

Ezra Pound's "Histrionic Translation" and Cultural Appropriations of *Cathay*

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This paper will focus on Ezra Pound's translation of *Cathay* to discuss how Pound exemplifies the "Chinese spirit" in cultural appropriations of Chinese poetry. Pound's clairvoyance in *Cathay* – his ability to identify with the intentionality of the source text and accentuate the source personae in translation – remains his legacy as both a gifted poet and a practising translator. His most distinctive quality has enabled him to translate with unique charisma and flair in the process of resurrecting the source personae in his translation; and by extension, acculturating and transculturating the source personae in the target language and target culture. This transcultural "resurrection" in translating great poetry of distant times and places is Pound's specialism and exemplifies the phenomenological roles of translators in re-creating and re-inventing the source personae. This paper will present a close text analysis of the "method" employed by Pound in his English translation of *Cathay*: It will explore mimesis and re-creation, and discuss the ways in which Pound is able to employ a translation strategy that in many ways runs parallel to Stanislavsky's method to translate the source personae. It aims at looking into Pound's translation of *Cathay* from a "histrionic" point of view. Among the whole entire collection of *Cathay* poems, the emotional density and emotional force are far more significant for the translation than the rhetorical devices and beautiful wordings in cultural appropriations and transculturation. Different "masks", or source personae can come through Pound's histrionic use of expressive language and vivid image in his re-creation.