888-1995. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Oxford 2003 (available at http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/). Papers from the collection will be cited as OX [Shelfmark, folio number].

or less professional files there are some papers relating to personal and family life and a considerable amount of Smith's literary papers. These contain both published material – for example, newspaper articles[5] and a booklet of his Boyer Lectures[6] – as well as unpublished material: numerous letters, drafts and other manuscripts of texts and speeches (including a statement for the United Nations Career Records Project).[7] Special mention has to be made of a draft manuscript for an autobiography entitled 'The Unknown Assignation' which was never completed before Smith's death.[8] In the papers covering the UN there is a sub-section exclusively devoted to Dag Hammarskjöld and this section alone consists of some 1,000 leaves or pieces of paper, which accounts for the prominence that Dag Hammarskjöld holds in Smith's collection. At the same time there are also cross-references to Hammarskjöld in other sections – for example in his correspondence with some prominent figures ranging from Ralph Bunche and Andrew Cordier from the UN to a number of artists such as Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore and, last but not least politicians, including Sir Roy Welensky, the former Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Access to most of the papers is unrestricted, with some exceptions for papers after 1977 (either containing politically sensitive information or originating from people still alive). A big part of the Hammarskjöld section is concerned with Smith's private investigations into the Ndola air crash.[9] This is largely accessible without restrictions (including some tapes with dictation by George Ivan Smith and Claude de Kemoularia dating from the late 1960s or early 1970s).[10] There may, however, still be pieces of information that remain concealed since, for example, the correspondence with his one-time colleague Conor Cruise O'Brien is partially closed and together with the Irishman he had published the latest version of his theory of events at Ndola in 1992.

For those with an interest in Dag Hammarskjöld and the United Nations in the 1950s and 1960s the three associations inherent in Smith's invocation of the Conrad scene in the 1957 letter form a threefold motivation to have a closer look at these papers. The following findings from Smith's papers in this vein deal with his perspective on Hammarskjöld, the private man, his work as UN Secretary-General and his death at Ndola in September 1961. In order to appreciate Smith's perspective, we first have to take a closer look at his biography.

5 E.g. his obituary one year after Hammarskjöld's death: George Ivan Smith, Epitaph for Dag, in *The Observer*, 16 September 1962 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6492, fols. 4-5).

6 George Ivan Smith, 'Along the Edge of Peace – Recollections of an International Civil Servant'. Australian Broadcasting Commission. The Boyer Lectures 1964, Sydney 1964 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fols. 88-114).

7 George Ivan Smith, 'Transcript of Interview for the United Nations Career Records Project' in 1993 (OX MS. Eng. 4797, fols. 187-230).

8 George Ivan Smith, *The Unknown Assignation. Sketch Outline for a Book in Two Parts*, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fols. 26-37).

9 A first reconstruction of the information in the papers was published by Matthew Hughes, 'Diary (The Death of Dag Hammarskjöld)', in *The London Review of Books*, 9 August 2001, pp. 32-33. See also Matthew Hughes, 'The Strange Death of Dag Hammarskjöld', in *History Today*, October 2001, pp. 2-3. Hughes' article led to various comments. See Bengt Rösiö, Letters: Hammarskjöld's Death, in *The London Review of Books*, 20 September 2001, p. 4; Michiel Wijnberg, Letters: Hammarskjöld's Death, in *The London Review of Books*, 20 September 2001, pp. 4-5 and Rolf Rembe, Letters: Hammarskjöld's Death, in *The London Review of Books*, 1 November 2001, p. 5.

10 Four cassettes containing dictation by Smith and an interview concerning Hammarskjöld's death, around 1980 (OX MS. Eng. E. 3254).

I

The life of George Ivan Smith is colourful and diverse, beginning in Australia and bringing him into intense contact with almost all continents of the globe.[11] Thinking about his origins, Smith, in a draft chapter for his unfinished autobiography, writes: 'I have spent more than fifteen years in Australian prisons. But it was hardly my own fault.'[12] This was not due to some criminal offence that he committed, but rather the consequence of his father, George Franklin Smith, being a prison governor in Australia. The family has Irish and Scottish roots but came to live 'down under' with the first wave of settlers. It is in the context of this humorous and Australian background that Conor Cruise O'Brien described Smith as having 'a face like a sunset over a sheepfarm'.[13] George Ivan Smith was born in 1915 in Sydney. His studies soon brought him into contact with the media, and he started out as a newspaper journalist. In 1937 he became one of the youngest staff members of the Australian Broadcasting Commission and his claim to be the first or youngest in several new professional settings was further strengthened by the fact that at the age of 24 he was given the task of setting up a new overseas broadcasting service, Radio Australia. This, in turn, brought him to the BBC and London where he was appointed Head of the Pacific Service in 1941. In this capacity, he was primarily concerned with covering the war in the Pacific. After the war, Smith joined the still fledgling United Nations Organization in 1947 as Director of External Affairs and worked to establish the very first international radio programmes of the UN. His media expertise was mixed with a more political role when Trygve Lie appointed him director of the UN Information Centre in London in 1949. For some ten years he worked as a kind of ambassador's ambassador or channel of communication between the UN and Britain – but also responsible for Ireland, the Netherlands and Belgium.
In this capacity in 1953 he also got to know Dag Hammarskjöld who not only kept him in the post, but involved him in various diplomatic missions as his personal spokesman and press officer. Among other events, this brought Smith to the Four Powers' summit in Geneva in 1955 and also put him on the very first plane of UN soldiers landing on Egyptian soil as part of the UN Emergency Force during the Suez Crisis in 1956. These assignments also led to very close contact between Smith and the Secretary-General who, in 1958, decided to bring Smith from London to New York where he first headed the External Relations Division of the UN's Office of Public Information and then became Director of Press and Publications.

It may have been inevitable that the cosmopolitan Smith with his experience in the Pacific, Europe and the Middle East finally became involved in UN missions in Africa – mostly dealing with former British colonies or members of the Commonwealth. Various shorter missions to the Congo were followed by a complete switch in his work in order to become chief

11 For the following see Lucy McCann, *Catalogue*, op. cit., as well as Smith, *Unknown Assignation*, op. cit and Smith, *Edge of Peace*, op. cit.
12 Smith, *Edge of Peace*, op. cit, p. 7.
13 Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Memoir. My Life and Themes*, London, 1998, p. 241.

George Ivan Smith at his desk at the United Nations Information Centre in London

of the civilian operations in Katanga after Dag Hammarskjöld's death in September 1961. Under U Thant, Smith represented the UN Technical Assistance Board on the continent and was later appointed Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for East, Central and Southern Africa. Working from Dar es Salaam and Lusaka, Smith managed to establish himself as an important figure and point of contact amidst the ongoing transformations of political structures caused by various moves towards independence and the end of colonial rule. This also brought him the nomination in 1965 for the post of Secretary-General of the Commonwealth – a bid supported by four African countries but, rather symptomatically, not successful since he was regarded as already being too 'Africanised'. Smith then engaged in academic teaching and research as visiting lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs in Princeton as well as the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Boston. He prepared a number of studies on current international problems and advised both governments and international corporations.

In 1968 he returned to London as head of the UN Information Centre, a position he held until his retirement in 1975. After that he worked as an author and journalist and in 1980 published a highly acclaimed book on the rise and fall of Idi Amin under the title *Ghosts of Kampala*.[14] Smith had three children with his first wife Madeleine Oakes; in 1944 he married Mary Douglass who also brought two daughters to the family. In 1964 they adopted Edda Mutzawelo.

14 George Ivan Smith, *Ghosts of Kampala. The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin*, London, 1980.

II

The first step in approaching Smith's papers from an interest in the UN and Dag Hammarskjöld inevitably leads to their correspondence, which consists of some 60 letters, the majority of them written by Smith. While the Bodleian Library holds most of the letters and notes, the selection could be supplemented by the holdings of the Kungliga Biblioteket in Stockholm, which holds Hammarskjöld's private papers. The correspondence starts in November 1953 and ends in August 1961 so that it does in fact cover the full range of Hammarskjöld's tenure as Secretary-General.

The issues that are being dealt with can be summarised under the headings of administrative matters (including, for example, the discussion to bring Smith to New York in 1958), general philosophy of the United Nations (including the discussion of Hammarskjöld's annual reports), questions of politics (including the position of the British or other governments on certain UN-related questions), literature and the arts (including contacts with and comments on T. S. Eliot, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore) and last but not least a very special half-philosophical, half-joking dialogue between Mr. or 'General' Flexible (which would be Hammarskjöld) and Mr. or 'Corporal' Fluid (which would be Smith). These nicknames came up in 1956 when an Egyptian newspaper used them because of the fact that these two adjectives had become standard repertoire of their press conferences when diplomatically talking about the necessity to uphold flexibility in trying to cope with fluid situations among conflict parties.[15]

15 See also Urquhart, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit, p. 147.

Even before these special assignments when Smith was press officer to Hammarskjöld, there was already a humorous tone in their correspondence when, for example, they discussed time and space or even science fiction – a topic obviously dear to Smith who made some suggestions for Hammarskjöld to take it up at a lecture for the National Book League that did not, however, come about.[16] Combining this topic and his close working relationship with Hammarskjöld, Smith wrote in November 1957: 'On a lighter note I report that a letter writer to the *Economist* reminds readers that national claims to space will be hard to define, because space is "curved". All lines when projected will meet at infinity. At that stage, he suggests we should send Mr. Hammarskjöld out into space to negotiate. I should like to be your press officer on that trip, and take my dog if I may.'[17] Smith also took care to send Hammarskjöld the first toy soldier representing a UN Blue Helmet. In the accompanying letter of 1 November 1957 he wrote: 'In a lighter vein, I send you herewith the ultimate evidence of its [i.e. UNEF's] acceptance – it now takes its place alongside the Guards and other Regiments of the Line in every English nursery which is the sub-soil of all political life. You may not wish to adorn your desk with these ornaments but I felt you would wish to see what certain "silly little boys" are about to play with. The fact that the manufacturer is called Britain provides an unfortunate political connotation on the lid of the box, but once open it and you will find our men neutralised by blue bonnets and armbands.'[18]

Still, there are some more serious analyses of the UN's role in international affairs that tie in with some of the aspects of Hammarskjöld's philosophy of world organisation.[19] Already in a letter from November 1953 Smith illustrates this by identifying some of the paradoxes underlying the UN Secretariat's work: 'A whole series of paradoxes reveal themselves, e.g. when we cease to think of ourselves as protagonists of a cause, and instead concentrate on effective servicing within the spirit of the cause, we shall be effective. Or again, our disinterested skills will have political influence when we have learned that political influence is not our aim.

16 See also the reply by Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 24 August 1955: 'You have branched off in the direction of mathematics and philosophy. My tendency was to be off at another tangent, psychology and ethics. This is reflected in the double title with which I now toy in the best Victorian way: "The Decadence of Distance or the End of Exotism". One of the poles would be the cheap triumph over distance which in Jules Verne's books got what I still consider to be charmingly naïve expressions, reflecting somehow the childish optimistic materialism of the world exhibitions of our grandfathers. The other pole will be the extreme spiritualism which found its first mature expression in for example the Psalms (If I Took the Wings of Dawn etc.). Somewhere along the line between those two poles I cross the line you are tracing, but I don't think that I would ever come in touch with science fiction and space travelling as anything but symptomatic examples of escapism.' (OX Eng. MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 132)

17 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 13 November 1957 (OX Eng. MS. c. 6488, fol. 170).

18 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 1 November 1957 (OX Eng. MS. c. 6488, fol. 168).

19 This is dealt with in more detail in Manuel Fröhlich, *Dag Hammarskjöld und die Vereinten Nationen. Die politische Ethik des UNO-Generalsekretärs*, Paderborn et al., 2002 as well as *Political Ethics and the United Nations. Dag Hammarskjöld as Secretary-General*, London and New York, 2008. See also Manuel Fröhlich, 'The Quest for a Politial Philosophy of World Organization', in Sten Ask/Anna Mark-Jungkvist (eds), *The Adventure of Peace. Dag Hammarskjöld and the Future of the UN*, New York and Houndmills, 2005, pp. 130–145.

A third obvious paradox is that we shall find security when we cease to seek it; it is our concept of security which at present makes us insecure."[20] Regionally, Middle East affairs are very prominent in, for example, a number of letters and memoranda on the policies of Ben Gurion. It is only in 1960 and 1961 that Smith openly voices his wishes to become more deeply involved in African matters at the UN, something that eventually was realised in various assignments.

The whole correspondence is permeated by references to literature, theatre performances, the arts and philosophy. The list of authors referred to range from Aristotle to William Butler Yeats and from Albert Einstein to Martin Buber – to name just a few.[21] The latter held a special position for Hammarskjöld and Smith. Hammarskjöld had sent Buber's essay collection 'Pointing the Way' to Smith, who answered: 'How typical of you to send Buber at that moment. Many responsive chords were struck especially in "Abstract and Concrete" where he says that it is "impossible to penetrate to the factual through the varnish of political fictitiousness".'[22] Buber's analysis of the underlying forces that dominate the Cold War scenario, which for him basically was an age of distrust, also influenced a number of speeches by Hammarskjöld who shared Buber's diagnosis that many of the political and military problems were in fact problems of human behaviour, trust and communication. Hammarskjöld replied on 29 April 1958: 'I am happy that Buber struck a chord in your U.N. soul as it did in mine. What a truly remarkable fellow and what an influence he might have on his own people if they really listened. […] If we could make him understand our philosophy on Israel it might be of value beyond the human and personal sphere.'[23] Here the relation between political, literary and philosophical concerns becomes very obvious. Smith and Hammarskjöld also shared an appreciation of Saint John Perse whose 'Anabase' Hammarskjöld had probably sent to Smith.[24]

20 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 23 November 1953 (OX MS. Eng. 6488, fol. 126).

21 An alphabetical list of authors whose work is discussed by Smith and Hammarskjöld would include: Aristotle; Bradbury, Ray; Bragg, William; Buber, Martin; Cantwell-Smith, Wilfried; Carlyle, Thomas; Carson, Rachel; Church, Richard; Conrad, Joseph; Cooper, James Fenimore; da Vinci, Leonardo; Descartes, René; Dickens, Charles; Einstein, Albert; Eliot, Thomas Stearns; Emerson, Ralph Waldo; Euclid; Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von; Hakluyt, Richard; Hamilton, Thomas; Hilton, James; Holinshed, Raphael; Homer; Joyce, James; Kafka, Franz; Kingsley, Charles; Kipling, Joseph Rudyard; Lippman, Walter; Maeterlinck, Maurice; Marryat, Frederick; Maugham, William Somerset; Middleton, Drew; Mill, John Stuart; Milton, John; Newton, Isaac; O'Neill, Eugene; Osborne, John; Plato; Pope, Alexander; Pound, Ezra; Priestley, John Boynton; Roper, Trevor; Shakespeare, William; Smuts, Jan Christian; Socrates; Stein, Gertrude; Stephens, James; Toynbee, Theodore Philip; Verne, Jules; Virgil; Wells, Herbert George; Whistler, Charles; Whitehead, William; Whitman, Walt; Wilder, Thornton; Williams, Tennessee; Wilson, Colin; Yeats, William Butler. Smith was also instrumental in Hammarskjöld's efforts to release Ezra Pound. See the article by Marie-Noëlle Little in this volume.

22 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 23 April 1958 (KB DHS).

23 See Fröhlich, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit, pp. 192-211 as well as Manuel Fröhlich, 'Vom Vorposten internationaler Verantwortung und der Einsamkeit des Geistesturmes: Dag Hammarskjöld und Martin Buber' in Martha Friedenthal-Haase/Ralf Koerrenz (eds), *Martin Buber: Bildung, Menschenbild und Hebräischer Humanismus*, Paderborn et al., 2005, pp. 97-114.

24 There is a hint in George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 9 January 1954 (KB DHS): 'The book is delightful. The character of primitive passion and the bewildered thought of the pioneer in a wide Biblical world comes out strongly (…)'. For the background see Marie-Noëlle Little, 'Travellers in Two Worlds. Dag Hammarskjöld and Alexis Leger', in *Development Dialogue* 1/2001, pp. 59-79.

When the English version of *Vägmärken* (Markings) was published in 1965, Smith showed himself disappointed by Auden's work with the text and recalled the special place St John Perse and Buber had for Hammarskjöld. Writing to Max Ascoli, editor of *The Reporter*, who had just written a review of *Markings*, Smith stated: '[Auden's] essay (it was not an introduction in the strictest sense) angered me. As a prelude to a work that concerned itself with self-surrender, it jerked over the surface of life and lost itself in the superficiality and the crust of surface and theories. […] Privately and frankly Auden scarcely knew Dag at all. They dined together very occasionally. I believe I may have been present on the majority of occasions. Dag enjoyed the crackle of Auden's mind, his imagery and his concern with words and forms. […] But not by the wildest stretch of the imagination would I have turned to [him] to write an introduction to such a book. My choice would have been Martin Buber or St. John Perse.'[25]

For both Hammarskjöld and Smith, literature was no distraction from what they perceived to be their official duties. Literature, the arts and philosophy infused the sphere of the political with innovative insights and gave sound orientation beyond the shortsightedness of ideology, pure self-interest and skirmishes for prestige.[26] Speaking for himself, Smith underlines this context in his Boyer Lectures for 1964. Recalling the experience of the Second World War and the Holocaust he said: 'Our claim to culture and to civilisation depends upon a daily proof that we are taking its disciplines and its beauties like a light in every dark corner. It is something to be used, not just boast about.'[27] This conviction was definitely shared by Hammarskjöld who went so far as to directly compare the role of the artist and the politician and to highlight the similarities in poetry and politics.[28] A special manifestation of this common belief of Smith and Hammarskjöld is the contact between the Secretary-General and British sculptor Barbara Hepworth whom Smith had introduced to Hammarskjöld.[29] Their contact would ultimately find expression in the unveiling of Hepworth's sculpture 'Single Form' in front of the UN building in New York. Another concrete artistic project that Hammarskjöld and Smith pursued concerned Hepworth's colleague Henry Moore. Smith, in his draft autobiography, recalls: 'We had many things in common including a love of literature and the Arts in general. I introduced him to Barbara Hepworth and to Henry Moore. As a result of our mutual friendships one finds in front of the UN today, the huge monument to Hammarskjöld by Barbara Hepworth and, more recently, I was able to persuade Henry Moore to place

25 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Max Ascoli, 16 June 1965 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6492, fol. 84).

26 This attitude is illustrated quite nicely in a short note that Smith sent with a copy of T. S. Eliot's essay collection 'On Poetry and Poets 1957/58': 'The Prescription. To be taken in small doses and regularly during long watches of the Assembly. DO NOT SHAKE, because the prose structure is in a weak precipitate and might dissolve.' (Note attached to George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 23 April 1958 KB DHS).

27 Smith, *Edge of Peace*, op. cit, p. 15.

28 See i.a. his Address at the Inauguration of the 25th Anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art 19 October 1954, in Andrew W. Cordier/Wilder Foote (eds.), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume II: Dag Hammarskjöld 1953-1956*, New York and London, 1972, pp. 372-375.

29 For their contact and correspondence see Manuel Fröhlich, 'A Fully Integrated Vision: Politics and the Arts in the Dag Hammarskjöld-Barbara Hepworth Correspondence', in *Development Dialogue* 1/2001, pp. 17-57.

in the garden of the UN New York one of his famous "reclining Figures". It had been Hammarskjöld's last sentence to me before he left on the flight which caused his death. "George, this garden will not be complete until there is a Henry Moore over there." There is now.'[30] In Smith's papers there is a further letter to Tristam Powell, producer at BBC TV who was preparing a programme on Dag Hammarskjöld for which he had interviewed Smith in 1976.[31] Smith again stresses Hammarskjöld's interests beyond politics and administration. Speaking of the renovation of the UN's meditation room that Hammarskjöld supervised, Smith explains: 'The fact is that it was not just a hobby or a relaxation, it was a work that mattered as a further projection of his central concept.'[32] And in a note to Brian Urquhart he summarises: 'Thus to him music, painting, literature, diplomacy and a million other facets of life were not separate departments to which he became addicted. They were unified as expressions of Mind, they were Mind's ideas at different levels and in forms clear or distorted.'[33] Smith and Hammarskjöld congenially shared this outlook on human endeavours and this holistic approach was the background for their close cooperation.

30 Smith, *Assignation*, op. cit. (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fol. 32).

31 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX Eng. c. 6488, fols. 102–109).

32 For a background see Hammarskjöld's text for a visitor's leaflet to the Meditation Room. Dag Hammarskjöld, 'A Room of Quiet', in Andrew W. Cordier/Wilder Foote (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume III: Dag Hammarskjöld 1956-1957*, New York and London, 1973, pp. 710–711.

33 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Max Ascoli, 16 June 1965 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6492, fol. 85).

III

Working at the UN even before Hammarskjöld came to New York, Smith offers a view on the internal perspective on the new Secretary-General and the feelings of his predecessor Trygve Lie. Tor Gjesdal, long-time companion of Lie and Principal Director for Public Information, had informed some of his colleagues at the Office of Public Information (Smith being one of them) about the new Swedish Secretary-General coming to New York and the election process that preceded his nomination.[34] Smith kept this note dated 2 April 1953 in which Gjesdal writes: 'You will probably have learnt from the papers that the election came as a surprise both to Mr. Hammarskjöld personally and to the Swedish authorities. I might add that the surprise was equally evident here, since his name only came up in the very last round.'[35] Gjesdal then points to the fact that Swedish candidates, coming from a neutral country, obviously emerged as a possible compromise between East and West in the Security Council. Before Hammarskjöld, the names of Swedish ambassador Erik Boheman and Gunnar Myrdal had been discussed, with Boheman declining the offer despite strong British and French support for the former Swedish Ambassador in Washington and Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office in Stockholm. Hammarskjöld then appeared on a list that the French delegate gave to his Soviet colleague. In a line that reminds one of Lie's alleged resentments against

34 On this see Brian Urquhart, 'The Secretary-General – Why Dag Hammarskjöld?', in Ask/Mark Jungkvist (eds), *Adventure*, op. cit., pp. 14–23.

35 Tor Gjesdal, Note, 2 April 1953 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 2).

Hammarskjöld, Gjesdal writes: 'I must say that most people here feel very sorry for the man, for the trials and tribulations ahead of him and for which he has not asked.' Hammarskjöld, in contrast to Lie, is portrayed as being more 'technical' and 'cautious', but at least courageous. Gjesdal adds: '[W]e are facing a period in world history when constructive international cooperation in all fields really gets its chance. If that should be so, it can be taken that the Secretariat will have a very highly qualified leader who will leave no stone unturned to get practical results, in the best Swedish traditions.' The superficially balanced words for Smith could not conceal the reservations Lie and Gjesdal had about Hammarskjöld. In a background note to the BBC's Tristam Powell in 1976 Smith referred to Gjesdal's analysis and wrote: 'The letter protests too much. Lie did not want to give up the post and did not want to give it up to an "unknown" Swede. [The letter] kills D. H. with faint praise and wrongly states that D. H. would play a cautious role and not provide the political leadership of Trygve Lie. How wrong and bitter can one get, and it was the writer of this letter who spread early whispers about D. H.'s personal life.'[36] Gjesdal left his post one month after Hammarskjöld took over in order to become Head of Mass Communications at UNESCO.

Despite these early judgements, Hammarskjöld established himself as an indispensable personality at the helm of the world organisation. In a letter to Greta and Leif Belfrage from January 1958 Smith recalls a visit to the Middle East together with Hammarskjöld.[37] The report is a good illustration of Hammarskjöld much-quoted empathy and ability to engage in genuine dialogue: 'The trip to Gaza was also fascinating. I've seen Dag set a very hard pace during a number of missions but this time he excelled even his own high standards. A political negotiation is one thing. Then there is time to judge the weight and character of the persons with whom you are dealing and take a gentle hold of the ideas put forward before deciding how to come to grips with them. However, on this trip he went like a typhoon across the countryside shaking hands and talking with hundreds of men. Sometimes he had only a few minutes in which to make contact with an individual and in which to get across to him as an individual. His performance was quite fantastic. Always the right word and comment and always done with such inner sincerity as to make the men feel the genuineness of purpose behind his visit.' Time and time again, Smith stresses the 'human factor'[38] in international relations and instances like this one strengthened his view that mere institutions and procedures alone cannot account for successful politics. This perspective also determines his recollection of another event during the Middle East trip that he conveys to the Belfrages: 'And just to cap it all we had dinner on Christmas night with Dr. Fawzi. The room was decorated with a Christmas tree, we had turkey, plum pudding and other traditional dishes. Then in the presence of his Egyptian compatriots Fawzi paid Dag the most sincere and moving tribute that you could imagine. Having praised his integrity he asked all Egyptians present to drink to "a true Christian".'

36 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 107).

37 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Greta and Leif Belfrage, 3 January 1958 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fols. 10–11).

38 Smith, *Edge of Peace*, op. cit., p. 17.

Smith also offers a number of observations on Hammarskjöld's particular political and diplomatic style. A first element of this style would be Hammarskjöld's reliance upon a small circle of close advisors. Smith, in his New York days, was a member of that circle when he regularly joined Andrew Cordier and Ralph Bunche for an informal lunch at a nearby restaurant in between Saturday office hours at UN headquarter[39] or even more exclusively at dinners in Hammarskjöld's apartment and walks around his lodge in Brewster or at Long Island.[40] Smith underlines the special place of Cordier: 'Cordier had the next office [to Hammarskjöld's] and he was smart enough never to rush into DH with every paper unless the matter needed immediate attention, so he devised a scheme which worked well. Any papers about issues which he thought DH might wish to see were left on Cordier's table and when D.H. had a free moment, he would wander into the room and casually rifle through the papers giving decisions or suggestions as he went.'[41] Recalling a moment on a Middle East trip with Hammarskjöld, Smith further writes to Cordier some years later that Hammarskjöld said: 'If Andy did not exist he would have to be invented. I need send him only a brief message knowing that he will not only immediately interpret its political and diplomatic essence, but he will call in the heads of all delegations capable of playing some part in the development and he will give each of them precisely the ingredient needed for their role.'[42] While the role of Cordier and Bunche has been acknowleged from various sources,[43] Smith also emphasises the importance of Alfred Katzin who not only played an extraordinary successful role in the clearance of the Suez Canal but who already in 1953 took over special tasks for the Secretary-General:[44] 'When Hammarskjöld assumed office, he found within the Secretariat entrenched interests, divided loyalities, national links with international staff, and much else not consistent with people whose tasks were to work in the interests of the world, influenced only by the principles of the Charter. Hammarskjöld had the concepts but not the stomach to carry through what had to be done – fire people, transfer others, shake up the fabric to fit the pattern. So, "Send for Alf". He did the immensely difficult job superbly and to the best of my knowledge made no enemies when walking through that minefield.'[45]

The second element Smith identifies is a Swedish heritage which he describes in his letter to Powell: 'During one walk, I asked him [Hammarskjöld] if he conceived of a particular diplomatic style for a U.N. Secretary-General. He had. It was to be a classical Swedish style, not because that was his country – never anything as simple as that. He revealed the immensely detailed knowledge he had of diplomatic practices and methods, past and present. "You see, in such a situation the French method would be likely to develop in this pattern; the British in that pattern. The Swedes throughout recent centuries found

39 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 103).

40 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Brian Urquhart, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 83).

41 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 107).

42 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Andrew Cordier, 3 February 1975 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6498 fol. 23).

43 For an overview of the working routine in the Secretariat see also Fröhlich, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit., pp. 232–253.

44 See also Urquhart, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit, p. 79, 199.

45 George Ivan Smith, A Trouble-Shooter for the UN, in *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 4 June 1989, p. 10.

themselves in danger of being ground between gigantic millstones of power. The nature of the power complexes kept changing. At one point it is a Czarist regime, at another point a communist regime. Types of German pressures changed character. The positions of Britain and France in relation to each other, the scramble for colonies and so on and so forth, made it necessary for a small Scandinavian country to develop and maintain an active neutrality – repeat, active. If by accident or design another power infringed that neutrality, they could expect a barrage of reports, legal opinions, public protests." The size of power did not matter.'[46] This testimony is a variation of Hammarskjöld's general conviction that true internationalism does not exclude but rather builds on a well-grounded awareness of one's own origins.[47]

A third element of Hammarskjöld's political style would be his integrative approach which Smith coined 'the orchestral idea': 'Any relevant element was brought into play. It was not only individuals – officials or otherwise – but also different organs of the U.N., World Bank, private sector, the arts, *ad infinitum*. The selection of the individuals, governments or institutions which they either represented or did not represent was part of a detailed and quite brilliant scoring.'[48] The already mentioned use of literature and the arts finds an echo here and is supplemented by Hammarskjöld's careful cooperation with, for example, the AMOCO-businessman Jacob Blaustein as a channel of communication with Ben Gurion and with newspaper mogul William Randolph Hearst Junior as his prime contact with the media.[49] Added to that there were individual arrangements like, for example, the practice of fully briefing the Israeli journalist John Kimche of the *Jewish Observer* whom both Smith and Hammarskjöld cherished as a trustworthy and committed channel of information to Jerusalem.[50]

The interplay of these various elements of his diplomatic style soon manifested itself in a number of political innovations, from the UN Blue Helmets to the Peking Formula or Hammarskjöld's concept of the international civil service. One of these innovations, which came to be established as standard UN practice, was Hammarskjöld's concept of UN presence.[51] In his draft autobiography, Smith recalls the birth of this concept and does indeed claim that its formulation was due to a spontaneous idea: Smith was accompanying the Secretary-General on a trip to Jordan which had become entangled in various tensions with its neighbours (especially Egypt and Syria) complicated further by debates over the withdrawal of US and British troops in the region.[52] Hammarskjöld pondered over the question of how the UN could help in this situation: '[He] discussed

46 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 104).

47 See, for example, Dag Hammarskjöld, '"Know Yourself, Know Your World" Address at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary Meeting of the Swedish Tourist Association, 27 February 1960', in Andrew W. Cordier/Wilder Foote (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume IV: Dag Hammarskjöld 1958-1960*, New York and London, 1974, pp. 545-553.

48 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 104).

49 On this see also Kay Rainey Grey, 'United Nations Notebook. The Relationship of Dag Hammarskjöld with the Press', in *Development Dialogue* 1/1987, pp. 33-58.

50 See George Ivan Smith, Obituary Letter, in *The Guardian*, 8 April 1994, p. 19.

51 On the concept of UN presence see Fröhlich, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit, pp. 283-312.

52 Cf. Urquhart, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit, pp. 293-295.

the problem as we paced up and down on the flat roof of that crummy hotel. It is a nice touch of history, because while he was searching for some kind of diplomatic method, we could see over the road the ruins of an old Greek theatre and chickens were jumping up and down on the stone balconies. So he said, "You see, if we bring military people in, the surrounding Arab states will take that to mean that they were in fact regarded as the threat to Jordan. But something has to be done." (A long pause). "Perhaps just a chap kicking around here …" Later that day at my Press conference, I interpreted that as "U.N. presence". Wish I had not. It began to be used for every future event […] an ointment suggested for every wound."[53] The 'chap' was to be Piero Spinelli, Head of the UN's Geneva office, who conducted a mission in Jordan and thus established the basis for what today is firmly established as a system of personal and special representatives of the Secretary-General.[54] The personal and the political, for Hammarskjöld, formed a symbiosis that was typical of his philosophy and diplomacy.

IV

In his recollections, Smith keeps coming back to two events that, for him, best expressed Hammarskjöld's personality and perspective. These two events, incidentally, had to do with a shared experience in India.[55] Hammarskjöld visited India at the beginning of 1956 and Smith was in his team. During their trip, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru proposed that Hammarskjöld should visit a Punjab village in order to get a first-hand impression of local development and culture in India. Hammarskjöld, together with Smith and his bodyguard William Ranallo, followed this advice. Smith recalls: 'As soon as our party arrived, the villagers began to strike cymbals, to deck us in garlands of flowers, and to march. It was not a march in unison or in line. It was a massive manifestation of human energy. Within a minute one was caught up in the spirit of the event and I saw Hammarskjöld's shoulders go back and his arms began to catch the rhythm. It was the same with Bill and myself. It was all-pervasive. We felt that we were people on the march with them."[56] This moment of emotional understanding, in Smith's view, was also a special moment for Hammarskjöld. In appreciation of the kind and genuine encounter with the people at the village he later on would send their chief some tall, elegant and simple chairs especially crafted by a Danish designer whom Hammarskjöld very much liked.[57] But the coincidence of cultural diversity and human kinship for Hammarskjöld found a further illustration in the dancing to poetry by Tagore which Nehru had arranged for Hammarskjöld's delegation in the evening. These two events shaped

53 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Tristam Powell, 29 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fols. 106-107).

54 See Connie Peck, 'Special Representatives of the Secretary-General', in David M. Malone (ed.), *The UN Security Council. From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, Boulder and London, 2004, pp. 325-339.

55 See, for example, Smith, *Assignation*, op. cit. (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fols. 26-27) as well as George Ivan Smith, 'Transcript of Interview for the United Nations Career Records Project' in 1993 (OX MS. Eng. 4797, fols. 220-221).

56 Smith, *Assignation*, op. cit. (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fols. 26-27).

57 Smith, *Assignation*, op. cit. (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fol. 27).

Hammarskjöld's outlook when he was to give the inevitable speech before his host audience. Smith writes: 'The next evening Hammarskjöld was to give a major speech before an audience of thousands, organised by the Indian Institute of International Affairs. He had a prepared speech about some aspect of the United Nations' role in trying to achieve harmony in international affairs. I saw him about half an hour before he was due to deliver the speech, glancing through the text. He then put it aside and when he went on to the platform, he did not speak from that text at all. He spoke from the heart about the experience of being with the people in the villages. It was by far the best speech I have ever heard him give. It had an eloquence because it was free from the qualifications and the safety devices that the U.N. Secretary-General normally must use in public speeches. The audience caught the echoes of the feelings that had been aroused for us in their own villages. There was a yearning, shared by the speaker and his audience, to do more to elevate the human race, to consider and help with leadership, those human beings in the deprived areas in which they were born to "eke out their lives in quiet despair".'

The text of this, mainly extemporaneous, speech can be found in the public papers of the Secretary-General.[58] Hammarskjöld had decided to reflect upon the work of the United Nations by referring to Saint Paul and the Christian trias of faith, hope, charity: '[I]n simple human terms the United Nations stands as a symbol of faith. It is also an instrument for action inspired by hope, and in many corners of the world it stands as a framework for acts of charity.'[59] Hammarskjöld did not want to lecture his mainly Hindu audience on Western ideology; quite the contrary: He referred to the Christian trias because it 'reflects ideas common to all philosophies and all great religions'.[60] The work of the United Nations therefore builds on this commonality of human conduct and experience: 'With respect to the United Nations as a symbol of faith, it may in this perspective be said that to every man it stands as a kind of "yes" to the ability of man to form his own destiny, and form his own destiny so as to create a world where the dignity of man can come fully into its own.'[61] This already implies a solidarity beyond local and national communities: '[T]he United Nations also appears as a framework for charity […] It is no news to anybody, but we sense it in different degrees, that our world of today is more than ever before *one* world. The weakness of one is the weakness of all, and the strength of one – not the military strength, but the real strength, the economic and social strength, the happiness of people – is indirectly the strength of all. Through various developments which are familiar to all, world solidarity has, so to say, been forced upon us. This is no longer a choice of enlightened spirits; it is something which those whose temperament leads them in the direction of isolationism have also to accept.

58 Dag Hammarskjöld, 'The United Nations – Its Ideology and Activities. Address before the Indian Council of World Affairs 3 February 1956', in Andrew W. Cordier/Wilder Foote (eds), *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. Volume II: Dag Hammarskjöld 1953-1956*, New York and London, 1972, pp. 658–673. Starting his speech, Hammarskjöld claimed that he did not have the chance to carefully prepare a manuscript during his recent travels and asks his audience 'to accept today a speech without text, a rather rambling speech, from notes which I made on the plane coming here' (658).

59 Hammarskjöld, *The United Nations*, op. cit., p. 659.

60 Hammarskjöld, *The United Nations*, op. cit., p. 659.

61 Hammarskjöld, *The United Nations*, op. cit., p. 660.

In such a world it is impossible to maintain the status of "haves" and "have-nots", just as impossible as it has grown to be inside the national state."[62] These words of human kinship, real solidarity and a common purpose may be regarded as a direct echo of Hammarskjöld's experience in the Punjab village. Already at the beginning of his speech he had said that 'coming here now to India for the second time, I longed to have an occasion to establish a contact – a contact of mind, and I may add perhaps, of spirit'. The speech before the Indian Institute for International Affairs is a direct manifestation of this spiritual contact with political implications. Smith further recalls: 'He ended his speech to a raptly attentive audience by referring to the cultural evening at the Prime Minister's house and to the dance. He then quoted the lines from Tagore's poem that was reflected by the dancers. "Listen to the rumbling in the clouds, O heart of mine! – then you must leave, yes always leave for the unknown assignation."'[63] In the verbatim record of the Public Papers, the last line reads: 'Listen to the rumblings of the clouds, oh heart of mine. Be brave, brake through and leave for the unknown assignation."[64] Hammarskjöld gave his own interpretation of Tagore and thereby linked the Christian words from the beginning with Indian poetry: 'I think that these lines, which – at least to me, as a European, seem typical of deep trends of thought in this people, express in a very noble way the attitude we must take to this venture which is the United Nations. We may listen to the rumbling of the clouds, but we can never afford to lose that kind of confidence in ourselves and in the wisdom of man which makes us brave enough to break through and leave – always leave – for the unknown assignation."[65] Smith repeats his recollection of the speech in an interview with the Oral History Project where he judges it to be 'the best speech I have ever heard him give, it was absolutely from the heart'.[66]

For Smith and Hammarskjöld, Tagore stood for yet another shared experience. During the Suez crisis Smith was asked by the BBC to give his personal evaluation of Hammarskjöld as a kind of background information for a feature programme. Smith, in a note to Brian Urquhart, writes: 'It went along these lines. The central factor was integrity. I don't mean that he keeps his hands off the cash – that you can take for granted. Still less do I mean well integrated in the sense that psychiatrists and psychologists use the phrase. The integrity I refer to is of a universal character. He seems to believe in the existence of one Mind and to see all natural activity as the consequent expression of that mind. To illustrate the point I quoted Tagore: "Thou hast made me endless such [i]s [t]hy pleasure. Th[is] frail vessel thou emptiest again and again[,] and fillest it ever with fresh life. This little flute of a reed thou hast carried over hills and dales[,] and [hast] breathed through it melodies eternally new. [At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart loses its limits in joy and gives birth to utterance ineffable.] Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very small hands of mine. Ages pass[,] and still thou pourest[,]

62 Hammarskjöld, *The United Nations*, op. cit., p. 661.
63 Smith, *Assignation*, op. cit. (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fol. 27).
64 Hammarskjöld, *The United Nations*, op. cit., p. 673.
65 Hammarskjöld, *The United Nations*, op. cit., p. 673.
66 George Ivan Smith, 'Transcript of Interview for the United Nations Career Records Project' in 1993 (OX MS. Eng. 4797, fol. 221).

and still there is room to fill."[67] My letter went on to say that it was in this context that I judged Dag's integrity to be uppermost. It was integrity of an instrument. He did not fix himself about the differences between painting, literature, religion, politics. They were manifestations at different levels, and with different values of Mind. I ventured the view that he found a great deal of his tireless energy by seeing himself as an instrument in the manner described by Tagore.'[68] Tagore, in other words, stands for a variation of the orchestral idea described above.

After Smith had sent this note to the BBC he did, however, have second thoughts about it and feared that it might have intruded too much on Hammarskjöld's personality. So he showed the draft of the letter to Hammarskjöld in order to find out if he should withdraw his already delivered information to the BBC. Smith recalls: 'At the risk of sounding melodramatic, I tell you that the letter had a terrific impact on him. After he read it he sat silently for what seemed to be an interminable length of time. I thought I was about to be fired but he turned to me and said "you are the first person that has ever understood this about me".' This little anecdote clearly shows the unique kind of relationship that George Ivan Smith and Dag Hammarskjöld shared. Nothing could better illustrate this common point of reference than the fact that Smith had wanted to use the notion from Tagore ('The unknown assignation') as the title for his autobiography. Needless to say, in Smith's autobiography one out of 12 chapters was designed to deal exclusively with 'Dag Hammarskjöld: A Personal Assessment of the Man and his Achievements'.[69]

This assessment clearly would not have been confined to Hammarskjöld, the political man. In his letter to Urquhart, Smith gave his colleague some impressions on his view of Hammarskjöld, stating 'that the closest links I had with Dag stemmed not from the professional side and OPI [the Office of Public Information] – (even though that went fairly well in the Middle East and over Suez) but in a curious way it came from the kind of background reflected in Markings.'[70] Smith even says that he was close to Hammarskjöld only 'for a fairly short time' because there obviously were some administrative (not personal) difficulties after he changed over to OPI (he states that he was seen as 'DH's man' in the arguments about the controversial Expert Committee Report). The event that Smith then uses to illustrate his relationship with Hammarskjöld goes back to the Secretary-General's first visit to London where he was also invited to Smith's private home. Hammarskjöld went through the books in Smith's private library and found an anthology of poetry with some texts that Smith had written years before. Smith recalls: '[T]wo of the poems attracted Dag's attention. Luckily for you, I cannot remember them in full and the anthology's in storage somewhere. However, one of them was called

67 The lines are from Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali. A Collection of Prose Translations. Made by the Author from the Original Bengali*. With an introduction by W. B. Yeats, New York, 1997, p. 17. The text won Tagore the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. Insertions were made according to the original text in Poem No. 1.

68 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Brian Urquhart, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 82).

69 See the draft table of contents in Smith, *Assignation*, op. cit. (OX MS. Eng. c. 6519, fol. 187).

70 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Brian Urquhart, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 81).

"Meditations" and the general idea was that prayer in the real sense was only possible when "human will and sense are still – there in the quiet to pray." One of the other poems was concerned with the curious riddle that man destroys the essence of what he loves by trying to possess it. Oscar Wilde […] said it more bluntly "all men kill the things they love". […] I cannot remember the whole poem but some of the phrases were along the lines that "holding is sadness, losing is gladness – but oh it is bitterness too." Dag said – and I did not understand the phrase until I read Markings – "you too".'[71]

Markings is indeed another topic that one can find in Smith's papers. As his letter to Urquhart states, Smith was not aware of the fact that Hammarskjöld kept this sort of diary. Later on, he would recall that he had witnessed Hammarskjöld reading from a book of psalms during the Suez crisis.[72] It was, however, also during a visit to the Middle East, that Hammarskjöld had confessed his deep spiritual yearning to Smith: 'I recall a long walk with him at Jerusalem. We were going up and down inside the compound because diplomatically he could not easily go into Israel or Jordan. On one side there was the clear sight of Jerusalem and on the other side the hills of Moab and of the village where Lazarus was raised from the dead. It was probably under the impact of the surroundings that he revealed to me for the first time the intense strength of his Christianity. He never gave the faintest inkling that he was writing a diary but I now recall books that he was studying at a particular time and finding subsequently a relationship between them and some entry in Markings.'[73] This correlation between *Markings* and actual political developments in Hammarskjöld's tenure of office was first explored by Henry van Dusen in his 'Dag Hammarskjöld: The Man and his Faith'.[74] Talking about van Dusen's book in a letter to Ann Barber from 1976, Smith writes: 'As mentioned on the telephone, I was a Visiting Professor at Princeton University where van Dusen was Professor of Theology. I tried to discourage him from writing a book of this kind because Hammarskjöld always told me that there was no such thing as "international morality" and therefore I never expected that he would relate his Christian principles – on a mystical level – to mundane affairs like Suez or Congo. However, van Dusen, very receptively, read "Markings" and related entries to events. In some cases, it works. I know that on various trips, Dag was reading this or that concerning different religions. I now see how those readings related to the entries of that date.'[75] The Belfrages, who were in charge of deciding whether they should publish *Markings* were

71 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Brian Urquhart, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 82).

72 George Ivan Smith, Transcript of Interview for the United Nations Career Records Project in 1993 (OX MS. Eng. 4797, fol. 214).

73 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Brian Urquhart, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 83).

74 Cf. Henry P. van Dusen, *Dag Hammarskjöld: The Man and his Faith*, New York/Evanston/London, 1969.

75 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Ann Barber, 24 May 1976 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 89).

in close contact with Smith.[76] His criticism of Auden has already been mentioned and he further argues: 'Incidentally I think Auden was wrong to avoid Waymarks as a title. It was used by writers like Emerson in precisely the form I think Dag intended, i.e. "finding the way". I think it is used in The Bible but I can't quote the reference without research. I am quite certain it was used in the last century in the context of Pilgrimage. Markings is cave-dweller stuff.'[77] The shortcomings of the English translation of *Markings* have recently been highlighted by Kaj Falkman and Bernhard Erling.[78] Smith obviously felt a responsibility for the authentic remembrance of Hammarskjöld – a feeling that also inspired his investigations into the Ndola air crash.

V

Smith continued to be influenced and inspired by Hammarskjöld for the rest of his life and his continuous efforts to search for an explanation of the Ndola air crash are part of the special relationship that they had. His investigations cover some 30 to 40 years and are rich with detail and different traces that he followed.[79] Essentially, Smith came up with an update or new version of his theory every ten years after Hammarskjöld's death: For the first time together with Knut Hammarskjöld (who at that time was Director-General of the International Air Transport Association) in a 1971 BBC programme,[80] in 1980 together with the Swedish film producer Gunnar Möller-

76 See, for example, Greta and Leif Belfrage, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 14 September 1963 (OX MS Eng. c. 6488, fols. 48-52). The letter conveys the Belfrage's decision to publish 'Vägmärken'. It gives a remarkable introduction into Hammarskjöld's notes (mainly in the words of Greta) addressed to Smith: 'It is shattering reading, of his struggle with himself, of the strong belief he has in himself as having been "chosen", of his never-faltering will to be led in his life and his work only by this God, who once spoke to him and called him. Aphorisms, ethical reflections, but also nature descriptions and lyrics of, sometimes, such a beauty and so loaded of meaning, that it will go to the heart to even the coldest reader. […] This "profile" that Dag thinks himself is the only adequate one will add something to your picture of him, but it certainly is not the whole truth, impossible as it is for us all to see ourselves from all angles, sincere though we may be. […] I look at your photos from Ndola and of course we know, even if we will never say so to anybody else, that he was a saint.'

77 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Brian Urquhart, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 83).

78 See Kai Falkman, 'Signposts in the Wrong Direction. W. H. Auden's Misinterpretations of Dag Hammarskjöld's Markings', in *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 September 1999, pp. 14-15 and Warren Hoge, 'Swedes dispute Translation of U.N. Legend's Book', in *The New York Times*, 22 May 2005, p. 3 as well as the alternative and the new translation by Bernhard Erling, *A Reader's Guide to Dag Hammarskjöld's Waymarks*, St. Peter, 1999.

79 Smith also kept a collection of further hints and theories in his papers. These include information on Major Joseph Delin, a Belgian mercenary pilot ('Lone Ranger') who flew the Fouga jet in Katanga. Another story that came up was the testimony of Francis Bodenan who had kidnapped Tshombe and brought him to Algeria. Bodenan claimed that Tshombe was behind the plane crash. According to this theory, one of Tshombe's agents, dressed as a technician, had boarded the plane of the Secretary-General and removed the flight map for Ndola. When the plane later needed help from the air traffic controller at Ndola it was given deliberately false information on altitudes etc., that led to the plane crash. See Harry Debelius, 'Tshombe linked with Hammarskjöld death', in *The Times*, 1 February 1981 (OX MS Eng. c. 6491 fols. 8-9). Smith even had a correspondence with the lawyer Bernard Fensterwald who headed a 'Committee to Investigate Assassinations' and was involved in the investigations after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. See George Ivan Smith, Letter to Bernard Fensterwald, 1 October 1971 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fols. 86-87).

80 See the 'Transcript of Tape from 24 Hours (BBC) Programme', 27 September 1971 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6491, fols. 10-13).

stedt and in a report for the *Observer*[81] and finally in 1992 together with Conor Cruise O'Brien[82] in an article for the *Guardian*.[83] Although there have been variations and sometimes contradictions within this evolving theory, the core of it can be described as a kidnapping that went wrong. This theory has been dismissed most notably by Bengt Rösiö who was commissioned by the Swedish Foreign Ministry to look into the case after Smith and O'Brien came out with their story. On the basis of intensive research and also several conversations with Smith Rösiö concluded that the crash was most probably a consequence of what is know as CFIT or 'Controlled Flight Into Terrain', a phenomenon that led to the establishment of 'Ground Proximity Warning Systems' not yet common in 1961.[84]

Although its final conclusion has been dismissed, the papers of Smith allow for a detailed reconstruction of his argument and material. The story has its origins in a night in January 1967 at a Paris opera house, when Claude de Kemoularia, another member of the UN staff during Hammarskjöld's time, was approached by the UPI journalist Robert Ahier who had made the acquaintance of some Belgian mercenaries claiming they had killed Hammarskjöld. Kemoularia agreed to meet these people in order to find out more about the trustworthiness of their story. Although there was always the suspicion that the mercenaries were out for money in selling a big story, Kemoularia decided to meet with these mercenaries who introwduced themselves as de Troye (or de Croix) and Grant (or Grent). Their argument was that one of their 'colleagues' involved at Ndola in September 1961, a pilot called Beukels, wanted to rid himself of

81 See George Ivan Smith, 'Mercenaries Accused of Killing Hammarskjöld', in *The Observer*, 18 May 1980 (OX MS. Eng. 6491, fols. 2-3).

82 O'Brien, being a direct actor in the events in the Congo of September 1961 had previously published a controversial account of his perspective blaming various UN colleagues – see Conor Cruise O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back. A UN Case History*, London, 1962. In 'George Ivan Smith: True Believer in Role of UN', in *The Guardian*, 22 November 1995, p. 17, an obituary for his friend and colleague, O'Brien recalled the fierce debate about his book and Smith's symptomatic reaction: 'George was, at this time, head of the UN Information Office in London and he was, of course, asked about my book. His reply, to which he added nothing, was simply: "Wonderful … Irish … poetry!" When I read that reply I laughed aloud. George had done it again. He had retained the confidence of his institution, without giving offence to his friend.'

83 See David Pallister, 'Mercenaries "Killed UN Chief in Air Crash"', in *The Guardian*, 11 September 1992 (OX MS. Eng. c. 4702, fol. 225) and George Ivan Smith, 'My Evidence to Show How Dag Died', in *The Mirror* (Lesotho), 9 October 1992 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6516, fol. 113) as well as George Ivan Smith/Conor Cruise O'Brien, 'Hammarskjöld plane crash "no accident"', in *The Guardian*, 9 November 1992, p. 18, and Conor Cruise O'Brien, 'Foul Play on the Albertina', in *The Guardian*, 25 September 1992, p. 19. O'Brien also saw a connection between the British Government of Harold Macmillan, the Rhodesian Government and diverse commercial interests in the Congo: 'They did not conspire against Hammarskjöld, but I believe they conspired to cover up the conspiracy.' He further stated his view in his autobiography: O'Brien, *Memoir*, op. cit, pp. 230ff.

84 Cf. Bengt Rösiö, 'Searching the Sky', in The Guardian, 13 March 1993, p. 26. For an overview regarding the various theories about the Ndola plane crash see i.a. Bengt Rösiö, 'The Ndola Air Crash and the Death of Dag Hammarskjöld', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 31/1996, pp. 661-671, Hughes, 'The Strange Death of Dag Hammarskjöld', op. cit., Hughes, 'Diary', op. cit., and Fröhlich, *Hammarskjöld*, op. cit., pp. 372-378 with further references. The official inquiries by Rhodesia and the UN tended to conclude that the crash was due to an accident and maybe a pilot error, although especially the UN report would not rule out other explanations.

the events in Africa when he unintentionally shot down the plane of the Secretary-General. According to their story Beukels had been given the order to intercept and redirect Hammarskjöld's plane en route to his meeting with Tshombe. Instead of going to Ndola he was to bring the plane to land at Kolwezi[85] where a strange group of people representing various European political and business interests were assembled in order to meet the Secretary-General and convince him of their perspective on the 'rightful' secession of Katanga. The group was represented by an even more dubious 'Mr. X' who, as a mercenary, is said to have been the effective governmental authority in Katanga behind and above Moise Tshombe.[86] Intercepting Hammarskjöld for them was a kind of last resort since they saw their influence shattered by the prospect of a peaceful mediation between Hammarskjöld and Tshombe. According to the mercenaries they had two planes in the air in order to spot Hammarskjöld's plane, the Albertina, and the pilots were constantly informed about the confidential flight route. When Beukels spotted the Secretary-General's plane he directed his search lights to it, established radio contact with the pilot and asked him to fly to Kolwezi. Then, however, Beukels gained the impression that the aircraft wanted to continue its landing manoeuvre for Ndola airport. He then fired a warning shot that – according to his own testimony – mistakenly hit the plane at the rear and caused it to crash. Beukels said that he stood on some kind of trial for this when he returned to Kolwezi and feared that his principals would kill him. Even in 1967 he seemed to have suffered from ill health and alcohol problems.

The problem with such a theory, apart from some unresolved technical questions, is of course that trusting mercenaries some time after the event is a rather risky thing. The second objection is even more important: the logic of planning to hijack the UN Secretary-General, talk to him and hope to see his attitudes changed when he was released again is rather strange. Smith himself was confronted with this objection already in 1971 when he answered in a BBC interview: 'Mercenaries are men who fish in troubled waters. They are not academics, they are not clerics. As often as not they are psychotics or soldiers of fortune and you would expect acts of lunacy from them.'[87] But this seems to be a rather weak line of defence. With these objections stated, one nonetheless has to stress that the amount of detail that Kemoularia and Smith gathered is really astonishing. Their written report which stems from four cassettes[88] on which they taped their thoughts and Kemoularia's recollections of his meetings with the mercenaries covers some 70 pages and includes a number of very specific points on altitude,

85 There is also reference to Kamina air base which was, however, held by the UN and not by mercenaries. See letter by Bengt Rösiö to the author, 7 November 2005.

86 In this context see also George Ivan Smith, 'Tshombe, the Congo's troublemaker', in *The Herald* (Melbourne), 1 January 1963 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6516, fols. 26-27).

87 'Transcript of Tape from 24 Hours (BBC) Programme', 27 September 1971 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6491, fols. 10-12).

88 Four Cassettes Containing Dictation by Smith, no date (OX MS. Eng. e. 3254).

flight directions, equipment etc.[89] Their theory ties in with a slightly different version reconstructed by the operational head of Transair, the company from which the Albertina was chartered, Bo Virving, and further speculation on possible aircrafts used in the 'kidnapping'.[90] It is also compatible with the claims of various eye witnesses that were not properly considered by the Rhodesian Commission of Inquiry in 1961.[91] Last but not least, Smith was able to draw further suspicion from his interview with the airport manager at Ndola (who said that one may never know the true story behind it, but that he was right to investigate).[92] Beyond the Ndola investigations, Smith had a direct personal inter-

89 'Transcript of Dictation by Smith', no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6490, fols. 74–144).

90 Virving had also claimed that the plane of the Secretary-General had been intercepted and fired upon or even 'bombed' by hostile aircrafts. In Smith's papers there is a report by Virving dated 15 November 1979 that is in fact a rewritten manuscript of Virving's original report from 23 January 1962 (Bo Virving, 'Report on Reconstruction of Probable Sequence of Events Leading up to the Crash on September 18th, 1961', of Aircraft SE-BDY at Ndola 15 November 1979 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6490, fols. 59–65). With the manuscript there are also some photos and maps (Miscellaneous Material (OX MS. Eng. c. 6490 fols. 66–69)) showing a plane at Kolwezi airport in August/September 1961, the presumed flight routes of the planes involved as well as a photo of the radardome of SE-BDY which Smith or someone else marked as 'possibly penetrated by a bullet'. Virving also attaches great importance to the witness statements that he claims have been suppressed by the Rhodesian Commission of Inquiry. Among Smith's papers one can also find the copy of a report from an ONUC intelligence team whose task was to examine all remaining Katagese aircraft on a visit to Kolwezi and Jadotville in January 1963 ('Report ONUC Intelligence', 22 February 1963 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6490, fols. 54–58)). The implied message of this report is that the Katangese airforce, via Angola, South Africa and Rhodesia, possessed not only the Fouga jet but also some De Havilland Doves and Vampires. Explosives found at Kolwezi gave further ground to the suspicion that there were efforts to equip and reconstruct these aircrafts for transport and use of specially constructed bombs.

91 See, for example, the 'Witness Statement of Timothy Jiramda Kankasa' (later a state minister in Zambia), no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6491, fol. 173) and the 'Transcript of Interview with Timothy Kankasa', 6 October 1979 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6491, fols. 181–185). Kankasa testified that he saw two planes in the sky. In addition to Kankasa's testimony a European District Commissioner pledged to know that a pilot with the name of Beukels was indeed operating in the Ndola area at the time (this is contrary to Rösiö's intensive research which did not bring up the name Beukels in available records; see letter to the author 7 November 2005) and a British naval commander whose car was hit by some sort of bullet on a road near the crash site. Smith's theory may also tie in with the report of Harold Julien, the sole survivor for some time after the crash, who spoke of a flash in the sky (presumably the search lights) and Hammarskjöld's order to turn back. Smith himself listened to the tape of Julien's interrogation and claims that he cannot be dismissed as being in a kind of feverish trauma but that just before his recollections of the last minutes on board he was able to give correctly his name, address, telephone number, etc. See George Ivan Smith, Letter to Sir Roy Welensky, 6 November 1979 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6502, fol. 158).

92 In a letter to Andrew Cordier he reports the scene with the officer at the Ndola control tower: 'I asked him how it was that they couldn't have seen the fire from the crash. I put this question while we were in the control tower and he seemed to recall that after he had been contacted by Dag's plane he was very busy in other parts of the tower and was not specially looking out beyond the airport. He also made the point that in any case it was the time of the year for bush fires and burnings. But after we had gone through all of the courtesies and as I was about to leave, he said: "You know, it is very mysterious. We may never know what happened to that aircraft." I couldn't press him, but in the context of our conversation I was given a firm impression that he didn't believe in the story of the pilot error.' George Ivan Smith, Letter to Andrew Cordier, 12 June 1964 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6498, fol. 8).

est in the actions of Katangese mercenaries at the time since he himself, together with Brian Urqhart, was kidnapped and beaten in November 1961 – a plot which he attributes to the sinister workings of a certain mercenary called 'van Rooy'.[93] Smith obviously knew a lot of the people in Katanga at the time and even had contacts with various mercenaries: he names various colonels in charge of foreign mercenaries (Colonel Faulques,[94] Jan Zumbach (a Polish arms dealer) as well as Colonel Lamoumine, a former Belgian Army major in charge of 'military technical assistance' in Katanga)[95] and visited the infamous Elephant and Castle Bar in Ndola, a popular meeting-point for various mercenaries.[96] Against all this detailed knowledge one is struck by the fact that he would not have been able to hear or even identify the supposedly almighty Mr X behind the alleged kidnapping at Ndola.

Another avenue Smith tried to explore was his contact with Sir Roy Welensky, the Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, whom he suspected of at least knowing more than he said. His effort with Welensky is symptomatic, since the former Prime Minister seems to be open and even friendly but gives only so much detail, leaving Smith in limbo between suspicion and verification. For example, Smith also asked Welensky specifically about the possibility that an aircraft hitherto unaccounted for (a Havilland Dove) could have tuned into the radio contact between the Albertina and the Ndola control tower. Such a further aircraft would in fact have broadened the possibility of interception since the only known aircraft of the Katangese airforce in the region, a Fouga jet, most probably did not have the range for such an undertaking.[97] In a letter from 1979 Smith argued: 'It was straightforward mercenary business and I have built up a very substantial amount of data. For historical reasons I think it most important that I leave in my records every detail possible to emphasise that it was the mercenaries, acting on their own, who brought this about. Even Moise [Tshombe] had little or no control over many of their actions because in point of fact they, the mercenaries, did not want a cease-fire. Some of them wanted to

93 Cf. Brian Urquhart, *A Life in Peace and War*, New York, 1987, pp. 179–184 as well as O'Brien, *Memoir*, op. cit, pp. 248–253. Smith kept a 'Confidential Note on Conversation with Roger Asonong', no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6472, fol. 102–104) in which he reports from a meeting with Asonong, an opaque 'press correspondent' who had contacts to various parties in Katanga and who supported Smith's theory that a Belgian group of 'right-wing interests opposed to Spaak working closely with the mercenaries' led by a certain van Rooy had a major share in the beating and kidnapping.

94 See also Knut Hammarskjöld, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 5 February 1963 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 36): 'In one of your earlier letters […] you mentioned that during the fatal month of September 1961 a more or less permanent helicopter liaison was kept between Katanga elements in Ndola and Elizabethville and other places in the province. I now understand that during all this time a psychological warfare commando, led by the famous French Colonel Faulques, was stationed at Ndola. This commando is said to have consisted of 4 mercenaries. It is also said to have directed Tshombe's external propaganda, specially to the West. I wonder if you ever heard about this during your visits to the place, and, if this is the case, the names of the other three officers are known to you. It would also be of great interest to me to know anything about their professional qualities, radio- and electronic equipment etc.'

95 See also the information from a letter by Rösiö to the author, 7 November 2005, as well as Hughes, 'Diary', op. cit., p. 4.

96 George Ivan Smith, Letter to David Owen, 1 June 1962 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6458, fol. 98).

97 Sir Roy Welensky, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 29 October 1979 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6502, fol. 156).

go on fishing in muddy waters for financial gain but there were others from the OAS in Algiers who had a political motive, albeit one that was both crazy and unobtainable.'[98] In a further draft letter to Welensky, Smith wrote: 'Dear Roy, please help me solve this. I now have everything except the last links and it has become a point of personal importance – as a close friend of Dag's, to set the record straight.'[99] Welensky suggested that Smith should go to the police if his and Kemoularia's story about the Belgian mercenaries was right.[100] The former Prime Minister continuously tried to refute Smith's suspicions and especially his theory that Rhodesia might have helped the Katangese government and mercenaries in a plot. He wrote: 'I never made any secret of the fact that my sympathies were with Tshombe but I would say that if there were two men in Central Africa, who had need for Hammarskjöld to stay alive, it was Tshombe and myself, because I have always believed that the thing that sparked off the attack on the Post Office and really brought about the bloodshed that developed, were the attitudes of two men C. C. O'Brien and Kahari the Indian representative. Neither Tshombe or I had any reason for wanting the death of Hammarskjöld.'[101]

The ambivalence of information from Rhodesia, for Smith, can be further seen in a letter to David Owen, Executive Chairman of the UN's Technical Assistance Board, dated 1 June 1962. Smith reports a story about the events in Ndola from a conversation with H. N. Parry, Permanent Secretary to Welensky at the time: 'The Ndola plane crash was also still on everybody's mind. Parry repeated what a number of other officials told me, "We completely underestimated the extent to which world opinion might associate us directly or indirectly with having in some way caused the disaster". He told me how he had been waiting at Salisbury for the talks to begin. At some stage of the proceedings he was with Lord Alport. Whether it was in the early hours of the morning of the crash or towards 8 or 9 a.m. before the search began I am not sure but he described how he and the group of officials were all terribly puzzled as to where the Secretary-General had gone and why. He said that the idea of a crash just hadn't occurred to them. You will recall from the evidence at the enquiry that the Airport Manager's first faint fears about the plane having failed to land were allayed when he heard Lord Alport express the view that there had been some doubt as to whether Hammarskjöld was going to have the talks and that he'd probably flown off somewhere else. It seems that this same

98 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Sir Roy Welensky, 6 November 1979 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6502, fols. 157-158).

99 George Ivan Smith, Draft Letter to Sir Roy Welensky, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6502, fol. 167).

100 See Sir Roy Welensky, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 24 June 1980 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6490, fol. 171): 'I will not repeat what I said to you in an earlier letter. The odds of dropping a bomb from one plane to another – at 10 or 11 o'clock on a black African night, are fantastic […] I must admit I find it intriguing for you to refer to someone who says the gentleman possesses a file in support of the fact that the plane was attacked in the air and that he has met two of the pilots that were involved. George, if he is an honourable man, he ought to go straight to the authorities because if there is any truth in the statements that these people made, then they are party to murder, and as far as I know, murder is a crime in almost every country of the world, and it certainly was under Federal Jurisdiction and Northern Rhodesia was part of the Federation at that time.'

101 Sir Roy Welensky, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 27 May 1980 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6502, fol. 163).

kind of thinking was going on at Salisbury and it was only after they'd got a negative response to a check on other airfields which they'd sent to find out where and why the S.G. had gone, did they think of a disaster. I told him that when the story first broke I heard far more suggestions that the disaster had been caused by the direct action of the Fouga jet rather than by any Rhodesian action. He said, "I can tell you something interesting on that. After we'd learned that the plane was missing there was, of course, a terrible state of tension here. And I well remember Tshombe suddenly telling us that it couldn't conceivably have been the Fouga jet because it was out of commission. Almost immediately afterwards he was distressed at having said that obviously because he felt that he had given away a military secret of some importance. He looked embarrassed and then implored us not to mention that fact to anybody." (I must say that Tshombe is such an actor that I find this story highly revealing. I interpreted it absolutely in another way from Parry. I take it to mean that Tshombe was afraid that the Fouga might have been responsible and he registered a quick defence with his usual histrionics)."[102] Ndola continued to be on Smith's mind right until the end of his life and he stood to his unflinching conviction that it was not a mere accident.[103]

VI

George Ivan Smith and Dag Hammarskjöld were companions on a journey full of 'unknown assignations' in Tagore's words and reminiscent of the challenges described by Conrad. Hammarskjöld, for his part, was unusually outspoken in naming the merits of George Ivan Smith when on 24 May 1956 he wrote: 'I should have written to you long ago first of all in order to thank you for invaluable assistance on all levels: as political adviser, as an incredibly skilled public relations man, as general caretaker of a sometimes somewhat helpless group, and a very fine, understanding and stimulating personal friend."[104] They did share a common view on the role of the United Nations which Smith, referring to Hammarskjöld, also summarised under the necessity for a diplomacy of reconciliation. In November 1957 he had given a speech on this topic before a sceptical British audience at the Oxford Union and described the reaction as 'incredible' and supportive.[105] In another draft for a speech at a seminar at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation Smith relates the rationale for a 'diplomacy of reconciliation' to the Biblical stories of reconciliation present in the story of the prodigal son or of Joseph sold by his brothers.[106] In other words, Smith, much the same as Hammar-

102 George Ivan Smith, Letter to David Owen, 1 June 1962 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6458, fols. 94–95).

103 In that effort he at times was inclined to embrace dubious information as Bengt Rösiö who met Smith several times and entertained a cordial relationship with Smith witnessed on a number of occasions. See his statement in a letter to the author, 7 November 2005.

104 Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to George Ivan Smith, 24 May 1956 (OX MS. Eng. 6488, fol. 140).

105 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Dag Hammarskjöld, 13 November 1957 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 170): 'The response was incredible.' In Smith's papers there are, however, no records of the speech before the Oxford Union. See a letter dated 3 March 2006 from Archivist Graeme C. Hall to the author.

106 Cf. George Ivan Smith, Draft Manuscript of a Speech Given at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, no date (OX MS. Eng. c. 6515, fols. 176–185).

skjöld, underlined the spiritual and ethical basis for constructive politics. In this context it is remarkable that it was Smith who conveyed Hammarskjöld's last sentences before heading for Ndola to Martin Buber, the philosopher of dialogue whom both cherished: 'By a series of chances I was not with him [Hammarskjöld] on his last trip to Africa. In the course of the funeral service at Uppsala, Dr Linner told me that before Dag boarded the aircraft, almost the last conversation he had with Linner concerned your work. He was translating some of it into Swedish while he was at Leopoldville and, almost certainly, in the aircraft on the way to Ndola. Linner said that the last words he remembered Dag saying before the aircraft took off referred to your work and to medieval mystics. "Love, for them," he said, "was a surplus of power which they felt completely filled them when they began to live in self-forgetfulness".'[107]

Smith advocated and was indeed the prototype of a new species of 'International Man'[108] that had to overcome the short-sightedness of national interest in order to cope with the myriad of problems that the 20th century had brought with its scientific progress, its ideological aberrations, nationalistic excesses and violent conflicts. The international civil servant, for example in the form of a UN blue helmet for Smith as well as Hammarskjöld represented a hope for the future. In Smith's words: 'It's only another example of how an individual, if he represents a set of principles, can, without force of arms, help to create an atmosphere in which the peace is kept – in which the parties themselves are able to keep the peace.'[109] Decades after his time with Hammarskjöld, Smith, even as a retired international civil servant, kept engaging himself in contemporary debates about the problems of humanitarian intervention, for example in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. In a 1992 letter to the editor of *The Independent* Smith argued: 'There are cases of human need that call for the world to brush aside any opposition based on the sacred cow of "national sovereignty".'[110] The interplay of national sovereignty and international organisation has in fact occupied his mind throughout his whole professional life. But Smith was surely not politically naïve since he knew very well about the problems and obstacles for a peaceful conduct of international affairs. This, again, brought him together with Hammarskjöld. In a 1961 letter to Max Ascoli, just after Hammarskjöld's death, Smith wrote: 'In the light of what is happening now it is of no small interest to re-read Dag's introduction to his annual report. He showed it to me as soon as

107 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Martin Buber, 3 October 1961 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fols. 34-35): 'I have just returned from Stockholm and Uppsala. The service in the cathedral was magnificent, but the walk through the cobbled streets of Uppsala and through the ranks of university students who lined the route to the graveyard was quite the most moving experience of all. The utter simplicity, the quiet dignity and the intense depth of feeling in the audience made the final moment at the church-yard the most memorable of my life. At the very end, when the representatives of kings and governments were dispersing, I caught sight of a man in highly coloured folk dress standing under the shadow of the nearby chapel from where he had watched the service. I made my way to him and through an interpreter discovered that he was a guide from northern Lapland who had been with Dag in many northern journeys. He had made his own way south for the funeral. The sorrow expressed in that man's face is something else I shall not forget.'

108 Smith, Edge of Peace, op. cit., p. 46.

109 Smith, Edge of Peace, op. cit., p. 22.

110 George Ivan Smith, Letter: More Power to the UN if it is to 'Put Blue on the Map', in *The Independent*, 22 September 1992, p. 22.

he had finished writing it only a few weeks ago. I made some comment after reading it and he said "well, these are matters that perhaps may not be decided within a decade, but at least I have tried to set the stage."'[111] Smith definitely played his part in the setting of that stage.

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111 George Ivan Smith, Letter to Max Ascoli, 3 October 1961 (OX MS. Eng. c. 6488, fol. 29).

Ezra Pound, and Dag Hammarskjöld's Quiet Diplomacy

Marie-Noëlle Little

> *It stands on a lovely hilltop near Clinton in the State of New York; stands in a noble park still marked out with the treaty stones of the Indians, placed there as a pledge of sanctuary when first the school was built. Men whose business takes them to all universities, both in this country and Europe, have told me that, except for the University of Upsala*[1] *in Sweden, the Hamilton campus is the most beautiful in the world.*

This is how American journalist Alexander Woollcott described his Alma Mater, Hamilton College, in his famous radio programme 'The Town Crier' in the 1930s. Even though he often portrayed himself as 'an old grad of the most virulent type',[2] he thought of the campus as a 'Sacred Grove'. Woollcott certainly was not alone in this perception, as I used the same Clinton-Uppsala quote to introduce my own work at a Hamilton College conference in April of 2005, commemorating the centennial of the graduation of one of their most controversial alumni, the American poet Ezra Pound. That anniversary was a

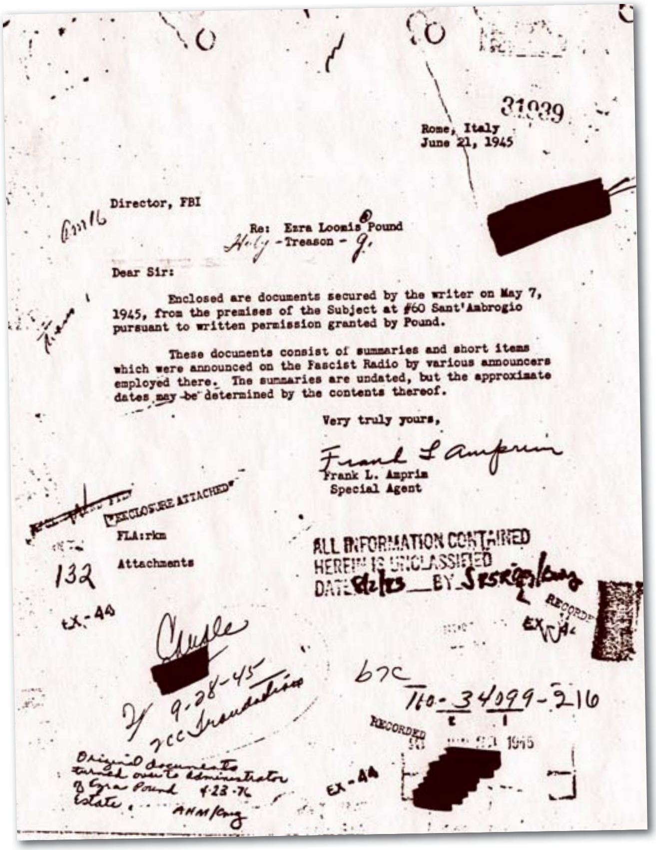
1 Uppsala (old spelling).

2 As quoted by Samuel Hopkins Adams in 'The Sacred Grove', a chapter in *A.Woollcott, His Life and His World* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1945), p. 44. (Woollcott graduated from Hamilton College in 1909.)

Marie-Noëlle Little, Professor of French at Utica College of Syracuse University in Utica, in Western New York, has also taught at Mount Holyoke College, Amherst College, the University of Massachusetts in Amherst where she received her doctorate, and at Indiana State University. She was born and raised in Sweden, then lived in France and Lebanon, and arrived in the United States in 1969 after completing her undergraduate studies at the French École des Lettres and the American University in Beirut. Most of Professor Little's research has been on Francophone literature and interdisciplinary studies. She has published works in French and English on Dag Hammarskjöld and French poet and diplomat Saint-John Perse, and is now writing a book on Dag Hammarskjöld and the American poet Ezra Pound.

few days shy of another one, some sixty years ago, when on May 3, 1945 on a hillside near the Italian sea resort of Rapallo, a group of Partisans arrested Ezra Pound and brought him to the United States 92nd Division's headquarters. Why? Simply because of the type of hat and the leather boots Pound was wearing, which made the Partisans suspect that he was a 'Fascist persona' or at least 'bad news' (to quote the special agent in charge).[3] Pound was in fact 'wanted' by the FBI, as he had already been indicted in July of 1943 on several counts of treason because of his pro-Fascist short wave radio broadcasts from Rome. Things, of course, might have been quite different had he spoken from 'home', from Amurika,[4] or had the timing been different. Pound made his first broadcast soon after the attack on Pearl Harbour and his last one the day after Mussolini fell.

'I have for years believed that the American people should be better informed by men who are not tied to a special interest or under definite control,' Pound wrote from Rapallo to United States Attorney General Francis Biddle on August 4, 1943. The Attorney General never replied. To him Pound was a traitor. And in January of 1944, Francis Biddle wrote to Secretary of War Henry Stimson requesting that if and when Pound were arrested, he be 'thoroughly interrogated' and also that 'an effort be made to locate and interview persons, particularly American citizens, having information regarding his acts of treason'.[5] An effort was made, indeed, judging from the hundreds of FBI documents that I had a chance to read – or try to read, as so many pages are still censured or classified. One should also keep in mind that the mood and, again, the timing may not have been the best, as both Francis Biddle and Henry Stimson were about to attend the Nüremberg Trials, which started only two days after Pound arrived in Washington in November of 1945.



31039

Rome, Italy
June 21, 1945

[redacted]

Director, FBI

Re: Ezra Loomis Pound
-Treason - 9.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed are documents secured by the writer on May 7, 1945, from the premises of the Subject at #60 Sant'Ambrogio pursuant to written permission granted by Pound.

These documents consist of summaries and short items which were announced on the Fascist Radio by various announcers employed there. The summaries are undated, but the approximate dates may be determined by the contents thereof.

Very truly yours,

Frank L. Amprim
Special Agent

"ENCLOSURE ATTACHED"

FLA:rkm

Attachments

132

EX-44

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

100-34099-216

RECORDED

EX-44

[redacted]

Letter to the Director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover

3 I located that secret agent in Florida thanks to a local newspaper article sent by a friend.

4 Pound loved to change the pronunciation and spelling of words.

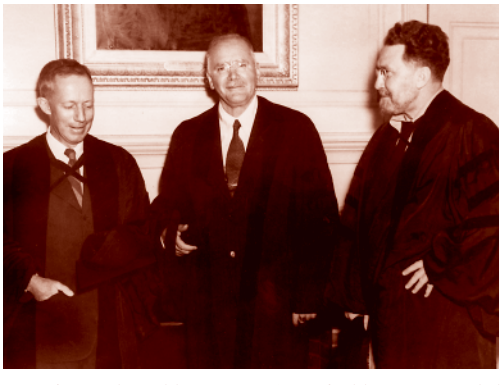
5 See Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988), pp. 625-26.

Disciplinary Training Centre cages in Pisa, Italy

After his arrest, the disruptive 'Town Crier' was put in a cage in the Disciplinary Training Centre in Pisa, where, during his six months of confinement, he wrote *The Pisan Cantos*. In November of 1945, Pound was finally flown to Washington, and after his lawyer pleaded that he was mentally unfit to stand trial, Pound was locked up in a different kind of cage: St Elizabeths Federal Hospital, where he spent the following twelve and a half years. It was not until May of 1958 that he was finally released and allowed to return to Italy, and later on to his beloved Rapallo. But, was Rapallo really Paradise, or just another prison? Even though his psychiatrist in Rapallo, Dr Romolo Rossi maintains, to this day, that Pound was not insane, one must admit that in 1958 he was not the same man who had been arrested thirteen years earlier. But was he sane? 'While there was slippage,' declared his publisher, James Laughlin, at the 1985 Pound Centennial, 'Ezra never lost his marbles.'[6]

St Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, DC

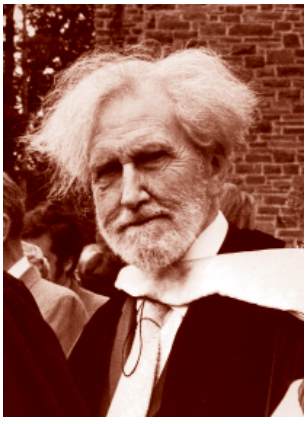
It may very well take another hundred years before we realise that even if Pound never lost his marbles – and never had his trial – somehow he had already been condemned and would never really be free again. In the last years of his life, silence slowly became a safe haven and also his last 'cage', with the difference that he could open it and talk (on the rare occasions when he felt like it). When Pound, who had been so vocal in 1939 at the award ceremony for his honorary degree from Hamilton College,[7] returned to the



Left to right, Elihu Root jr (son of Elihu Root, Nobel Peace Prize, 1912), H. V. Kaltenborn and Ezra Pound at Hamilton College in 1939

6 Quoted by William C. Chace in 'Ezra Pound: "Insanity," "Treason," and Care'. *Critical Inquiry* (Vol. 14, No. 1, 1987), pp. 137-38.

7 Pound got into a heated argument, after the ceremony, when another honoured guest and well-known journalist, H. V. Kaltenborn, made some anti-Fascist remarks.



Ezra Pound at Hamilton College in 1969

campus thirty years later, on the occasion of James Laughlin's honorary degree, he did not say a single word. And when Pound finally died in 1972, his Alma Mater made no comment, either. His picture, bordered in black, appeared in the campus newspaper with no obituary. Back in Italy, Pound was to take his last voyage on a Venetian gondola, and be buried on Axel Munthe's small island of San Michele. There are only two words on his gravestone: *Ezra Pound,* but as we say in French, the words are '*tout un poème*', a poem in themselves.

Rapallo, Italy (view from Hotel Italia, where Pound often stayed)

Many of us who had participated in the Hamilton College conference, 'Ezra Pound and Education', and celebrated the centennial of Pound's graduation, gathered again in Rapallo in early July of 2005 for the 21st International Ezra Pound Conference, to explore the poet's 'Language and Persona' and to discover the beautiful region that had been so important in the poet's life before the war and after his American exile. Pound's daughter, Mary, and his granddaughter, Patrizia, came to my session, perhaps intrigued by 'The Noble Mask', the title of my paper; even though they both knew that the man behind that mask was not Ezra Pound, but Dag Hammarskjöld, or

Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachelwiltz, on her 80th birthday, July 2005, in St Ambrogio (where Pound was arrested in May 1945)

'Noble Dag' as Pound liked to call him. The Secretary-General and the poet never met, but off stage, Hammarskjöld, playing the role of the diplomat, embodied the complexity of poetry and politics intertwined, in brokering Pound's release from St Elizabeths, truly a feat of 'quiet diplomacy'.

If it were not already the title of my book on Dag Hammarskjöld and the French poet and diplomat Alexis Leger, *The Poet and the Diplomat* would be an excellent title for the

story I am now writing, about Ezra Pound and Dag Hammarskjöld. The most striking difference, however, between Alexis Leger and Ezra Pound is that the former was both a poet and a diplomat, and the latter was a great poet, but not a great diplomat. Diplomacy is certainly a skill – and even a mask, at times – but isn't a pseudonym also the ideal mask? Such was the case for French Foreign Affairs secretary-general, Alexis Leger, who left France in 1940 for America, soon after the Vichy government stripped him of his French nationality. His pseudonym of Saint-John Perse was to become his new kingdom in exile, which lasted seventeen years, until 1957, when he finally returned to France. And a year later, it would be Ezra Pound's turn to end his American exile and return to Italy. What Pound and Leger did have in common, besides being expatriates[8] before being exiled, were friends – and friends who at times could be their good fortune. In 1940, Alexis Leger luckily met the American poet Archibald MacLeish, who helped him find a position at the Library of Congress – a position that perhaps Pound would have liked to have had in 1939, when he visited the Library of Congress, and MacLeish in Massachusetts.

Pound and MacLeish had also belonged to the Lost Generation in the Paris of the Twenties, and their circles of friends included Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and of course Sylvia Beach, among others (because, who was not in Paris at that time?). Some of them became a generation of lost friends, who never even bothered to visit Pound at St Elizabeths. Hemingway and Robert Frost never came, and it took MacLeish ten years to visit Pound, but what about the others? What about Alexis Leger, who was living 'next door' in Georgetown all these years? Impossible! Although their paths may have crossed in Paris, politically no two people could have been more different (and, I am sorry to say, Leger didn't even like Pound's poetry). During the controversy that followed the awarding of the Bollingen Prize to Pound in 1949, MacLeish alluded to 'the Pound fracas' and 'the Pisan Cantos fiasco' in his letters to Leger, but the two discussed the Pound case only when Leger visited his friend MacLeish, in the peace and quiet of the small New England village of Conway in Western Massachusetts.

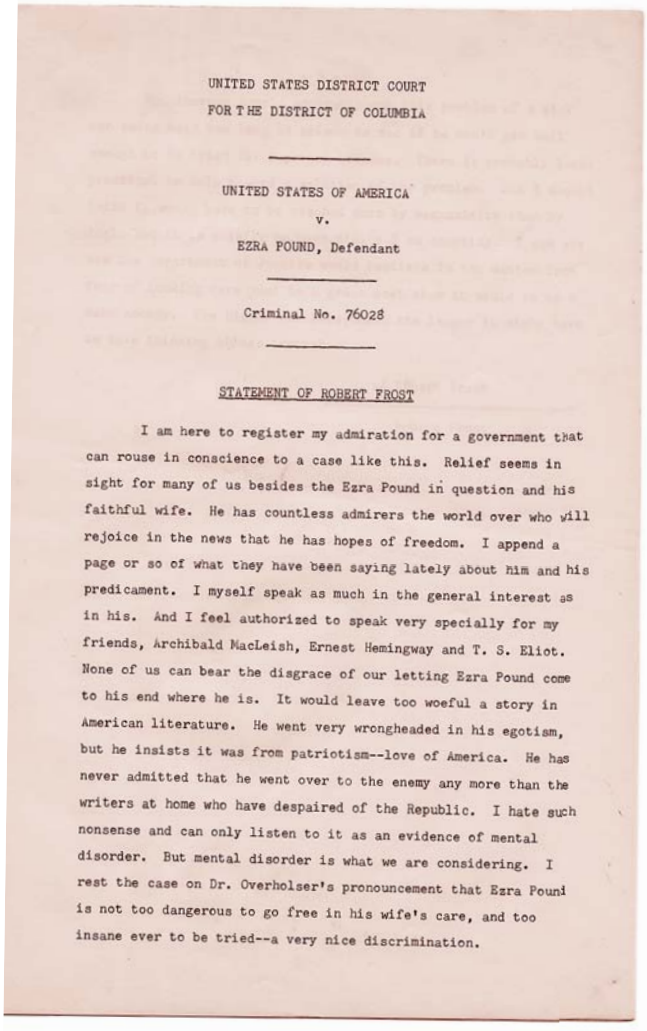
Archibald MacLeish in Conway, circa 1956

A few years later, in a much less bucolic setting, when Alexis Leger visited Dag Hammarskjöld on the 38th floor of the UN, I very much doubt that they discussed the Pound case, for the simple reason that between December of 1953 and April of 1958, 'the quiet diplomacy' deployed by the Secretary-General to liberate Pound was to re-

8 Leger was born in Guadeloupe and always felt like an expatriate after leaving the island in 1899. And Pound had already lived in Europe for over 37 years when he was arrested and flown back to Washington in 1945.

main hidden from the public eye, and perhaps even from his UN staff. Hammarskjöld's involvement in Pound's release was so well hidden, in fact, that for years I, like everyone else, thought that Hammarskjöld could not have intervened, and that he mentioned Pound in his correspondence only because of a possible Nobel Prize. I did not know that the 'Nobel Mask' was yet another shield to protect Pound. If one were to remove that mask, one would discover the truth – that Pound had no chance of being nominated for the Nobel, at least as long as he was at St Elizabeths. Avoiding the bitter battles that had already followed the Bollingen Prize, was yet another of the reasons for postponing Pound's candidacy for an even more prestigious prize.

If you ask Pound scholars about Pound's release, you will invariably hear about Archibald MacLeish or Robert Frost, but never about Dag Hammarskjöld, a name absent from the index of most Pound studies, or just mentioned because of a possible Nobel Prize, or because Hammarskjöld was among those whose names were mentioned, following Robert Frost's statement to the Court, in a document in support of the motion to dismiss charges against Pound. But, when Pound was finally free on April 18, 1958, it was to Archibald MacLeish, and not Robert Frost, that Hammarskjöld sent a telegram saying, 'Congratulations to you, common sense and poetry.' And in 1960 when Alexis Leger was awarded his Nobel Prize, there were no telegrams from de Gaulle or even the French government, but there was one from the Secretary-General of the UN to celebrate the event, and again, most of all, poetry. Alexis Leger had secretly addressed his acceptance speech to an invisible friend, the same mysterious advocate whose quiet diplomacy, once again, had been successful.



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
v.
EZRA POUND, Defendant

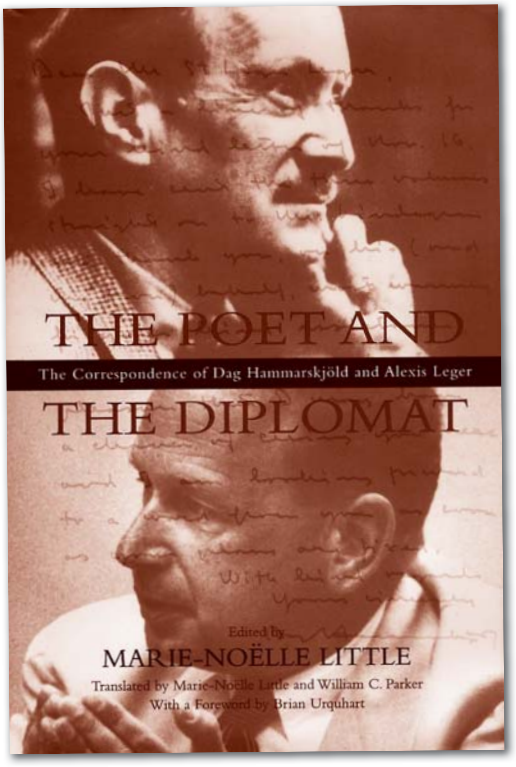
Criminal No. 76028

STATEMENT OF ROBERT FROST

I am here to register my admiration for a government that can rouse in conscience to a case like this. Relief seems in sight for many of us besides the Ezra Pound in question and his faithful wife. He has countless admirers the world over who will rejoice in the news that he has hopes of freedom. I append a page or so of what they have been saying lately about him and his predicament. I myself speak as much in the general interest as in his. And I feel authorized to speak very specially for my friends, Archibald MacLeish, Ernest Hemingway and T. S. Eliot. None of us can bear the disgrace of our letting Ezra Pound come to his end where he is. It would leave too woeful a story in American literature. He went very wrongheaded in his egotism, but he insists it was from patriotism--love of America. He has never admitted that he went over to the enemy any more than the writers at home who have despaired of the Republic. I hate such nonsense and can only listen to it as an evidence of mental disorder. But mental disorder is what we are considering. I rest the case on Dr. Overholser's pronouncement that Ezra Pound is not too dangerous to go free in his wife's care, and too insane ever to be tried--a very nice discrimination.

First page of Robert Frost's statement in support of the motion to dismiss treason charges against Pound in 1958

One could then understand that the 2001 Uppsala conference commemorating the 40th anniversary of Dag Hammarskjöld's death would also address aspects of his legacy outside the boundaries of politics and diplomacy, thus allowing some of us to explore his interests in nature, the arts, and of course, literature.[9] Bengt Thelin showed how 'Nature, Landscape, Literature' were already part of Hammarskjöld's childhood and youth. Manuel Frölich analysed 'Politics and the Arts' in the correspondence of Dag Hammarskjöld and the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth. I presented my newly published book, *The Poet and the Diplomat: The Correspondence of Dag Hammarskjöld and Alexis Leger,*[10] and I deliberately placed the names in that order in the title, as the poet was, of course, also Hammarskjöld, for whom there really were no boundaries between poetry and diplomacy. 'It is the Same Land', a line from the last entry in Hammarskjöld's journal. *Markings* was the title of my paper, which ended with an inscription for Hammarskjöld by Alexis Leger in *Exil*, the first long poem he wrote in America:



Book cover for the Dag Hammarskjöld and Alexis Leger correspondence

> *At the crossroads of my life,*
> *the most unexpected of men,*
> *whose encounter, for me,*
> *remains a delightful surprise.*[11]

My own conclusion was that 'the Linnaeus of poetry had met the Linnaeus of diplomacy'. The Swedish poet Erik Lindegren used to call Alexis Leger, who was a naturalist at heart, 'the Linnaeus of poetry'. Hammarskjöld himself was, of course, a great admirer of Carl von Linné, and his speech on the Swedish naturalist's 250th anniversary was read not only by Alexis Leger and Archibald MacLeish, but also by Ezra Pound. So, when the conference was over, I was very eager to finally visit the Linné garden. But I never did. I was invited instead to have lunch with Per Lind, Hammarskjöld's assistant at the UN, and Bengt Nirje, an old friend of Erik Lindegren. Yes, how could one refuse? Linné would wait, but what could not wait was the fascinating story Bengt Nirje was about to tell me.

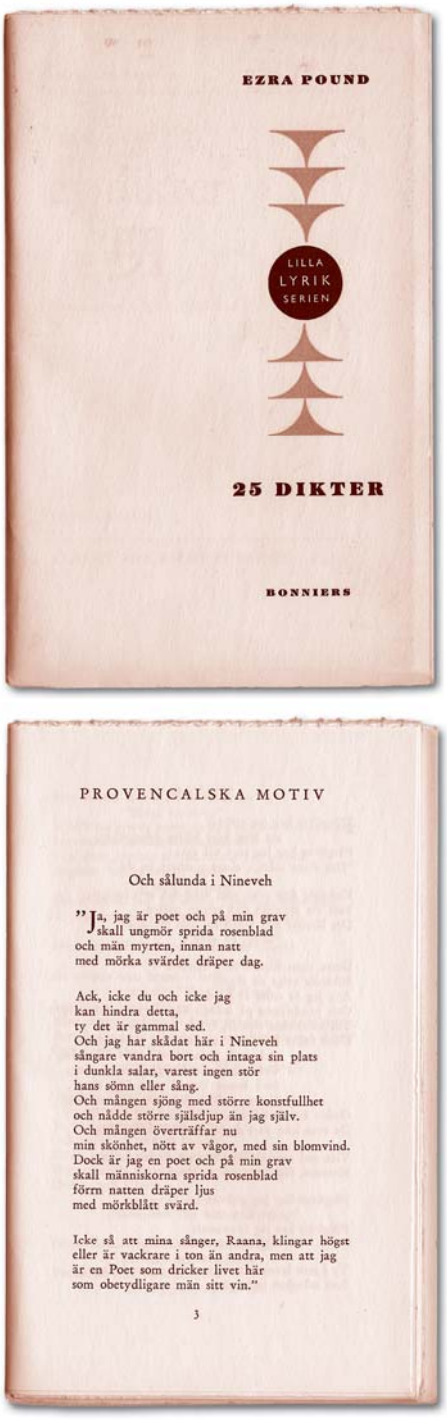
9 See the *Dag Hammarskjöld and the 21st Century* issue of *Development Dialogue*, 2001:1.

10 Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001.

11 'Au croisement des routes de mon temps,/ le plus inattendu des hommes,/ et dont la rencontre demeure pour moi /une heureuse surprise.'

Since then, I have often compared my own discovery of the documents related to Bengt Nirje's story with the discovery of the Lascaux cave by those young boys in France in 1940. Consulting Nirje's thick folders overflowing with detailed outlines, notes, and unpublished correspondence and documents, all related to the Pound case, was like discovering a treasure. And if I needed the talents of a speleologist to bring to light a story that otherwise would have remained buried in library archives, I was soon to call it a 'Northern light', mostly because of Hammarskjöld's role, but also because of the role played by Nirje and his circle of friends, which included Erik Lindegren and Lars Forssell. It was, in fact, Forssell who had first introduced Pound's poems to his friend Bengt Nirje.

In 1949 Lars Forssell, then only in his early twenties, wrote a long essay on Pound in *Bonniers Litterära Magasin* soon after – and perhaps thanks to – the Bollingen Prize controversy which had reached Sweden. In 1953, Bonniers published Forssell's first translations of Pound's poems, *25 Dikter*. The small book of twenty-five poems, which was a success, was followed by a second edition that same year, and a third in 1954. By translating Pound's poems into Swedish, Forssell introduced the American poet to Swedish readers, especially those in literary circles, and to members of the Swedish Academy.



Book cover and first page of 25 Dikter, Lars Forssell's translation of Pound poems

As for Bengt Nirje, he had a chance, while he was a student at Yale University, to study Pound, and even to visit him at St Elizabeths in 1953. During that visit, Nirje also met Pound's daughter, Mary, and he promised her that he would do everything he could to help liberate her father. Nirje did keep what he liked to call 'the promise to Mary'. He immediately wrote to his friend Lars Forssell, who alerted Hammarskjöld, who in turn later met with Nirje at the United Nations, and even sent him back to St Elizabeths to discuss the 'situation' with Pound. However, if Bengt Nirje kept his promise to Mary, he also kept this story to himself for almost half a century. (The same was true of those young boys, back in 1940, who were told to keep the Lascaux discovery to themselves.)

When I agreed to help Bengt Nirje with what has now become a book project, little did I know how fascinating it would be to untangle the invisible threads of Hammarskjöld's 'quiet diplomacy', as well as those threads that indirectly tied Pound to the OSS, the CIA and the FBI, and led all the way to the White House. When one skims my rough outline, one sees the names not only of writers and poets such as Archibald MacLeish, T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Ernest Hemingway and Robert Frost, but also of the famous spy, James Angleton, Under Secretary of State Christian Herter, Assistant Secretary of State Francis Wilcox, Director of the FBI Edgar Hoover, Attorney General William Rogers, and even President Eisenhower.

It is a fascinating story, but disturbing as well, as I was soon to find out that Pound is still a controversial figure, especially in the United States. 'Ezra Pound has probably inspired more fanatical loyalty and vigorous hatred than any other twentieth century American writer,' wrote Robert Corrigan,[12] now President of San Francisco State University in California. Strangely enough, remnants of these strong feelings still linger. Quoting Corrigan again: 'Any attempt to study the history of Pound's endless legendary battles is complicated by the fact that the legends surrounding the battles are equally endless.'[13] What did help me in my own battles, though, was having Hammarskjöld's name attached to my project title, almost as a shield or an appeasement. It is certainly not a surprise, then, that most of the support I needed for the project came from Sweden, from a 'Sacred Grove' in Uppsala: the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. The 'Northern light' mentioned earlier is indeed also a 'Nordberg light', and I should thank Olle

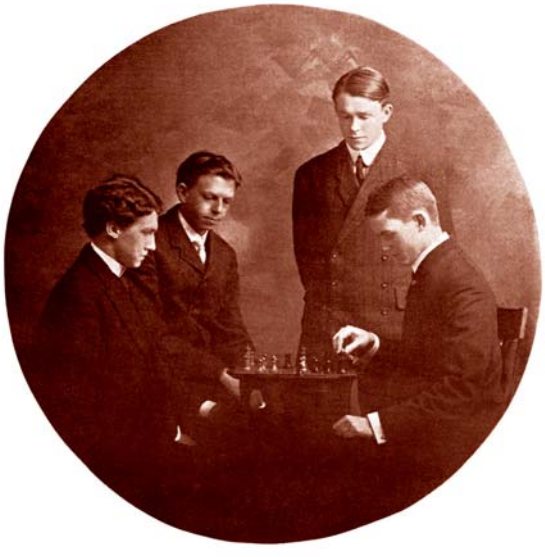
'Geijersgården', now home of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, and the steps of Carolina, Uppsala University Library

12 At the end of his 1967 dissertation on Pound,'"What Thou Lovest Well Remains", Ezra Pound and America, 1940-58' (Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1967), p. 401.

13 In 'Literature and Politics: The Case of Ezra Pound Reconsidered', in John A. Hague, ed., *American Character and Culture: Some Twentieth Century Perspectives* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979), p. 82.

Nordberg for his 'patient diplomacy' and continuous support over the years, including a chance to return to Uppsala to work with Bengt Nirje – and at last – of course, to visit the Linné garden.

The talents of a troubadour are now necessary to tell this story, dormant for half a century, of the brave Swedish knight who helped liberate the troubadour also known as 'the caged panther'. As in the *Chansons de gestes*, there are indeed numerous stories to tell, and several of them have alternative versions. So, where does one start? The Hamilton and Uppsala centennials gave me the idea to start – one hundred years ago – in that peaceful Upstate New York college, also called 'the Hill', where the young Ezra Loomis Pound was a student; and not too far from the Nine-Mile Swamp, the hideout of the famous Loomis Gang horses thieves,



Ezra Pound (left) playing chess with his classmates (Hamiltonian 1905)

Hamilton College in the late 19th century

although not directly related to Pound. The story ends in September of 1961 in Northern Italy, on another hill, at Brunnenburg castle,[14] perhaps once visited by minstrels and troubadours, and overlooking a peaceful valley as well; but this time overshadowed by the sad news of Hammarskjöld's death.

Bengt Thelin's own journey into Dag's youth and students years, in his book *Dag Hammarskjöld, Barnet, Skolpojken, Studenten,*[15] and Hammarskjöld's description of Uppsala in *Castle Hill*, also helped me compare the Uppsala and Hamilton campuses, and the interests the young Ezra and Dag had in common for languages and literature (and later on, also for the art of translation); even if the rest of their lives would take quite different turns. Reading

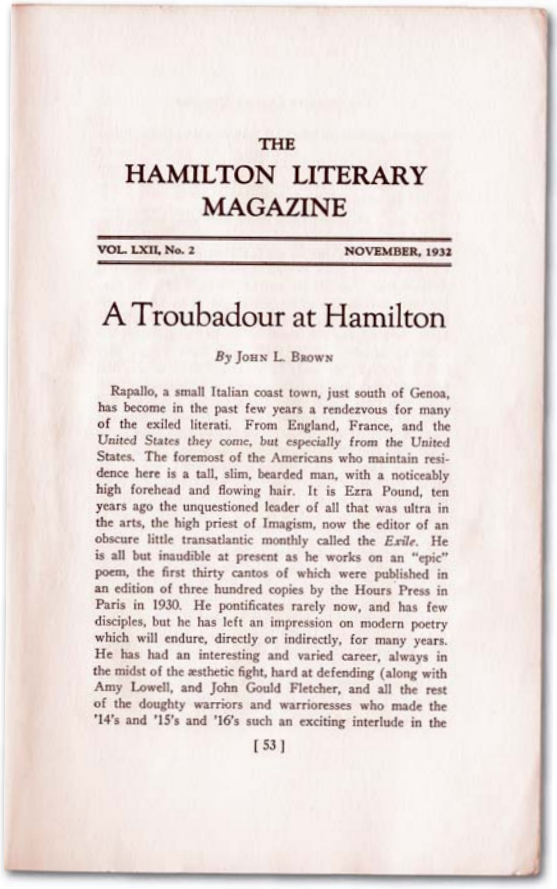
Book cover showing Dag Hammarskjöld as a child, a young man and a student

14 This is still the home of Pound's daughter, Mary de Rachewiltz.

15 Stockholm: Carlssons, 2001, 2005.

was certainly one of Dag's favourite occupations while growing up, and one could even say that books became his best companions later in life and until he died. The books that were found in the Secretary-General's briefcase and on his night-table after the Ndola plane crash, are always mentioned in great detail, as if we were surprised that literature would be so much part of Hammarskjöld's daily life.

A 1932 article in *The Hamilton Literary Magazine*, describing Pound as 'A Troubadour at Hamilton', also inspired me in my attempts to find out where 'it all started'. I am not referring to Ezra's eccentricities in speech, clothing, or even hairstyle, but rather to his favourite Hamilton professors and to the twenty-three out of thirty-six courses he took in languages, and especially French and Old French *Provençal*. His study of the French Troubadours and his love of poetry were to influence him for years to come, and in turn influence others, whether in London, Paris, Rapallo, and even at St Elizabeths Hospital. And Pound's own talents as a troubadour and his love for music are, of course, reflected in the many voices and languages of his *Cantos*.



THE
HAMILTON LITERARY
MAGAZINE

VOL. LXII, No. 2 NOVEMBER, 1932

A Troubadour at Hamilton

By John L. Brown

Rapallo, a small Italian coast town, just south of Genoa, has become in the past few years a rendezvous for many of the exiled literati. From England, France, and the United States they come, but especially from the United States. The foremost of the Americans who maintain residence here is a tall, slim, bearded man, with a noticeably high forehead and flowing hair. It is Ezra Pound, ten years ago the unquestioned leader of all that was ultra in the arts, the high priest of Imagism, now the editor of an obscure little transatlantic monthly called the *Exile*. He is all but inaudible at present as he works on an "epic" poem, the first thirty cantos of which were published in an edition of three hundred copies by the Hours Press in Paris in 1930. He pontificates rarely now, and has few disciples, but he has left an impression on modern poetry which will endure, directly or indirectly, for many years. He has had an interesting and varied career, always in the midst of the æsthetic fight, hard at defending (along with Amy Lowell, and John Gould Fletcher, and all the rest of the doughty warriors and warrioresses who made the '14's and '15's and '16's such an exciting interlude in the

[53]

Ezra Pound as a student, 'A Troubadour at Hamilton'

One could then say that real danger came only when the troubadour spoke with his own highly political voice, at a time when too much freedom of speech could lead to prison. When he did so, in the distance one could hear the horsemen of a new Loomis Gang closing in on Pound. In fact, there were several gangs involved, including the FBI, all the lawyers, and many a psychiatrist. But this time there were no horse thieves, except for some old friends and fellow poets who renounced their friendship, and the journalists and critics who either loved or hated the old Seer locked up in his Ivory Tower at St Elizabeths.

However, some of Pound's supporters, such as Lars Forssell, were shocked and concerned about the wellbeing of 'a great poet'. Forssell had read in the press about Hammarskjöld's interest in literature and poetry, and especially 'the T. S. Eliot generation of poets'. In his long letter to Hammarskjöld in December of 1953, Forssell very diplomatically mentioned *The Waste Land*, a poem that Hammarskjöld particularly liked and had even campaigned to make better known,

back when he was a student at Uppsala University. Forssell was, of course, alluding to Eliot's debt to Pound. However, Forssell's main concern was not so much for Pound's literary status as it was for Pound himself and his living conditions. One should also realise that if it had not been for this letter, Hammarskjöld might never have been involved in the Pound case. And when Forssell asked Hammarskjöld:

> I thought that you could in some way draw attention to the American opinion – or perhaps, rather to the opinion of influential individuals – that one of their greatest poets has already been sitting in some kind of prison for the last nine years now, and that his person and his personal situation are being forgotten while his reputation as a poet is growing more and more.[16]

Hammarskjöld immediately asked his assistant, Per Lind, to contact Sven Backlund at the Swedish Embassy in Washington. Backlund's reply confirmed that Pound was indeed at St Elizabeths mental hospital, but that there was no way to find out if he was mentally ill or not, although most people concerned thought that he was not sick. Backlund's recommendation was for Hammarskjöld to respond as soon as possible to Forssell's letter – which he did, as soon as the holidays were over, with the following letter:[17]

8 January 1954

Dear Mr. Forssell,

Thank you for your letter regarding Ezra Pound and for kindly sending me the booklet of your fine translations of his poems. I was aware that Pound's situation was difficult, but I had not fully realised the extent of his tragic fate until I read your letter, and I understand more than ever that you feel a strong need to shift your interest from Ezra Pound, the poet, to Ezra Pound, the human being. Unfortunately it is not easy to find the proper way to intervene in this complicated and in many ways sombre case. The preliminary inquiries I have had a chance to make, up to now, have in fact only led to a confirmation of your information that Pound resides at St Elizabeths mental hospital in Washington and that many Americans visit him. That these people have not found ways to address his situation, is quite surprising, especially as there seems to be a common understanding – among those who have some knowledge of the case – that Pound is not sick.

I will, of course, welcome any opportunities that might present themselves for me to find out more about this situation and what we can come up with to help him. This letter is just meant to assure you that I share your concern about this tragic human fate and that I will not let it out of my sight.

[carbon copy, not signed]

16 My translation.
17 My translation.

This is the only letter Dag Hammarskjöld wrote to Lars Forssell, but not the last one he would write regarding Ezra Pound. Standing by his words, as always, Hammarskjöld never did 'let it out of [his] sight'. For four years and four months, in spite of his demanding post, Hammarskjöld's concern for Ezra Pound always remained in the background. Each year that followed was important, but 1953 was definitely the most crucial one. It marked a new turn of events, finally gave new life to the various attempts to liberate Pound, and marked a striking new beginning in Hammarskjöld's own career.

Another important and seldom mentioned connection between the Secretary-General and the famous St Elizabeth's inmate can be found in Hammarskjöld's address on October 19, 1954, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art when he said:

> Modern art teaches us to see by forcing us to use our senses, our intellect and our sensibility to follow it on its road to exploration. It makes us seers – seers like Ezra Pound when, in the first of his *Pisan Cantos*, he senses 'the enormous tragedy of the dream in the peasant's bent shoulders'. Seers – and explorers – these we must be if we are to prevail.[18]

On Modern Art, the published version of that speech, ended with the Pound quote (although the original text delivered that day was much longer), but few Pound and Hammarskjöld scholars seem to have even noticed that particular passage.

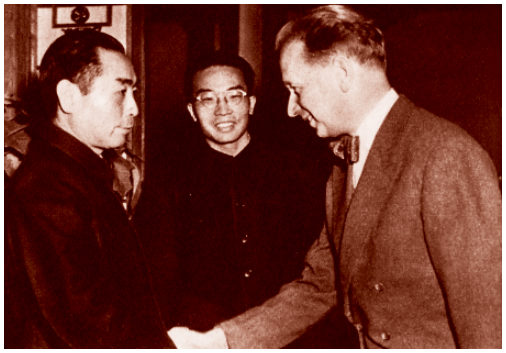
Dag Hammarskjöld at the UN, standing near a Fernand Léger painting, 1954

Two months after delivering his speech at the Museum of Modern Art, Hammarskjöld gave another important speech in Stockholm, but a more personal one, about his own father, when he took Hjalmar Hammarskjöld's seat at the Swedish Academy on December 20, 1954. It was the first time in the history of the Academy that a son had been elected to succeed his father.[19] Hammarskjöld's December visit to Sweden was significant for other reasons as well. While in Stockholm, arrangements were made with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to plan for Hammarskjöld's upcoming trip to Peking. The General Assembly had agreed to send the Secretary-

18 Wilder Foote, *Servant of Peace* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962), p. 62.

19 After Hammarskjöld's death, the poet Erik Lindegren took his seat at the Academy.

General to China to negotiate with Foreign Affairs minister Chou En-lai on the fate of fifteen US Air Force personnel shot down and taken prisoner in 1952 and 1953 in Korea. After several days of direct talks between Hammarskjöld and Chou En-lai, negotiations went on for several months, eventually leading to the liberation of the prisoners. The success of this, his first such mission, was very important for Hammarskjöld, because it strengthened the role of the UN as a mediator, and from then on the term 'Peking formula' was used to describe the Secretary-General's personal interventions. There is also a less known political connection between Hammarskjöld's China mission to liberate the airmen, and his mission to liberate the American poet; but with the difference that the former made the headlines[20] and the latter did not.



Dag Hammarskjöld and Chou En-lai, Peking, 1955

That historians, biographers, and critics later on did not acknowledge his involvement in the Pound case would not at all have bothered Hammarskjöld, who always preferred the spotlight to fall on others. Archibald MacLeish, with whom Hammarskjöld joined forces in 1956, never mentioned the Secretary-General's efforts, even in his memoirs, or *Reflections,* many years later, in the late 1980s. Neither did Robert Frost, who also forgot to share publicly his own victory with MacLeish, when charges against Pound were finally dropped in 1958. As for Thurman Arnold, he simply disapproved of Hammarskjöld's intervention, and wrote in his *Dissenting Lawyer's Life*: 'What right had a foreigner to interfere with our own domestic affairs? But with Robert Frost it was different. Frost instinctively knew the right political action to take.'[21] Really? Well, Frost did get all the credit, didn't he? However, when he was congratulated for his efforts, Frost should not have forgotten to at least mention MacLeish.

Although it may be difficult to know exactly what was said or not said, and who did what, when and why, it seems that MacLeish had some mixed feelings about the Pound case, and for many years. When Robert Corrigan (mentioned earlier) asked MacLeish if he could consult his closed collection of documents at the Library of Congress, regarding the Pound case, he asked Corrigan 'not to pursue that matter', and he preferred that he 'not insist', either.[22] In fact, it took MacLeish – who was also a lawyer – some thirty years to admit that '[Pound's] indictment by the Department of Justice was an error of law

20 One cannot help mentioning Brian Urquhart's surprise when noticing that Eisenhower later on in his memoirs, *Mandate for Change*, never even acknowledged Hammarskjöld's involvement in the release of the prisoners. See *Dag Hammarskjöld* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984), p. 127n.

21 In the chapter 'The Criminal Trial as a Symbol of Public Morality'. *Fair Fights and Fouls: A Dissenting Lawyer's Life.* (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, Inc., 1965), pp. 238-39.

22 Unpublished letter from Robert Corrigan to Bernard Drabeck, Oct. 14, 1986 (MacLeish Collection, Greenfield Community College, Greenfield, MA).

and his attorney's plea of insanity an error in tactics and his incarceration in St Elizabeths a miscarriage of justice'.[23] What had happened? The Vietnam War. MacLeish also noted the parallel of a former US attorney general 'who did in Hanoi precisely what Ezra Pound had done in Rome' and was not even arrested.[24] Why? Because of 'the right to dissent, the right to criticize'.

It is perhaps not a surprise that the most heated discussions around Pound's pro-Fascism took place not on the Hamilton campus in April, during the Pound conference, but in July, in the small Teatro delle Clarisse at Rapallo, and not necessarily among my Italian or French colleagues but among American ones, as if – finally free to speak their mind – they dared to criticise their own government. Or did they, simply, feel more free in Italy? Was this not what happened to Pound in Rome in the early 1940s, when he thought that he was free to criticise his own country, over the air waves? Whether right or wrong, Pound was, in his own way, trying to stop the war, or at least trying to prevent America from participating in the war, and as early as 1939. And as we know too well, one man alone cannot stop a war – even if this time around, our man, Hans Blix, was right. There really were no weapons of mass destruction.

Sometimes, neither the 'Town Crier' nor the 'Quiet Diplomat' can win. Alexander Woollcott, the original 'Town Crier', was also one of the founders of the famous literary circle at the Hotel Algonquin in New York. Strangely enough, my last and only visit to the Algonquin was in the company of a Swedish diplomat to discuss the then upcoming 2001 Uppsala conference. What was strange was not the company, but rather the answer to the last question I asked; 'Who would you have rather met, Charles de Gaulle or Dag Hammarskjöld?' He replied: 'De Gaulle'. My own choice was Hammarskjöld, of course, for the simple reason that he would have been a good listener and might even have answered some of my questions, as – after some twenty years – I am still trying to draw his 'true profile', and which cannot be limited to *Markings*.[25]

Charles de Gaulle, of course, was not particularly fond of the United Nations and its Secretary-General, especially during the 1961 Bizerte crisis. The dramatic eight-page letter Hammarskjöld wrote to Alexis Leger in July of 1961, about that crisis and de Gaulle, is just as important as the six-page letter Hammarskjöld wrote in December of 1955 to Anders Österling of the Swedish Academy, regarding his involvement in the Pound case. Although the historical context of the two letters is different – one letter representing an important page in the history of Tunisian independence, and the other marking a pivotal point in Pound's life – both show Hammarskjöld's deep, abiding concern for justice and freedom, a characteristic for which he became legendary. They also show his impartiality and courage in dealing with any crisis, whether political, diplomatic, or in the arts.

23 'The Venitian Grave', a chapter in *Riders of the Earth* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1978), p. 117.

24 Attorney General Ramsey Clark, recipient of the Gandhi Peace Award, also became a supporter of Slobodan Milosevic, of the leader of the Rwandan genocide, and of Saddam Hussein, among others.

25 Hammarskjöld wrote in the letter that was found with the manuscript of his journal: 'These entries provide the only true "profile" that can be drawn.'

One of the most moving tributes at the July 29, 2005 Memorial Ceremony in Backåkra, was that of the talented actress Lena Endre who read passages from *Markings*, and managed to convey not so much the spirituality, but rather the extraordinary strength of character of the person we were honouring that day, 'Noble Dag'.[26] When we gathered again in Uppsala in September, there was another memorable moment. Among the dignitaries who paid their respects in front of the Hammarskjöld family grave were Hans Blix and Bo Sundqvist, Vice-Chancellor of Uppsala University, standing side by side, almost as symbols of Hammarskjöld's diplomatic and academic talents.

The story of Ezra Pound and Dag Hammarskjöld's quiet diplomacy is in itself the perfect illustration of how politics and poetry can at times be intertwined, for good or for ill. The legend of *The Knight and the Troubadour* may also finally bring some closure to the Pound case, and at the same time, allow readers to perceive 'the caged panther' in a clear light, just as we now see the painting of 'the wounded bison' in the Lascaux cave for what it is – the origin of art.

Hammarskjöld family grave, Uppsala cemetery, September 2005

Bo Sundqvist and Hans Blix, paying their respects, Uppsala cemetery, September 2005

26 Both a 'Noble Day' (*Dag* meaning 'day' in Swedish), and 'Noble Dag' (as Pound liked to call Hammarskjöld).

Photo credits

p. 38
Ezra Pound Collection, Hamilton College Library

p. 39, top left
Photo: US Signal Corps (Courtesy of Humanities Research Center, Univ. of Texas at Austin)

p. 39, bottom left
Photo: St Elizabeths Hospital

p. 39, right
Photo: Ezra Pound Collection, Hamilton College Library

p. 40 top left
Photo: Ezra Pound Collection, Hamilton College Library

p. 40 bottom left
Photo: M. N. Little

p. 40 right
Photo: M. N. Little

p. 41
Photo: Al Daigle (Courtesy of the MacLeish Collection at Greenfield Community College, and the Recorder)

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Courtesy of Ezra Pound Collection, Hamilton College Library

p. 46, top right
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p. 49
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p. 50
Photo: United Nations

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Photo: M. N. Little

These two essays by authors who have undertaken long-term research on Dag Hammarskjöld offer fascinating new insights into the second UN Secretary-General through two very different relationships he cultivated.

One essay is based on the archives of George Ivan Smith, who was among Hammarskjöld's closest companions at the United Nations. The narrative allows us an intimate look into the work and collaboration of these two men, both of whom held central positions in world politics in the 1950s and early 1960s.

The other essay highlights more cultural dimensions, which are also personal and political. It explores and documents the advocacy role Hammarskjöld was prepared to play in support of the US-American poet Ezra Pound.

In different ways this publication brings us much closer to the life and legacy of an international leader. It adds important pieces to the picture of a man who did not talk a lot about himself.

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