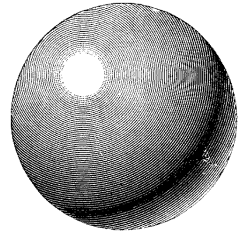


II Postino Part 1

The first time I saw this movie I was spending the summer in New York City. I was a student at a summer institute on the Renaissance at New York University. My friends and I couldn't get over the connections that the movie had to what we were studying: Dante, metaphors, poetry, as well as the connections that it made to each of our lives. As you watch the movie, keep what you've recently studied close at hand. Let the connections flow and ebb like the tide on Mario's island...



Consider the following BIG idea as you watch the film: ***The idea of what a metaphor, just really is – listen to the poetry and keep your eye on the ball.***

Questions – To be answered in complete sentences (not typed) and turned in on a separate sheet of paper. The questions in italics may require more thought and you may not want to finish them while actually watching the film. But do **think** about them. All questions are **due this Friday** on a separate sheet of paper. Work on each part as we finish.

1. What does the man with sniffles (Mario) do for a living?
2. Why is Pablo Neruda being exiled away from Chile? *Do any of the poems that we have read in class of his – bring to mind this exile? Metaquestion: When I first walked into the theater where this movie was showing – I was late – and we arrived during this news reel show – given the context – being in the theater at the theater it was bit surreal. How is our watching this movie, or any good movie, like the metaphors that Mario seeks out through the rest of his life (answer this after watching the entire movie).*
3. What does Mario lie to his father about? *Why? What is the implication about fathers & sons and occupations – especially in such a small village? As the movie progresses – do you believe his feelings towards his father's job has anything to do with his actions? Taking the postman job, becoming a poet, marrying? Remember Elaine's words to Mrs. Robinson at the wedding – connect.*
4. What does Neruda call his wife? *What does it mean? How does this fit in with the view that Mario and the others (in the village) have of Neruda – how does it fit in with Neruda being best known as a romantic, rather than a political poet?*
5. Why does Mario, at first, buy a book of Neruda's poems? *How does the reason he bought them, change as the movie progresses* (come back to this question after you are done)? How can you connect this to Dante's journey in The Divine Comedy?*
6. What is the short definition that Neruda gives for “metaphors?” *Is Mario's question, asking if all the world is a metaphor for something else, valid? Why? Ok HUGE question that you may want to wait till after you've watched both parts of the film to answer: How is a Postman, metaphorically speaking, like a poet (specifically – this poet). Now consider Mario's “hunger” almost desperation to have both of these occupations. Remember Little Alma's book from The History of Love – her “how to survive in the wild,” is there a connection between these and the metaphors Neruda, Mario, and the rest of construct to view our world? oooooohhh (notice not ewwwwww).*



7. *Now may be the time to consider why Dante (in The Divine Comedy) tells his story using an allegorical device – why? How does it change our interpretation as opposed to just telling his philosophy in a “nonfictional” kind of way? In real life (not the film) Neruda, really wasn't exiled to Italy – it was an island off his homeland of Chile. Why make that change? If the director/screenwriter have a certain idea to get across (as we can assume Dante did) should they be allowed to make such changes? Before you answer this question, go back to your answer to question #1.*

8. What is Neruda's advice to Mario on becoming a poet? *How does it "click" with the poems we've read by Neruda? Use at least 2 different quotes from 2 different Neruda poems in answering this question.*
9. Where does Mario meet Beatrice? *How is it similar to Dante's meeting of his Beatrice (we mentioned it – look it up if you need to online)? How are his feelings quite different than Dante's?*
10. What favor does he ask Pablo to do for him regarding Beatrice? Why does Pablo say it is impossible – what must he do first? *Remember this for the end of the movie (and question 14 on the next part).*
11. What gift does Pablo give to Mario? *How is this fitting? Speaking of fishermen – do you know the expression about "give a man a fish"? Go Google it till you find the right one and comment. Go back to question 10 – do you see an implication for Mario's earlier action (or lack thereof)?*

EC Assignment (150 points): Create an Illuminated Text (ah, I think you know how to do this) of any of Pablo Neruda's poems – use the same guidelines as before (illuminating the text) but try to emphasize the metaphors of the poem. You will find many web sites with Neruda's poetry on it. You may work with a partner or alone for this one – you may use Power Point, After Effects, Keynote, Power Point, or any other appropriate program.

II Postino – Part II

nos·tal·gia /noun/ Etymology: New Latin, from Greek nostos return home + New Latin -algia; akin to Greek neisthai to return, Old English genesan to survive, Sanskrit nasate he approaches Date: 1770

1 : the state of being homesick : HOMESICKNESS

2 : a wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some past period or irrecoverable condition; also : something that evokes nostalgia

Questions – All answered in complete sentences on a separate sheet(s) of paper. All questions are due this Friday.

1. What does Pablo do to impress Beatrice (on Mario's behalf) at the inn? *How is it a gift to Mario?*
2. According to Mario what are the fishing nets like? *Why do you think that this is true for him? Look back at your answer to question 3 from yesterday. Now, the fact that they are on an island may have special significance – why (there is a literal and figurative answer). Mario obviously dislikes fishing (remember his interaction with his father) – how can you link his goal of becoming first a postman, then a poet to Dante and the situation he found himself in (at the start of "The Inferno")? Be specific.*



3. Why does Signore Rosa believe that Mario has seen her niece naked? *What does she lack?*
4. Whose poetry does Mario give to Beatrice? *What does he mean when he says that poetry does not belong to those who wrote it? Do you agree? Why? If you can reach into your knowledge of literary criticism – the idea that author intentionality is a fallacy comes into play – why? (If you did not have me for Literary Criticism – ask someone or Google "The Fallacy of Author Intentionality".*
5. What does the priest say regarding communists and children? *Again, what does this have to do with what you wrote in your answer to number 3? Remember the lies that were told about the German soldiers, that Paul (All Quiet) and his comrades talked about (killing babies, chained to machine guns) – why do these lies perpetuate?*



6. What news does Neruda receive at the wedding? *How is this both happy and sad news for Mario? Look at your answer to question 2 – if Mario can't escape (though by wedding Beatrice...) at least...*

What picture does Mario have in the book that he gets from Neruda? *In what way is this a poem? In what way is this movie (metaalert) a notebook (see question 2 – in part 1)*

7. Who is Di Cosimo? *How is he like Beatrice's aunt? What does he also lack?*

Name 2 ways that Mario is degraded by Di Cosimo's men that are eating at the inn? *How is this island closing up with it "sad nets" on Mario?*

8. What is disappointing about Neruda's interview in the paper? How does Mario defend him?
9. What does Mario want to name his child? Who tells him no? *Why do you think that this is?*
10. Why does Mario believe that he deserves to be forgotten? What does he see himself as being bad at? *Does this have anything to do with his final action at the end of the movie?*
As he is remembering his initial words on the Don Pablo's tape, he remembers himself saying that one of the wonders of the island was Beatrice Russo. What was so perfect about her at that earlier moment? (think Grecian Urn, think Dante's Beatrice, think the last page of The Great Gatsby (look at the part about Hudson))
11. What is on the tape that Mario sends to Pablo? *How is it Mario's perfect poem? *When he "writes" this poem he has a new appreciation of things, how & why? Take another look at question 10 from yesterday – how is he able to do what he couldn't do for Beatrice? *What makes Mario discover the beauty around him?*
- 11b. *In what way is the tape like the Candide's garden? Paul Baumer's poplar trees, Alma finding Leo (ok that last one is a bit different). How are the sounds Mario collected like the objects Jonathan collects in Everything is Illuminated – how are they different? How does their ethereal (look it up) nature give them – ironically – more substance (in my opinion)... How does that ethereal nature make it closer to Candide's New World than to his garden (that one must work in)? How is that tape (and the lost poem) similar to the "things" that the soldiers carried with them in The Things They Carried (especially that first opening chapter – take a quick look).*
12. What happens to Mario's only written poem? *How does it fit within Neruda's definition of poetry (see the movie and his poems). How is Mario, like Dante, allowed a glimpse of Paradise (from later in the Divine Comedy). How is Mario truly The Postman? How is this movie (a postman) (see questions 2 from yesterday & 7 today)?*
13. Hopefully we discussed how Dante's Inferno may move us to examine our immediate lives as the book on Lancelot moved Paolo and Francesca – *link this to what you wrote for question 12.*
14. *Look again at question 7 from Part 1. What do Pablo and later Mario come to learn about metaphors and life? How do they (metaphors) help us? Percy Shelley wrote famously wrote that "Poets are the unacknowledged Legislators of the world." (Stop and figure that out). Ok – Another poet (whose name escapes me) further wrote that "Poets are the unacknowledged Lexicographers of the world." Look up lexicographer. How does that quote make sense in both in terms of what Pablo tells Mario about metaphors – but perhaps, even more importantly, what Mario learns about metaphors himself (his final tape recording of the islands sounds). Into this mix – consider Tim's (in The Things They Carried) decision to write about his experiences in Vietnam – how is that like Mario's tape? Give me a great answer here that answers ALL the parts of the questions)...*

A sad postscript to "The Postman" is that the leading actor, Massimo Troisi, one of Italy's most beloved comics, died at the age of 41 the day after principal photography was completed. He had delayed a necessary heart transplant in order to finish what had been a pet project long in the making... Working with his lead actor no more than two hours a day, director Michael Radford ("1984" and "White Mischief") had to accommodate Troisi's increasing physical weakness. Many scenes were arranged so that Troisi wouldn't have to stand up or do much more than speak his lines...

And it was at that age...Poetry arrived in search of me. I don't know, I don't know where it came from, from winter or a river.
 I don't know how or when, no, they were not voices,
 they were not words, nor silence,
 but from a street I was summoned,
 from the branches of night,
 abruptly from the others,
 among violent fire or returning alone,
 there I was without a face and it touched me.

Something beautiful about this place...

This assignment is a homage to *Il Postino*, to our school, and to those things that make our lives bearable and special. In this assignment you will create a short two - three minute sound recording of those things that you are most fond of and that have contributed to the best parts of your stay at our school. You should think of sounds that are both dramatic and subtle (that I believe is the key). Think of Mario and his choices (big and little waves, the church bell [with priest], the sound of the wind through the brush, the cloudless starry night over the island). He even included the bittersweet sad sound of his father's fishing nets. **Do not listen to earlier audios** that students have done – it will only interfere with your own creativity.



Think long and hard about your choices -- subtle and nostalgic is good.

You may even want to sample the audio from a previous video tape or cell phone recording (graduation, pep rally, etc.) and include that -- but keep those to a minimum. Consider the following:

- No direct or indirect references to anything that is obscene or drug-related.
- Your entire recording should not be longer than three minutes.
- You must save your recording in MP3 format. **When you save the MP3 file -- it must be saved at 11 khz, 22 khz, or 44 khz (11 is fine for voice and is smaller). If you don't save at this level, it will not work (and you won't get credit).**
- You need to briefly introduce what the sounds are (in your own voice). [“The sound of Scotese telling an in-house joke..”]
- The quality should be at least 192 mps (if you don't know what this is -- ask someone – or ask a question on the related forum).
- **Your entire file cannot be bigger than 50 megabytes.**
- Your cell phones have a built in record function and that most MP3 players also have a built in record function -- that should make things a lot easier. If you have an Ipod Touch – you can record with the newer models – and with the older models if you have headphones with a mic.

You will still have to edit everything together -- a good (and free – never pay for it) program - Audacity - for doing this can be found at <http://sourceforge.net/projects/audacity/>. Try to fade your sounds in and out to make the entire effect more powerful. With Audacity you can specify the bit rate (quality) that you save your final MP3 file as. Remember, it cannot be longer than 4 megabytes.

Submitting your file

There is a folder (for your year and period) on our website in the Dante – Neruda – Il Postino section where you can upload your file. **Look for Beautiful Sounds youryear (Upload Folders).** Get started right away so the sounds are spread out (“the sounds of walking in the snow” / “the sound of laying on the grass near Skinner Park”). This project is due February 27, 2018

The next book is Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* (you need it by 02/06/18)

Keep working on your Dante Plays – these are due February 12, 2018 and are worth 600 points.