TRANSLATION AS REWRITING IN THE RENDERING OF CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY: POUND'S CATHAY

Viviana Mauro

Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy
viviana.mauro@unive.it

Abstract: The concept of translation as a form of rewriting, developed by André Lefevere, identifies translation as a textual adaptation based on a series of social and cultural factors. Therefore, the act of translating means rewriting a foreign text on the basis of local cultural and poetic norms. The purpose of this article is to apply the concept of rewriting in translation to the approach employed by Ezra Pound in his collection *Cathay* (1915), which has been chosen as a model to conceptualize the writer's approach to the translation of Chinese texts. The first section of this article will focus on the different approaches employed in the translation of classical Chinese poems. Following a brief historical overview, two diametrically opposed translation methods developed at the turn of the 20th century, namely the Victorian method and Pound's method, will be compared. The investigation on Pound's translation methodology will be then discussed through the analysis of some of the poems included in *Cathay*. The findings of such analysis will allow for a deeper understanding of Pound's method, and finally identify to what extent Pound translations (or rewritings) succeeded in painting a clear and unbiased picture of Chinese culture for his Western readers.

Keywords: *Cathay; Chinese poetry; Ezra pound; rewriting; translation*

INTRODUCTION

According to Lefevere (2016), the act of translating can be seen as a form of rewriting, as the translator necessarily needs to take into account a series of ideological and political constraints within the receiving culture's system. Each target text is thus aimed at adapting the source text to a certain ideology or poetics.

Accordingly, the translated text is no longer seen as a faithful reproduction of the original but is instead analyzed as a new work belonging to a precise socio-cultural context. In such regard, it is important to note that the concept of "faithfulness" (or "fidelity") has been considered as one of the keywords of translation studies, and it has complex meanings. For instance, Munday (2009) defines faithfulness as "the close reproduction of ST meaning in the TT within the requirements of the TL without gain or loss in meaning" (p. 188).

The first section of this article shall serve as an introduction to the two main approaches employed by Western authors between the 19th and 20th centuries to translate Chinese texts, defined as the Victorian method, which consisted of a literal translation of the original text, and Pound's approach, which strays considerably from the source text to finally produce a brand-new poem.

The following section will then focus on Pound's *Cathay* translations, specifically through the analysis of the relationship between the translation methodology employed by Pound and the way Chinese culture is represented.

METHOD

The notion of translation as a form of rewriting was first theorised by Lefevere (2016), implying that any text based on another intends to adopt that other text to a certain ideology or a certain poetics (Dasgupta, 2020). Thus, a translation can be labeled as an independent cultural product with its own agenda rather than an original

text version (Forrai, 2018). According to Lefevere (2016),

> "Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewriting can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another." (p. 7)

Lefevere also considered the process of translation as more than a linguistic exercise, as it interconnects with literary, cultural, social, and political factors (Lefevere, 2016). Consequently, it is possible to assume that the very concept of translation goes well beyond the simple process of idiom rendering and thus avails itself of a strong cultural and symbolic connotation that transcends the written text.

The concept of rewriting in translation is hereinafter referred to as the translation approach utilized by American writer Ezra Pound (1885-1972) to render classical Chinese poetry. Pound was a pioneer of contemporary poetry and a prolific translator throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, contributing to the newest trends in translation theory and practice.

Cathay (1915), a collection of his translations from classical Chinese poetry, marked a turning point in his career as a writer and translator. Pound's unique approach to translation t was quite revolutionary, as he distanced himself from the techniques utilized by his contemporaries. To this extent, he paved the way for important developments in the field of translation studies in the second half of the 20th century. As argued by Munday (2016), the poet never failed to experiment with language, "seeking to energize language by clarity, rhythm, sound, and form, rather than sense" (p. 258). Such focus on signs is typical of his imagist approach, which shall be discussed more extensively further on.

Pound's creative method has also been investigated by Vieria (1999, as cited in Munday, 2016), who emphasized the

prominence of his "Make it New" imperative, which allowed the poet to revitalize the past through translation. In this sense, Pound's translation work can be identified as a form of transcreation rather than pure language rendering.

Pound's *Cathay* has been chosen as a model to conceptualize the writer's approach to the translation of Chinese texts as opposed to its contemporaries. A distinction can be made between the Cathay translations and Pound's earlier ones regarding language use and deviation from the source texts. Consequently, scholars rejected them as translations as they were regarded as too creative, despite their source language being Chinese, which differs in structure and rules of composition compared to English and other Indo-European languages (Xie, 2014).

Different Approaches to the Translation of Classical Chinese Poetry

Translations of Chinese poetry can be traced back to the 16th century when European missionaries started accompanying colonialists on their journeys to the Far East. Chinese and Western culture began to intertwine in this epoch as missionaries uncovered thousands of years of cultural and literary efforts. As for the first translations of Chinese literature, although the French Jesuits had already carried out some translation works at the end of the 17th century, poetry translation struggled to catch on among the sinologists of the time except for a few versions of the *Shi Jing* 诗经 (Jiang, 2018).

With the diffusion of Tang poetry in the English-speaking world between the 19th and 20th centuries, a significant distinction was made among different types of poetry translators. The first category included those who engaged in direct translation from Chinese source texts, such as the Hong Kong-based missionary James Legge (1815 - 1897). The purpose of sinologists and missionaries like Legge was to provide an unbiased source of knowledge on China to the Western world, which could have proved useful to their fellow missionaries, sinologists, or to all

those who wanted to deepen their knowledge of Chinese literature in general.

The second category included all the distinguished poets or writers, like Ezra Pound, who had little to no knowledge of the Chinese language or culture and relied on third-party texts which had already been translated into other languages. In this case, being clueless about the source language paradoxically turned into an advantage for the translator, whose work avoided stumbling into the trope of exoticism but rather re-created the different (Kristeva, 2016).

This classification, which differs both in intent and subject-related competence, is reflected in the chosen translation methodology, which will inevitably influence the target text. For what concerns the work of Legge, he included prose versions alongside the original Chinese texts and extensive comments where he used Chinese characters. As a Victorian translator, he produced a rhymed and metrical version of the *Shi Jing*, as expected by his readers (Idema, 2019).

A completely different approach was adopted by Pound, who placed particular emphasis on the way the message was conveyed rather than focusing on the actual message, producing "a highly idiosyncratic version that probably is best appreciated as an original creation" (Idema, 2019, p. 97). T. S. Eliot defined Pound as "the inventor of Chinese poetry in our time", as the excellence of Chinese poetry was still relatively unknown to the English-speaking world before the publication of *Cathay* (Jung-Palandri, 1968).

Nonetheless, Eliot's famous claim has been often misunderstood. What Eliot actually meant was that *Cathay*, despite being distant from the Chinese original if compared to Legge, is still an excellent representation of Chinese poetry – thus defining his translations as "translucencies" (Williams, 2009). In his reworking of Fenollosa's notes for *Cathay*, Pound did not contribute in any way to expanding them due to his lack of knowledge of the Chinese language and culture. Although his initial aim was to make

stylistic and linguistic improvements to Fenollosa's notes under the influence of an archaizing translation technique, *Cathay*'s language is modern and simple, far from archaic (Nadel, 2016).

Translating Poetry: Pound's Approach
The translation methodology theorized by Pound refers to a need for a renewal of English poetry. In fact, the author's career began at a time when English literary production was at a standstill. Pound turned his gaze to foreign literature in response to such a stagnant period, starting a prolific production of translations, among which figures *Cathay*, whose representation of Chinese culture shall be explored in the next chapter.

The author's desire to redeem or rather elevate the role of the translator can be exemplified by an assertion he made in his 1934 collection of essays *Make It New*, in which he stated that "a great age of literature is perhaps always a great age of translations, or follows it" (Pound, 1934, p. 101). To understand the boundaries, he deemed worthwhile to cross when it came to translating poems.

It is fundamental to explain three varieties of poetry, theorized by Pound himself, which acted upon poems. *Melopoeia* grants musical attributes to words, allowing poetic language to operate through auditory representation. *Phanopoeia*, on the other hand, relates to the visual representation of a poem, as words suggest visual signs. A different approach emerges from the definition of *logopoeia*, liberating Pound from the narrowing idea that poetic language should be merely associated with its auditory or visual meanings (Hoogestraat, 1988).

The variety of *logopoeia*, otherwise, suggests that words can be employed in poetry not solely for their direct meaning, in fact retaining an "aesthetic content" (Pound, 1968, p. 25) which overleaps the direct significance of the word. Such distinction is particularly important to comprehend Pound's idea of what could and should be translated into a poem. *Melopeia* is

"practically impossible to transfer or translate" (Pound, 1968, p. 25), as musical features solely pertain to the language in which they were produced, while visual content produced by *phanopoeia* can be wholly transferred in another production. *Logopeia* cannot be translated; however, once having determined the original author's disposition or state of mind, it is possible to find a "derivative" or "equivalent" (Pound, 1968, p. 25) expression. In this sense, the original author's state of mind is regarded as the very essence of the poem, representing the part that cannot be lost in translation.

Another important remark regarding Pound's attitude to translation may be found in the essay *Dateline* (Pound, 1934). He presented the concept of translation as a type of critique, with "excernement" as its primary purpose. The concept of excernment was defined by Pound himself as "the general ordering and weeding out of what has actually been performed […] the ordering of knowledge so that the next man (or generation) can most readily find the live part of it, and waste the least possible time among obsolete issues" (Pound, 1968, p. 5).

Pound conceived critique through translation as a technique to find elements that could improve contemporary writing starting from the original text. Pound's translations were intended to challenge not only traditional poetry but also contemporary poetry. In reality, his translations resulted in a reassessment of the past, which aided in transforming the present and creating new ideas (Apter, 1987). It is important to note how Pound considered his translated works as new poems for two different reasons. He purposefully selected some desirable elements from the original texts he thought were missing from contemporary poetry to provoke a shift in poetic sensibility.

On the other hand, he viewed his translations as new poems, for they could never reproduce or rather copy the exact meaning of the original but simply reflect it through a contemporary perspective (Apter, 1987).

These interpretations on Pound's approach towards translation uncover the divergences between Pound and Victorian translators regarding what concerns the treatment of the original text. The latter cares about reproducing the features of the original text in their entirety, considering that the original poem's effects should be replicated either locally, that is, at the level of the line or stanza where they occurred, or not at all.

By contrast, Pound's view was well aware of the inevitability of losses in translation, refusing to conform to the Victorian standard. His vision is made clearer by explaining the untranslatability of *logopoeia*, which cannot be translated locally, but rather through derivative or equivalent expressions (Apter, 1987).

Brief Overview of *Cathay*

Cathay has been a truly influential work in 20th-century poetics, poetry, and translation studies. Its publication in 1915 triggered the interest of modernist poets in Chinese poetry. In particular, British orientalist Arthur Waley (1889-1966) published his translations *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (1918) in response to Pound's translation. Such a response aimed at providing an alternative model to Pound's *Cathay*, which he was reputed as being merely composed of beautiful poems rather than actual translations. He supported literalness in translation and believed that a literal translation could still be regarded as poetry (Raft, 2012).

Cathay also caused heated debate among translation theory scholars. Many have often doubted that Pound's rendition could even be classified as the actual translation of Chinese poetry. As a matter of fact, Pound's rudimental knowledge of Chinese, combined with his manipulation of the original texts, has led many critics to believe that *Cathay* could only be considered as a collection of excellent English poems based upon Chinese texts, thus denying their status as translations (Yip, 1969).

Pound was introduced to Chinese poetry through the manuscripts of American

orientalist Ernst Fenollosa (1853-1908). Fenollosa's manuscripts included notes about the poems of Li Bai 李白 and Wang Wei 王維, along with some observations on the art of poetry writing in classical Chinese. The manuscripts were then given to Pound by Fenollosa's wife, who after his death, decided that the poet was the only artist capable of using her husband's notes to make something great (Xie, 2014). Fenollosa's notes became the raw materials for the fourteen poems Pound inserted in *Cathay*, his first attempt at translating Chinese poetry.

Pound only had a rudimentary knowledge of Chinese language, thus heavily relied on Fenollosa's glosses for his translations. In the first edition of *Cathay*, Pound described the sources of his translations as follows: "For the most part from the Chinese of Rihaku,[1] from the notes of the late Ernest Fenollosa, and the deciphering of Professor Mori and Ariga" (Billings, 2019, p. 9-16).

Most of the poems in *Cathay* are translations of works written by one of the most important poets of Chinese literature, Li Bai, who lived during China's Tang dynasty (618-907 CE). Tang dynasty was considered as a period of renaissance in Chinese history and a moment in which Chinese poetry finally flourished again. Li Bai's poetry revolved around his experience of nature, a central element of his life, which he regarded as a source of wonder and spontaneous energy. His poetry was characterized by the same spontaneity. His topics ranged from folk to love themes, from the celebration of nature to social protest (Hinton, 2008).

Pound's introductory note also mentions other poems in *Cathay* whose source text was taken from earlier Chinese authors and collections. The first poem in Cathay, "Song of the Bowmen of Shu", comes from the earliest anthology of Chinese poetry, the *Shi Jing*, also known as *The Book of Songs*. Pound erroneously attributed "Song of the Bowmen of Shu" to a government minister and poet, Qu Yuan 屈原 (c. 340-278 BCE), the main author of the poems included in *Chuci* 楚辞 (*The Songs of Chu*) (Hinton, 2008).

When the translations displayed in *Cathay* were reprinted in *Lustra* (1916), Pound attributed the "Song of the Bowmen of Shu" to King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty, proving that the poem was not a composition by Qu Yuan (Jiang, 2018). The second poem in *Cathay*, "The Beautiful Toilet", is attributed to Mei Cheng 枚乘, a poet from the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE). The poem is part of the collection *Nineteen Ancient-Style Poems*, published during the Han dynasty, which shares the same themes as the oral folk song (*yue fu* 乐府) tradition, although lacking the intensity of the immediate experience found in true folk song (Hinton, 2008).

From the third poem in Cathay, "The River Song", to the end of the collection, Pound exclusively translated from the two notebooks of Fenollosa's lessons on Li Bai. Li Bai's poems usually consisted of pentasyllabic old-style verses (*wuyan gushi* 五言古诗), or heptasyllabic old-style verses (*qiyan gushi* 七言古诗). In particular, Li Bai often adopted a conventional eight-line form for his compositions. This type of metric, called *lüshi* 律师, developed during the Tang dynasty and can be compared to a sonnet. *Cathay* includes three poems originally written in such metric, being "Taking Leave of a Friend", "Leave-Taking at Shoku", and "The City of Choan" (Billings, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Rewriting and Cultural Connotations in *Cathay*

To understand how the translation techniques used by Pound in *Cathay* resulted in a more or less altered representation of China for Western readers, it is first necessary to define the concept of orientalism, introduced by Edward Said in his 1978 homonymous essay.

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[1] Rihaku was the Sino-Japanese name for Chinese classical poet Li Bai 李白.

In *orientalism*, a "damning critique of the West's literary and political production of the Orient" (Hayot, 2003), Said argues that orientalism does not truly concern the East but can be rather seen as a result of Westerners' assumption that the West is somehow superior to the East (Hayot, 2003).

In the same way, as Eliot (1968) claimed that Pound "invented" Chinese poetry, thus classifying his translations as representations of the East through Westerners' eyes, Said was most concerned with the existence of the Orient as a Western idea, which had little in common with its true reality (Hayot, 2003). Although Pound's translations can be seen as an adaptation of Chinese literary tradition to modern English poetry (Nadel, 2016), *Cathay*'s poems depart from the predominant, stereotypical imperialistic view of Chinese people of the late 19th century.

More precisely, Pound's work draws attention to Chinese people's intimate and emotional aspects, offering a representation of China that deviated from the discriminatory views of the time (Yao, 2007). An example of Pound's attempt to make his work introspective if compared to the original Chinese version can be seen in his rendering of "Song of the Bowmen Shu" (original Chinese title 采薇 *Cai wei*, "Picking Ferns") the first poem included in the anthology (Billings, 2019).

Pound's version is characterized by the presence of a first-person narrator who emerges in the first part of the poem. The anaphoric structure created by Pound ("Here we are, picking the first fern-shoots [...] Here we are because we have the Ken-nin for our foremen") somehow resumes the repetition of the original version (采薇采薇，薇亦作止 / [...] 采薇采薇，薇亦柔止 / [...] 采薇采薇，薇亦刚止 *cai wei cai wei, wei yi zuo zhi / cai wei cai wei, wei yi rou zhi / cai wei cai wei, wei yi gang zhi*), although manifesting a narrator who will be then identified with the one present in the final part of the original poem (我 *wo*). Pound's translation, therefore, aims at establishing a sense of intimacy with

the speaker through a semi-monologue that generates the illusion of the presence of an imaginary audience (Yip, 1969). According to Yip (1969), Pound's translation focuses on the soldiers and their complaints, emphasizing the themes of the duration of the war and the impossibility for the soldiers to go back to their homes.

One of the leading Poundians, Zhaoming Qian, deemed Said's concept of orientalism as inadequate to analyze Pound's case. According to Qian, in fact, Pound did not believe at all in Western cultural superiority. Furthermore, the scholar argues that what attracted Pound the most about China were its affinities with the West rather than the difficulties that may arise between them. As an alternative to Said's orientalist model, Qian offers a more relevant definition of Pound's poetics, namely the concept of imitation. Pound's interest in Chinese poetry is closely linked to the writer's search for an ideal literary model of his own. Consequently, *Cathay*'s translations appear as the result of a rewriting operation in which Pound incorporated his own methods, departing from the original form. From this perspective, Qian defines China described by Pound as "very similar to Pound himself" (Miyake, 2009, p. 96).

The idea that translation always conveyed a manipulated portrayal of foreign culture in the target literary tradition was stressed by Lefevere, who claimed that rewritings could not be considered ancillary productions offering a neutral image of an original piece of literature. Instead, they were a result of manipulations by a series of concrete factors, being power, ideology, institution, and poetics.

Consequently, foreign literature could be read as a result of a rewriting process, through which the writers of the original works lost their role as authors, which was given to the translators or rewriters. (Lefevere, 2016). Lefevere demonstrated how the translators' actions result in the domestication of a foreign text by making it familiar to the target-language reader, thus giving them the impression of experiencing

the other. As a result, translation produces a representation of the original that is significantly different from it, as the translator is constrained by a set of cultural restrictions (Álvarez & Vidal, 1996).

Lefevere also noted *Cathay* as an example of Chinese culture being domesticated in English literature since Pound's translations were seen as a product of the poetics' restrictions of his time. Lefevere considered poetics as one of the reasons responsible for the manipulation of foreign texts, suggesting that translators frequently attempted to alter the original work by using the poetics of their own culture. This way, the translated texts could be appreciated by the target audience. In this sense, translators used their works as an influential tool that could shape the evolution of the poetics of their time (Lefevere, 1992).

Hence, one of the reasons for *Cathay*'s popularity was not so much the accuracy of Pound's translations but rather the fact that they were part of a new wave of English poetry. Once contextualized as a product of the early 20th century, Pound's works can be seen as an attempt to adhere to the modernist aspirations of the poets of the time. Indeed, one of the main interests of modernist poets in the first two decades of the 20th century was the linguistic and symbolic characteristics of classical Chinese poems, especially their synthetic language, visual clarity, and suggestive mood (Qian, 2012).

Therefore, *Cathay's* poems were considered fewer translations and more adaptations of English prose into English Imagist verse to provide a new poetic language and rhythm to English poetry.

Imagist poetry provided a fresh perspective on the translation of Chinese poetry. Before receiving Fenollosa's manuscripts, Pound had already stated the three main criteria of Imagism:

a) Direct treatment of the 'thing', whether subjective or objective.
b) To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
c) As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in the sequence of a metronome. (Eliot, 1968)

The first two principles of Imagism, direct treatment of the "thing" and verbal concision, are akin to key principles in classical Chinese poetry. The connection between imagination and Chinese poetry, as theorized by Pound, proved helpful when it came to translation. By emphasizing these two Imagist concepts, Pound made Chinese poetry approachable and acceptable in English (Willet, 2005). In order to create clear images in the readers' minds, classical Chinese poetry tends to juxtapose allegorical names and images. In contrast, English poetry is rich in abstract names that have an allegorical and generalizing effect. Although, this tendency is completely opposed to the principles of Pound's Imagism. Therefore, to provide a practical example of applying these principles, Pound borrows some features from Chinese grammar for his renditions.

In order to illustrate the method of imitation of Chinese grammar applied by Pound, it is possible to consider his version of "Lament of the Frontier Guard":

> 三十六万人
> [three/ten/six/thousand/people]
> 哀哀泪如雨。
> [melancholy/melancholy/tears/like/ rain]
> 且悲就行役,
> [end/regret/follow/go/service]
> 安得营农圃.
> [how/can/occupy/farm/yard]
> Three hundred and sixty thousand,
> and sorrow, sorrow like rain.
> Sorrow to go, and sorrow, sorrow returning.
> Desolate, desolate fields.

Pound's version departs considerably from traditional English grammar, as these lines do not possess characteristics inherent to the traditional use of the English language in poetry. The repetition of the word "sorrow", however, gives a dramatic tone to his version, as it symbolises the sadness and reluctance of the frontier guard to get involved in the war. The use of repetition, therefore, is intended to move and touch the

heart of its readers (He, 2015).

The intensity of Chinese language and grammar is also responsible for other striking images in *Cathay*. Pound, for example, uses the idea of "dragon-like horses" in his "Poem by the Bridge at Ten-Shin". He translated literally from the two characters 馬 *ma* (horse), and 龍 *long* (dragon), which together indicate symbolically "a horse that is exceedingly swift and beautiful" (Öztürk, 2012). In his translation, Pound has kept the image that emerges from the juxtaposed ideograms plain and intriguing. This example shows two of the most important characteristics of Chinese imagery: directness and immediacy, which is the impression that imagists aimed for. (Öztürk, 2012).

Despite the fact that Pound's translations have been certainly adapted for a Western audience rather than perfectly adhering to the original, one of the greatest features of *Cathay* is that Pound managed to translate in a style that seemed culturally authentic, despite his lack of knowledge of Chinese language and culture. By adding elements that could be easily recognizable as Chinese, instead of revealing his unfamiliarity with the topic, he shared such features with his Western public, thus offering them a seemingly real experience of what Chinese culture is.

Besides, while domesticating the original poems for the sake of the new needs of modern English poetry, his numerous references to elements that could be easily identified as Chinese – bowmen, bamboo, jade among others – all indicated that Chinese culture was still much present in his translations (Hayot, 2003). Indeed, Pound's translations are rich with details alluding to Chinese culture. In "The River Song", for instance, he mentions a "boat of shato-wood", "jeweled flutes", and "pipes of gold". Exotic elements pertaining to Chinese culture can also be found in "Exile's Letter", where Pound mentions how the girls' eyebrows are "painted green", referring to a fashion rule popular among women in ancient China. Let

us now consider the poem "Taking Leave of a Friend":

青山橫北郭,
[blue/mountain/lie/North/side of a walled city]
白水繞東城。
[white/water/encircle/East/castled town]
此地一為別,
[this/place/once/make/separation]
孤篷萬裡征。
[solitary/dead grass/100,000/miles/go away]
浮雲游子意,
[floating/cloud/wandered/mind]
落日故人情。
[falling/sun/old/acquaintance/emotion]
揮手自茲去,
[shaking/hands/from/this/away]
蕭蕭班馬鳴。
[horse neighing/separating/horse/neigh]

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 others as we are departing.

Although the poem's symbolic quality is unquestionably related to the Chinese original, the English reader will recognize all of the images, as most of them appear in Western poetry more frequently than in Chinese poetry.

Nonetheless, the manner in which they are juxtaposed is perceived as exotic. "Blue "Mountains" and "white river", for example, are unlikely collocations in English poetry, but the reason behind this choice is closely linked to classical Chinese culture. As a matter of fact, depending on the context, the color term 青 *qing* might translate to either blue, green, grey, or black. The use of the character 青 is associated with Chinese art. It is important to notice that classical Chinese poetry is much similar to classical Chinese art

in certain aspects and that mountains in the distance are shown as blue in classical Chinese paintings. These unusual collocations must have appealed to Pound's poetic perception; thus, he chose to translate them literally in order to maintain the unique taste of the original poetry (Qian, 1990).

To emphasize this element of "Chineseness", namely Pound's strategy of maintaining the linguistic strangeness of the Chinese language in its English rendition, Pound exploited several calques of Chinese expressions rather than following the paraphrase suggested by Fenollosa's notes. An example can be found in the second line of "Separation on the River Kiang" (煙花三月下揚州 [smoke/flowers/third/month/go down/Yoshu] "The smoke-flowers are blurred over the river"). This line shows Pound's way of reassembling components from both the glosses and Fenollosa's paraphrase into something altogether new yet linguistically tied to the original (Billings, 2019).

CONCLUSION

In order to properly understand the impact of Pound's translations on Westerners' perception of Chinese culture, consideration must be made to the degree of translatability of Chinese poetry into English. A faithful translation into English can be considered unattainable due to the very nature of the Chinese language. Depending on where they are located in a sentence, many Chinese words can be used as nouns, adjectives, or verbs. Since English is a topic-prominent language, the subject of a phrase is frequently placed before the topic, as modifiers always come before the thing they modify (Wang, 1965).

The shortness of classical Chinese poetry is another factor worth considering. Poems were usually written in lines of five or seven characters, requiring the poet to exclude any unnecessary words that may have clarified the syntactical meaning of the line. As a result, depending on their place in the sentence or the context of the poetry, the reader had to deduce the appropriate grammatical links between the series of words constituting a line (Wang, 1965).

The brevity of Chinese poetry was in line with the imagist poets' idea of avoiding any word that would not add to the presentation. Pound could have never been able to make a literal translation from Chinese since he was not able to comprehend the source materials. Pound himself implied that his *Cathay* versions were not literal translations of the original texts. However, because of his indirect relationship to the original texts, he was freed from the boundaries set by the Chinese original, allowing him to focus on his main goal: to modernize English poetry and extend his poetic repertory.

The investigation on the approach utilized by Pound to translate the poems in *Cathay* allows a greater understanding of the value of Pound's translations in terms of cultural representation of China. Through the study of Pound's renditions, it has been possible to understand how much his versions, identifiable as the product of a rewriting operation rather than a literal rendition, have contributed to the creation of a specific, manipulated, and historically determined vision of Chinese culture. Without resorting to archaisms, Pound was able to emphasize the foreignness of his translations.

Furthermore, he used a variety of tactics to make his language sound like a new type of English, providing the readers with a sense of alienation – the "Chineseness" of his translations. Consequently, it is possible to conclude that Pound's translations, although far from being a faithful reproduction of the original poems, are the result of a work aimed at adding value to Chinese culture in all its aspects through the use of a translation strategy that encourages the diffusion of Chinese principles in the Western world.

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