In moving away from the early Italian material with which he had worked from 1909 to 1912, Ezra Pound in 1913 reworked and retranslated a group of poems from H. A. Giles's *History of Chinese Literature*: "After Ch'u Yuan," "Liu Ch'e," "Fan-piece, for Her Imperial Lord," and "Ts'ai Chi'h." Impressed by the quality of Pound's translations, Mary Fenollosa asked if he would be interested in editing her husband's manuscripts and annotations of Japanese translations of the original Chinese poetry. Ernest Fenollosa, best known for his controversial essay "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" in 1904, was an important Orientalist and long-time resident of Japan. Pound agreed to take the job, and in 1915 his work, *Cathay*, appeared as a book of translation composed of 14 selected Chinese poems. In *Cathay*, it is easy to see his sensitivity and voice in the choice of the persona and the act of translation, the devices Pound acquired from his studies of Victorian poets Robert Browning and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. While Pound's notion of the persona owed much to Browning's choice of Cino da Pistoia and Bertran de Born as personae, his interest in translating Cavalcanti by employing a modern idiom indicated the indebtedness of his early work to Rossetti's translations of early Italian poets. Although his early work derived from Browning and Rossetti, Pound attempted to go beyond being a dramatic poet and a translator, and it was in *Cathay* that Pound succeeded in such a project.

Much of the fascination to be found in Pound's early work lies in watching him develop this poetic of the persona through a poetic of translation and to bring translation and original composition together. Typical classical Chinese poetry does not explicitly provide information about speaker and voice, the relationship between the observer and observed. Pound's persistence in taking on the device of persona of earlier poets or poetic characters makes it convenient for him to interpret and invent the rhetorical perspective of the speaker. Caught in using the device of the persona, Pound in his *Cathay* poems expresses someone else's personality rather than his own, which strongly clashes with the Romantic notion that poetry is the expression of a poet's personality. In doing so, Pound's deliberate rendering lies in "maximizing three criteria" of an English poem, as Hugh Kenner points out, "the *vers-libre*, that the single line is the unit of composition; the Imagist principle, that a poem may build its effects out of things it sets before the mind's eye by naming them; and the lyrical principle, that words or names, being ordered in time, are bound together and recalled into each other's presence by recurrent sounds." Thus, the poems in *Cathay* can be considered far more than beautiful translations for Pound is primarily concerned with literal recreation of a text in the new language.

As Pound's appropriation and interplay of Western and Eastern literary traditions involves cultural exchanges and different kinds of intersections, this paper explores the significant effects of such encounter, interplay, and intersection of non-Western literature,

culture, and mentalities. Pound's act of transposing Chinese classical poetry can be seen as a creative and liberating force, which helps him develop a new English poetics and differentiate himself from his late Victorian predecessors. Moreover, the literary product of this encounter has often reflected the artist's mythic and imaginative projections and interpretations of alien cultural sources one comes in contact with. As Pound posits China as a repository of sophistication in its arts, he seems to become aware of himself in relation to different mentalities embedded within these Chinese poems. Through Pound's adjustments and invigoration of their intrinsic mentalities, the antiquarian Chinese people in the original Chinese poem become modern. In this fantasy of cultural interaction, Pound's act of transfiguring all human experiences in *Cathay* suggests a significant integration of us all into a seething humanity.

Ezra Pound, along with several other American modernists, marks a period of extensive experimentation and unprecedented transformation of American literary writings. These modernist writers show their interest in and fascination with the idea of writing as role-playing, as turning to the diversity of masks and putting on of personae. Pound's attachment to the idea of personae is best summed up in his "Vorticism" of September 1914, in which he called his translations and his poems a series of "elaborate masks." Masking becomes an effective technique for doing experimental writing in that it enables the firmly established authorial identity to be taken over by the cultural "other" as a means to achieve a richer experience in the encounter with the non-self. The literary boundaries among nations, cultures, and literary texts are inevitably blurred and entangled by these cross-cultural activities. As a result, it seems impossible to identify with the person who creates it and to locate the cultural activity within national or geographic borders.

These new phenomena were also described as "interculturation" and "transculturation" by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in 1940. In general, transculturation takes place when intercultural activities become highly visible. As Carl Weber explains:

> The term "transculturation" is . . . more generally used to signify a cross-cultural collaboration and appropriation which brings forth art works that combine elements from separate cultures and their indigenous artistic traditions . . . The term "intercultural" is used in this context to signify transactions between separate indigenous cultural systems, when, either unilaterally or mutually, elements of one culture are accepted or adopted in[to] the other culture.

Affected by these intercultural and transcultural forces, American artists of the dominant culture in the early twentieth century owed their inspiration and creativity to transactions

and interactions between cultures. They actively sought out foreign cultures to rejuvenate their own exhausted culture. Pound's *Cathay* is the product of interculturation and transculturation. The process of adapting non-Western art forms enables Pound to conveniently imagine the authorial figure in the guise of cultural other and helps him form a different subjectivity. The real attraction of adopting alien cultural sources is to develop technical distinction and a revolutionary mode of narrative. As Diana Taylor, who takes transculturalism as a specific aesthetic issue, points out, the term is often used to "denominate the transformative process undergone by a society in the acquisition of foreign cultural material --- the loss or displacement of a society's culture due to the acquisition or imposition of foreign material, and the fusion of the indigenous and the foreign to create a new, original cultural product." Whether it is through "collaborations" or "transactions," non-Western cultures are appropriated by Western forms of language, artistic models, and religion, and its cognitive landscape is often transformed as a means for artists to rebel against the cultural past and to affirm the vitality in their new art work.

Drawn to the knowledge of Chinese poetic characters, settings, and actions provided in Fenollosa's notes, Pound idealistically assumes that one can autonomously adapt non-Western materials. His transposition of Chinese poems reveals in its poetic form and expression the poet's concern with examining and interpreting Fenollosa's notes under a different light to make the difference prominent and to make something new. Like a performer on stage, Pound engages in the willful act of "interpretation," and this act inevitably causes him to intentionally misread and misinterpret things in Chinese due to his ignorance of the Chinese language and classical Chinese prosody. However, through the process of observing the linguistic system and literary expression of Chinese classical poetry, Pound－with some interpretative work－succeeds in producing a new language and literary expression for his *Cathay* poems. As Eric Hayot puts it, Pound "granted himself the right to substantially modify any literal or philologically correct reading in order to follow something he might have called the poem 'itself.'" With the vital compulsion to create something new and to represent the original with new meanings, poetry writing in *Cathay* is also different from conventional understandings of poetry writing practiced in both Western and Chinese traditions. In order to know what performative interpretations Pound gives to the Chinese poems, we need to consider first what qualities in these poems attract Pound. As Gyung-Ryul Jang points out, "Pound must have found in Chinese poetry the possibility of maximizing not only the *vers-libre* principle but also the Imagist principle." We should also consider interpretations to which Pound contributes.

In the T'ang and Sung periods, the images represented in Chinese poetry had a lot in common with many Chinese landscape paintings:

Parts of the represented field of view are separated from other parts, and are

treated as if remote or floating with reference to the human figures 'tethering' the mood to its focus; yet the formal articulation and composition of these levels and zones of separation allow the viewer to read the picture-surface, its recessions and elevations, as coherently *viewed*: this is a kind of ordering and ordered perspective usually called a "parallel perspective" or a "multiple station-point."

The image of natural landscape, the parallel perspective, the presence of solitude, and the lack of expression of subjective feeling are used by Pound in rendering parataxis in his *Cathay* poems. For instance, in "Taking Leave of a Friend," the image of natural landscape is appropriated and arranged to create the effect of communicating the mood and the sense without depending on the subjective identification with the poet or the speaker. Pound renders his version as follows:

> Blue mountains to the north of the walls,
> White river winding about them;
> Here we must make separation
> And go out through a thousand miles of dead grass.
>
> Mind like a floating wide cloud,
> Sunset like the parting of old acquaintances
> Who bow over their clasped hands at a distance.
> Our horses neigh to each other
>   As we are departing.

Pound's version conveys the viewpoint of the escort, while the occasion is that the escort is bidding farewell to his friend because he is going to travel "a thousand miles of dead grass." As the escort knows it will be a lengthy separation, he seems reticent about expressing his emotion and simply announces "Here we must make separation." However, the sense of loss is intensified when it is juxtaposed with the images of "floating wide cloud" and "sunset," from which the mood arises to express his emotion of loss. The sense of loss continues to intensify until the end when both of the horses that "neigh to each other" seem to sense their master's feeling of loss in this separation. As Zhaoming Qian suggests, "There is a silent communion between scene and sentiment, objective and subjective, nature and man. The images blended with feelings are able to incite the reader to build up in his imagination the undepicted details in the landscape and reconstruct what remains unsaid by the poet." With the presence of different objects arranged to catch a moment and bind it to an observing persona to evoke certain emotional effects and moods, Pound brings the parting theme into prominence at the end.

While appropriating the Chinese way of rendering a natural scenes or landscapes, depending on their associative meanings for different emotional effects, Pound experiments further with techniques practiced in both Victorian and Chinese classical poetic traditions: he creates the speaking or meditative personae and elaborates on their mental states rather than the expression of the poet's own. In the Victorian elegiac tradition, the poet's attention is almost solely devoted to his own elegiac states of mind; however, Pound noted the weakness of elegiac lyricism: the psychological mood or the dominant emotion is overwhelmingly expressed by the poet in response to the occasion that surrounds the poetic persona. On the other hand, in his study of Fenollosa's notes, Pound must have noted the effacement of subjective feeling so characteristic in much of Chinese poetry. Although the personal emotion is handled with control and restraint in Chinese poetry, the rise of the poetic character's mood, presented or conveyed in reticence and impassivity, relies on associative meanings with the presence of scenic images of natural landscape or objects to express intense emotion and feeling. As Ming Xie explains, "the codes for these Chinese landscapes, linking them to understand conventions of feeling, were so different that the mood seemed to arise directly from the disjunct economies of description." In other words, Pound employs natural scenery intrinsic to Chinese poetry to objectify the mood of the persona and to avoid producing overwhelming emotion. Yet at the same time, he doesn't want total effacement of subjective feeling. Rather than turning to the Romantic notion that poetry is the expression of a poet's personality, he takes on the persona of poet or poetic characters and speaks in his voice. In other words, he turns his expression to someone else's personality with a meditative or sympathetic resonance. This device allows Pound to freely interpret and communicate with his reader the poetic character's mood and sense of loss, loneliness, and isolation. By elaborately preserving the strength of both Eastern and Western poetic traditions and fusing them, Pound shows his experimental effort to transcend the linguistic mode and literary expression in his development of a new English poetics.

In "Lament of the Frontier Guard," for instance, the use of landscape imagery reveals the mood of the poetic character while Pound attempts to make the poem a monologue, a more individualized personal mood-elegy, by personalizing the guard's voice and customizing his sense of spacious isolation and solitude. Pound begins his poem as follows:

> By the North Gate, the wind blows full of sand,
> Lonely from the beginning of time until now!
> Trees fall, the grass goes yellow with autumn.

> I climb the towers and towers
>   to watch out the barbarous land:
> Desolate castle, the sky, the wide desert.

As the North Gate is the last outpost of the Chinese empire left to be defended, the guard, surrounded by "desolate castle, the sky, the wide desert," laments the wearisome isolation and wretched loneliness of fighting this war. By inserting a central defining pronoun, "I," that does not exist in Chinese poetry, Pound conveniently interprets the guard's mental state. In giving a speaking voice to the guard and impersonating his role, Pound is able to give complete primacy to the narrative from which the guard's mood arises. The guard then positions himself as a meditative self in the present:

> There is no wall left to this village.
> Bones white with a thousand frosts,
> High heaps, covered with trees and grass;
> Who brought this to pass?
> Who has brought the flaming imperial anger?
> Who has brought the army with drums and with kettle-drums?
> Barbarous kings.

As the personal sorrow and the desolation of empty space interact, the guard then recalls the bloody and tragic warfare that has taken place in "a gracious spring":
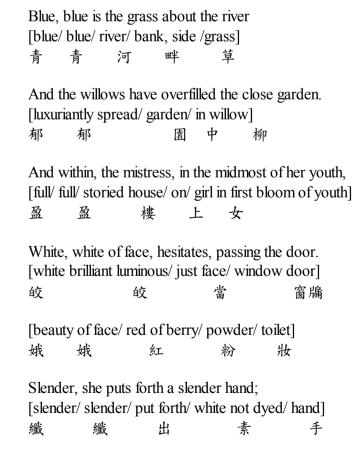
> A turmoil of wars-men, spread over the middle kingdom
> Three hundred and sixty thousand,
> And sorrow, sorrow like rain.
> Sorrow to go, and sorrow, sorrow returning.
> Desolate, desolate fields,
> And no children of warfare upon them.
>   No longer the men for offence and defence.
> Ah, how shall you know the dreary sorrow at the North Gate,
> And we guardsmen fed to the tigers.

The poem begins with an image of a deserted landscape juxtaposed with an emotional projection of the guard's mood, and it ends in the guard's retrospection and a direct address to his readers. In his elaboration on the individual speaker's emotion, Pound relies on the use of landscape and natural imagery to reveal the guard's personal and historical situation. Also, a speaking voice is invented to allow the guard to speak his

predicament and to express his feeling. This invention of a rhetorical perspective for the poetic character enables the poet to avoid producing an overwhelming mood and at the same time allows his version to exhibit a more effective use of mood-elegy. As Xie argues, Pound's presentation of mood by taking on the persona of the poetic character "is not the same as the Tennysonian elegiac mood which depends for its effect on the reader's more or less subjective identification and often exhibits a progressive, tacit conflation between lyrical mood, the ostensibly dramatized occasion for speech, and the reader's emotional response." In Pound's version, readers are led to see through the poet's eyes, to experience the distinctness of the poetic character's mood, and to find themselves often in sympathy with the speaking persona through joining with the poet's meditative resonance.

In directing a sensual effect, Pound tends also to work to position his Western audience in sympathy with the guard to experience the highly yet unusual individualized emotions and psychological perspectives. In "The Beautiful Toilet," Pound renders his version in similar manner:

Blue, blue is the grass about the river
[blue/ blue/ river/ bank, side /grass]
青　　青　　河　　畔　　草

And the willows have overfilled the close garden.
[luxuriantly spread/ garden/ in willow]
郁　　郁　　　　園　中　　柳

And within, the mistress, in the midmost of her youth,
[full/ full/ storied house/ on/ girl in first bloom of youth]
盈　　盈　　樓　　上　　女

White, white of face, hesitates, passing the door.
[white brilliant luminous/ just face/ window door]
皎　　　　皎　　當　　窗　牖

[beauty of face/ red of berry/ powder/ toilet]
娥　　娥　　紅　　粉　　妝

Slender, she puts forth a slender hand;
[slender/ slender/ put forth/ white not dyed/ hand]
纖　　纖　　出　　素　　手

[Reprinted here are Pound's translation, Fenollosa's notes, and the original poem in Chinese.]

Just as in the first part of the poem, Pound provides us with the narrative situation of a young mistress who waits for someone at the door, in the second part his interpretative speaking voice functions as agent for the mood of the persona and gives this poetic character, the young mistress, a sympathetic resonance:

And she was a courtesan in the old days,
[in former times/ was/ courtesan house girl]
昔　　　　為　　　娼家女

And she has married a sot,
[now/ is/ dissipated son's/ wife]
今　　為　　　蕩子　　　婦

Who now goes drunkenly out
[dissipated/ son/ go away/ not return]
蕩　　　子　行　　不歸

And leaves her too much alone.
[empty/ bed/ hard/ only one alone/ keep]
空　　　床　難　　獨　　　守

Reluctant to be a detached observer, Pound generates a speaking voice that expresses sympathy with this lonely mistress. His reading and interpretation of this mistress's solitude emphasizes the woman's precarious social positions and her unhappy marriage. As Steven Yao suggests, Pound seems to hold "a position distant from the woman subject's mind, yet [one] familiar with her emotional and physical situation;" he thus creates "a speaking voice much more sympathetic to[ward] the woman subject of the poem, and more judgmental of her drunken husband."

Let us also use this poem as an example to compare Pound's version with Fenollosa's notes that merely provide word by word lexical definitions of each Chinese character. With the aid of Fenollosa's notes that serve as intermediary, Pound "acts on" the setting and the poetic characters rather than just employing ideas and words supplied by Fenollosa. Also, classical Chinese poetry is a genre that obeys specific themes and metrical rules. By comparing Pound's version with the original Chinese poem, it should be easy to discover that Pound's interpretations of linguistic features and rhetoric perspectives, rather than faithfully rendering the original Chinese poem in English, contain

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intentional misreadings, interpretations and violations of the original. For instance, Pound intentionally takes this line [beauty of face/ red of berry/ powder/ toilet] to be the title of his poem. This rendering, as Edward H. Baker points out, "is marked as much by consistent stylistic choices Pound made independently of the rules of Chinese prosody . . . The effects of these choices can be seen throughout *Cathay*, as he sought alternatives that might be both poetically effective and consistent." As neither Fenollosa nor Pound is familiar with the principles of Chinese poetry and Chinese poetic conventions, Pound must rely on verbal inventiveness as well as his critical experience and poetic sensibility to imaginatively penetrate the ancient forms and styles of Chinese classic poetry. And because Pound is unfamiliar with melopoeia of the Chinese language, according to Jang, the poet "happily tried to 'translate' the phanopoeia and/or, if possible, the logopoeia of Chinese poetry into English." Pound, in "How to Read," comments on the relative translatability of three kinds of literal language, "melopoeia," "phanopoeia," and "logopoeia," as follows:

> Melopoeia, wherein the words are charged, over and above their plain meaning, with some musical property, which directs the bearing or trend of that meaning.
> Phanopoeia, which is a casting of images upon the visual imagination.
> Logopoeia, "the dance of the intellect among words," that is to say, it employs words not only for their direct meaning, but it takes count in a special way of habits of usage, of the context we *expect* to find with the word, its usual concomitants, of its known acceptances, and of ironical play.

In this unpromising activity of rendering Chinese poems into English, however, Pound's version shows that it is practically impossible for him to translate exactly the absolute rhythm and regular verse form embodied within Chinese poetry into English without sacrificing the verse form for the image or content due to few shared linguistic features of both languages.

From the above discussion, the creative process Pound goes through in rendering his *Cathay* poems can be generally described as follows: before Pound can write his poetry, he examines Fellonosa's translation of the lexical meanings of each Chinese character and also subjects them to further interpretation, a process taken by him to make sense of Chinese syntactical patterns and literary expressions that appeal to him. After exploring the effects of juxtaposing a scenic image or natural landscape with the poetic character to create a certain emotional effect, Pound's performative interpretations then amount to a conscious process of transposing linguistic features of classical Chinese to summon new representations of the scenic images and also to give rise to unique

representations of poetic characters' emotional states through his employment of the device of persona. Although the Chinese influence can be easily traced, it doesn't mean that Pound brings to his versions anything but a copyist's skill to reproduce the original. By giving his own interpretations to these poems during the process of transposing the Chinese linguistic system and literary expression, Pound instead invents new words to describe things and to represent them on their own terms. Arguably, Pound's *Cathay* poems are not a replica of the original because the poet transposes, rather than translates, the precursor. As Tilottama Rajan also suggests, transposition can be seen "as the intersection of different materials as well as textual surfaces." Rajan then turns to feminist theorist Julia Kristeva who defines intertextuality "as the mutual displacement of the literary and the historical or social by each other. Intertextuality . . . also situates the text within history and society, which are then seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them." Reading within this theoretical frame, *Cathay* becomes Pound's imaginative production and subjective vision from experimenting with linguistic modes and the narrative form. It is through Pound's adapting and experimenting with, rather than assimilating, themes and images of Chinese classical poetry that he is able to break from the cultural constraints of the past to transcend the entire Western literary and cultural milieu.

Therefore, the Chinese poems Pound appropriates in creating his poetry should not be seen as merely a trace or a force of influence but rather a dynamic force which enables Pound to produce a combined effect of stylistic features in the Eastern and Western poetic traditions in order to create something new. Exposing himself to new sensibilities and new techniques in Chinese classical poetry, Pound derives a stimulus to innovate new form and meter, syntax and content. As he deliberately selects and takes Chinese poetry as his inspiration, he values the Chinese poems he selects for their intrinsic aesthetic qualities and for inviting prospective artists like him to make performative interpretations. To compare him to a performer who acts on selected cultural sources can also help us relate to what Pound does in his *Cathay* poems. Approaching Pound's *Cathay* in the performative sense is to also suggest that Pound does more than mimic or imitate Oriental cultural forms and aesthetic modes. In performance, as Henry Sayre defines it, "the work itself is not only distinct from its actual or possible realizations but in fact transcends them." Thus, Pound's *Cathay* turns out to be a work of art which also reveals a performative site for him to experience and act on foreign cultural sources as well as a site for creating a meaningful intertextual exchange between Eastern and Western poetic traditions.

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